MINUTES

Full Board Meeting

Hybrid Meeting
Monday, August 17, 2026
809 Copper Ave. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102
1:30 pm

Meeting Leadership

Stacy Sacco, Chair
Vaadra Chavez, Chair-Elect
Karla Causey, Treasurer

Opening Notes

Before the meeting started Art Martinez explained that when voting takes place, we will ask for a roll call for those who don't approve and then identify the names of the members that did not respond to the don't approve as an affirmative vote. Additionally, prior to the affirmative roll call members that abstain from voting will respond via voice confirmation to the Board Chair and describe the reason. After the names are called for the affirmative vote, the chair will pause and ask those that do not concur with the affirmative roll call vote to voice a different vote. To ensure that a quorum remains, Ms. Nicole Giddings monitors the participants to ensure quorum is present and notes if a member is not available.

Call to Order

Stacy Sacco, Chair at 1:47 pm

Roll Call – Determination of Quorum

Facilitator: Nicole Giddings

Attendees:

Attendee	Organization	In Person	Virtual	Not Present
Steve Anaya	City of Moriarty			X
Michael Carriere	University of New Mexico - Valencia	X		
Karla Causey, Treasurer	Black Chamber of Commerce of New Mexico	X		
Robert Chavez	Youth Development Inc.		X	

Attendee	Organization	In Person	Virtual	Not Present
Vaadra Chavez, Chair Elect	Scale Smart HR		X	
Troy Clark	New Mexico Hospital Association		X	
Gabriel Esparza	Albuquerque Job Corps		X	
Bobby Getts	NM JATCH for Electrical Industry			X
Tracy Hartzler	Central New Mexico Community College	X		
Justin Hilliard	City of Albuquerque, Economic Development		X	
Antoinette Holmes	NM Department of Vocational Rehabilitation			X
Dr. Kristopher Johnson	Rio Rancho Public Schools			X
Robert Leming	New Mexico Chamber of Commerce			X
Roxanne Luna	New Mexico Human Services Department			X
James Magoffe	Yearout Mechanical Inc.			X
Chad Matheson	Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance (AREA)	X		
Lori Anne McBride	Manpower of New Mexico	X		
John Mierzwa	Ingenuity Software Labs, Inc			X
Holly Muller	Presbyterian Healthcare Services			X
Debbie Ortiz	RDO Enterprises		X	
Mark Podeyn	Action RV Specialists Inc.	X		
Stacy Sacco, Chair	SACCO Connections	X		
James Salas	New Mexico Commission for the Blind		X	
Waldy Salazar	New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions	X		
Jerry Schalow	Rio Rancho Regional Chamber of Commerce			X
Tom Schuch	New Mexico Restaurant Association			X
Jennifer Sinsabaugh	New Mexico MEP			X
Elisha Torres-Saavedra	PNM			X
Raymond Trujillo	Southwest Piping Institute (Local 412)			X
David Valdes	Central New Mexico Community College	X		
David Vedera	2Gates2Paths, LLC	X		

Summary: The attendance table identifies meeting participants, their organizations, and whether they attended in person, virtually, or were not present.

Introduction of new board members:

- **Michael Carriere, University of New Mexico – Valencia**
- **Chad Mattheson – Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance (AREA)**
- **Lori Anne McBride, Manpower of New Mexico**

Agenda Items

Approval of WCCNM Full Board Agenda, August 17, 2026

Motion: Karla Causey
Second: Tracy Hartzler
No Discussion
Action: Passed unanimously by Voice Vote

Member Name	Yes	No	Abstain	No Vote
Steve Anaya				
Michael Carriere	I			
Karla Causey	I			
Robert Chavez	V			
Vaadra Chavez	V			
Troy Clark	V			
Gabriel Esparza	V			
Bobby Getts				
Tracey Hartzler				
Justin Hilliard	V			
Antoinette Holmes				
Dr. Kristopher Johnson				
Robert Leming				
Roxanne Luna				
James Magoffe				
Chad Matheson	I			
Lori Anne McBride	I			

Member Name	Yes	No	Abstain	No Vote
John Mierzwa				
Holly Muller				
Debbie Ortiz	V			
Mark Podeyn	I			
Stacy Sacco	I			
James Salas	V			
Waldy Salazar	I			
Jerry Schalow				
Tom Schuch				
Jennifer Sinsabaugh				
Elisha Torres-Saavedra				
Raymond Trujillo				
David Valdes	I			
David Vedera	I			

Summary: The voting table records board member participation and voting outcomes for the agenda item, including affirmative votes, negative votes, abstentions, and members who did not vote.

Tab 1: Approval of WCCNM Full Board Minutes, June 15, 2026

Motion: David Vedera
Second: Waldy Salazar
No Discussion
Action: Passed unanimously by Voice Vote

Member Name	Yes	No	Abstain	No Vote
Steve Anaya				
Michael Carriere	I			
Karla Causey	I			
Robert Chavez	V			
Vaadra Chavez	V			
Troy Clark	V			
Gabriel Esparza	V			

Member Name	Yes	No	Abstain	No Vote
Bobby Getts				
Tracey Hartzler				
Justin Hilliard	V			
Antoinette Holmes				
Dr. Kristopher Johnson				
Robert Leming				
Roxanne Luna				
James Magoffe				
Chad Matheson	I			
Lori Anne McBride	I			
John Mierzwa				
Holly Muller				
Debbie Ortiz	V			
Mark Podeyn	I			
Stacy Sacco	I			
James Salas	V			
Waldy Salazar	I			
Jerry Schalow				
Tom Schuch				
Jennifer Sinsabaugh				
Elisha Torres-Saavedra				
Raymond Trujillo				
David Valdes	I			
David Vedera	I			

Summary: The voting table records board member participation and voting outcomes for the agenda item, including affirmative votes, negative votes, abstentions, and members who did not vote.

Action Items

Tab 2: Approval of WCCNM Local Plan 2-Year Modification

- David Vadera, Chair of the Local Plan Ad Hoc committee, provided an update regarding the two-year modification to the WCCNM four-year Local Plan. The Ad Hoc Subcommittee consists of Tawnya Rowland, Vaadra Chavez, and David Vadera. The purpose of the committee was to review and discuss the required two-year modifications to the existing four-year Local Plan.
- Mr. Vadera reported that the committee met on July 31, 2026 to review the proposed modifications. The WCCNM and the Board are responsible for developing a local response to the New Mexico State Plan. The initial modification was required to be completed by August 27, 2026 and posted for public comment by August 31, 2026.
- Ms. Tawnya Rowland reported she began the review process in May and conducted a comprehensive crosswalk of the state plan modifications against the existing four-year Local Plan. The applicable sections were updated and red-lined to identify proposed changes and modifications.
- The Board was advised that only minimal changes were anticipated because the existing WCCNM Local Plan is already substantially aligned with the direction of the current administration and the America's Talent Strategy: Building a Workforce for the Golden Age. Updates will include current labor market information, revisions to tables, and updates to policies to ensure they remain current.
- Ms. Rowland stated that the Board would receive a complete track-changes version of the proposed two-year modification prior to its posting for public comment. Board members would have an opportunity to review the document and submit comments, edits, or proposed changes during the public comment period.

Technician Economy and Industry Direction

- The Board discussed the importance of incorporating the emerging technician economy into the Local Plan. Discussion centered on the increasing demand for technicians across advanced manufacturing, energy, aerospace, quantum-related industries, and other technology-driven sectors.
- Representatives discussed the importance of developing career pathways that allow individuals to enter the workforce at an appropriate level and advance through additional education, skills training, and short-term credentials. The demand for industrial, mechanical, electrical, maintenance, installation, robotics, repair, and other technical skills was identified as a significant and continuing workforce need.
- The Board emphasized the importance of collaboration among the public workforce system, education, economic development organizations, and employers. It was noted that employers must remain actively involved in identifying workforce needs and developing solutions. The discussion also emphasized that industry direction and employer demand should be reflected directly in the Local Plan.

- The Board further discussed the importance of using employer engagement and real-time information, in addition to traditional labor market projections, to identify emerging workforce needs.

Workforce Pipeline and Upskilling

- The Board discussed strategies for increasing participation in the workforce, particularly among dislocated workers and individuals who may require retraining or upskilling.
- Discussion included the use of short-term credentials and other training opportunities to help individuals build upon existing skills without necessarily requiring them to leave the workforce for extended periods. The Board emphasized the need for greater visibility and outreach regarding available workforce programs.
- The discussion also addressed barriers that may affect workforce participation, including housing, childcare, transportation, and the potential loss of supportive benefits as individuals increase their earnings.
- The Board recognized the need to continue evaluating policies and strategies to determine whether they are effectively increasing labor-force participation, educational and training attainment, and wages.

Board Discussion:

- The Board discussed the proposed action to approve the initial two-year Local Plan modifications so that the process could move forward. Several Board members expressed concern about approving modifications that they had not yet had an opportunity to review in their entirety.
- Board members clarified that they were comfortable authorizing the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to continue its work but did not want to approve a final document before receiving and reviewing the completely proposed modifications.
- The Board discussed several options for completing the approval process within the required timeline, including potentially convening a special or Executive Committee meeting. It was noted that the final Local Plan modification must ultimately be approved and submitted to the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions by October 2, 2026.
- The Board also discussed the public-comment process. The proposed modification would be posted for public comment, and comments received would be incorporated into the ongoing review and discussion of the plan. Board members would also have an opportunity to provide comments and recommend changes.
- The Board requested that, when the track-changes document is distributed, an executive summary or brief overview identifying the significant areas of change be provided to assist Board members in their review.

Action

- No motion was made to approve the proposed two-year Local Plan modifications at this time.

- The Board agreed that the Ad Hoc Subcommittee should continue its work on the two-year modification and that the completed draft, including track changes and additional information regarding the technician economy and industry direction, would be provided to the Board for review.
- The Board will determine the appropriate process and timing for final approval so that the Local Plan modification can be completed and submitted within the required deadline.

Next Steps

- Tanya Rowland and the Ad Hoc Subcommittee will continue finalizing the two-year Local Plan modification.
- The complete track-changes version will be distributed to Board members for review.
- An executive summary or overview of significant changes will be considered to assist Board members with their review.
- The proposed modification will proceed through the required public-comment process and public comments will be documented and considered as part of the continued review of the Local Plan.
- The Ad Hoc committee and Board will continue discussions regarding the technician economy, industry direction, sector strategies, and workforce pipeline.
- The final Local Plan modification must be approved and submitted to the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions by October 2, 2026.

Tab 3: Approval of Operational Policy NO. OP – 435, Change 5 - Work Experience - Internship Policy — Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth

- Gabriel Esparza and Maggie Lujan presented the proposed amendments to the WCCNM Work Experience - Internship Policy. Mr. Esparza provided an overview of the recommendations developed by the ad hoc committee. The proposed revisions clarify the purpose of internships as structured, limited-duration work-based learning experiences designed to provide participants with hands-on experience and opportunities to develop occupational and workplace skills.
- The Board discussed the proposed employee-to-intern ratio and the waiver process. The ad hoc committee recommended a 3:1 ratio of regular full-time employees to interns, with a waiver process that could allow a 1:1 ratio for qualifying businesses that demonstrate the ability to provide a meaningful, structured, and high-quality internship experience.
- Discussion included safeguards to prevent internships from being used to replace an employer's regular workforce, while allowing opportunities for small, emerging, rural, or underserved businesses. The Board also discussed worksite monitoring, participant evaluations, training plans, and the need to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy after implementation.
- The Board further discussed establishing a reporting process to evaluate the policy after one year, including the number of waiver requests, approvals, outcomes, and participant and employer experiences. Staff noted that biweekly assessments, training plans, and surveys are currently used to evaluate internship experiences.

Motion: Tracy Hartzler
Second: David Valdes
Discussion: No Discussion
Action: Passed unanimously by Rol Call Vote

Member Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Recusal
Steve Anaya				
Michael Carriere	I			
Karla Causey		I		
Robert Chavez				V
Vaadra Chavez	V			
Troy Clark	V			
Gabriel Esparza	V			
Bobby Getts				
Tracey Hartzler	I			
Justin Hilliard	V			
Antoinette Holmes				
Dr. Kristopher Johnson				
Robert Leming				
Roxanne Luna				
James Magoffe				
Chad Matheson	I			
Lori Anne McBride	I			
John Mierzwa				
Holly Muller				
Debbie Ortiz	V			
Mark Podeyn				I
Stacy Sacco	I			
James Salas	V			
Waldy Salazar	I			
Jerry Schalow				

Member Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Recusal
Tom Schuch				
Jennifer Sinsabaugh				
Elisha Torres-Saavedra				
Raymond Trujillo				
David Valdes	I			
David Vedera	I			

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Service and Training Provider Updates

Tab 4: Chairman's Items

Facilitator: Stacy Sacco, Board Chair
Discussion:

- Chairman Sacco stated that he and Vaadra Chavez will be heading to Washington, DC to attend the Workforce Regional Summit in September to meet with State Legislators to talk about continuing funding.

Tab 5: Workforce Connection Operations Report – July 31, 2026

Due to time allotment this was not discussed. Report was provided in packet.

Tab 6: WCCNM Quarterly Performance Report PY25 Qtr 4

Due to time allotment this was not discussed. Report was provided in packet.

Tab 7: Additional Grant Updates

CBF Grant

Due to time allotment this was not discussed.

H1B Building Career Pathways for Infrastructure Fund Jobs

Due to time allotment this was not discussed.

Informational Updates

Ad Hoc Committee

- WCCNM 2-Year Local Plan Modification Policy Committee

Due to time allotment this was not discussed.

Tab 8: WIOA Monthly Expenditure Report for June 30, 2026

Facilitator: Elena King. WCCNM Accounting Manager
Discussion:

- Ms. King provided the board with the financial numbers for the year. It was noted the figures presented are pre-audit numbers and will be submitted for the appropriate reporting process.
- The primary takeaway was that expenditures remained relatively consistent throughout the year across all programs. Total expenditure for the year were approximately $9.2 million.
- She also noted that BAR 1 budget amendment is being prepared and is anticipated to be presented at the next Board meeting for review and approval. The amendment will include the actual carryover amounts from the current fiscal year. The initial estimate was approximately $1.2 million, but the actual carryover is expected to be approximately $1.5 million or higher.

Tab 9: WIOA Updates Standing Committee Updates

- **Disability Standing Committee – No Update**
- **Finance Standing Committee**

  Ms. Causey Committee Chair welcomed a new member to the board and invited other Board members to participate.
- **Operations Standing Committee**

  Ms. Chavez Committee Chair stated that our committee is also looking for members and if anyone would like to dive deeper on the operations and the specific metrics across the programs, that's really what that committee is focused in on, as well as looking at the, cyclical kind of quality audits that happen, and receiving the reports on the observations, if any, that come out of that.
- **Youth Standing Committee**

  Mr. Esparza Committee Chair welcomed any Board members who may be interested in joining the Youth Standing Committee and encouraged new members to consider participating.

  He introduced himself as the Center Director for the Albuquerque Job Corps Center and shared that he has assumed the role of Chair for the Youth Standing Committee. He noted that the committee provides a valuable opportunity to share information and feedback, particularly because some of the challenges experienced by the Board are similar to those encountered by Job Corps.

He noted and further explained that, as Job Corps operates directly under the U.S. Department of Labor and has transitioned toward additional WIOA-based expectations, participation on the Youth Standing Committee has been a helpful and productive experience.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at: 3:22 pm

Next Meeting

Date	Time	Location
Monday, October 19, 2026	1:30 pm	Mid-Region Council of Governments, 809 Copper Ave. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102

Summary: The table provides the date, time, and location details for the next scheduled meeting.

Approval

Approved at the WCCNM Full Board Meeting held on October 19, 2026

Should you require a signed copy of these minutes, please contact Nicole Giddings at ngiddings@mrcog-nm.gov

Anyone requiring special accommodations please notify the MRCOG office at

247-1750 seven (7) days prior to the meeting

Equal Opportunity Statement
“Equal Opportunity Program”