



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY
OFFICE OF THE LABOR COMMISSIONER
NEVADA STATE APPRENTICESHIP COUNCIL**

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**NEVADA STATE APPRENTICESHIP COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 6, 2026**

Nevada State Apprenticeship Council (NSAC) members present: Chairman Archie Walden, Vice-Chair William Kephart, Steve Ingersoll, Mandi Wilkins, Jordan Krahenbuhl, Samantha Dugan, Elaine Silverstone, and Anna Reynolds.

Also present: Brett Harris, Gregg Ott, and Toni Giddens.

1. Call to Order.

Chairman Walden called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

2. Roll Call and Quorum.

Per direction from Chairman Walden, State Apprenticeship Director Giddens took a roll call and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

3. Verification of Public Posting.

Director Giddens affirmed pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) Section 241.020, the Nevada Open Meeting Law, that the agenda and notice for the meeting were properly posted.

4. Public Comment.

Chairman Walden called for public comment.
Hearing no comment, Chairman Walden closed the initial public comment period.

5. Approval of December 3, 2025 and January 8, 2026 Minutes.

Chairman Walden asked if there was any discussion, hearing none Chair Walden made a motion to approve December 3, 2025 and January 8, 2026 meeting minutes. Jordan Krahenbuhl seconded. The motion carried.

6. Discussion of Upcoming Similar Programs Hearing.

Chairman Walden asked the State Apprenticeship Director to present the Special Hearing information to the Council. Director Giddens informed the Council that a special hearing is scheduled for March 19th, 2026 at 9 AM. Director Giddens confirmed that the notice of hearing has been posted and documents distributed to Council Members. The hearing will include JT Thorpe Engineers, Elevation Practice Partners, and Pye-Barker Fire and Safety. Director Giddens advised members to contact her if they had not received the meeting materials.

7. Minimum Construction Wage.

Chairman Walden introduced discussion regarding the 2026 Minimum Apprentice Construction Wage. Chair Walden stated that the proposed adjustment would increase the minimum wage from \$16.67 per hour to \$17.19 per hour. Chair Walden asked if the Council had any questions, hearing none he called for a motion to approve the wage increase from \$16.67 to \$17.19 per hour. William Kephart seconded the motion. Motion carried.

8. Community Outreach and School District Engagement.

Chairman Walden invited Toni Giddens, State Apprenticeship Director, and Labor Commissioner Brett Harris to provide an update on community outreach efforts and engagement with school districts, as previously discussed by the Council. Director Giddens reported that the Office of the Labor Commissioner has been actively conducting outreach with school districts to strengthen pathways from high school to registered apprenticeship programs. She noted that a Career and Technical Education (CTE) instructor had been invited to provide additional insights on collaboration with schools but was unable to attend due to scheduling changes. Director Giddens shared that strong relationships have been established with Clark County School District (CCSD) and Washoe County School District in support of upcoming apprenticeship career fairs. William Kephart commented that the Council's goal has been to strengthen collaboration with school districts to increase student awareness of apprenticeship opportunities. He explained that feedback indicated that students previously had trouble accessing apprenticeship information online due to school technology restrictions. Director Giddens confirmed that these issues have been identified and that work is underway with Workforce Connections and CCSD to improve accessibility.

9. Agenda Adjustment

Due to technical difficulties preventing representatives from IBEW Local 357 JATC from joining the meeting for the apprentice appeal, Chair Walden proposed temporarily reordering the agenda. Items 9 and 10 were moved later in the agenda to allow time for the parties to join. The Council agreed to proceed with Item 10.

10. New Program – CloudEmpower, LTD.

Chair Walden asked for a representative from CloudEmpower LTD. to present the proposed Apprenticeship Standards. Chris Van Houten was present for CloudEmpower. Mr. Van Houten explained that CloudEmpower is a cloud technology services company that works with Amazon Web Services (AWS) and specializes in

technologies related to customer experience platforms, cloud computing, and generative AI tools. He outlined the structure of the program, with participants first completing an instructor-led training program, lasting approximately 10-12 weeks. The training focuses on developing cloud technology and AWS-related technical skills. He stated that this program is designed to train participants from the ground up. Upon completion, participants would obtain industry-recognized certificates from AWS. Chair Walden asked Mr. Van Houten for clarification regarding program structure, employment and wages. Mr. Van Houten confirmed employment would be with CloudEmpower, assigned to projects contracted by client companies such as Amazon, Capital One, Accenture, and Deloitte. He confirmed that the program would include 4,000 hours of on-the-job training over two years, and that apprentices would have progressive wage increases. Chair Walden asked about recruitment and outreach efforts. Mr. Van Houten stated that CloudEmpower is currently working with the Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribes to establish an initial training cohort in Nevada but stated they would also recruit participants through community colleges and veteran programs. Chair Walden asked the Council if there were any questions. Hearing none, Chair Walden asked for a motion to approve. Mandi Wilkins motioned for approval, with Jordan Krahenbuhl seconding the motion. Motion carried.

11. Apprentice Appeal.

Chair Walden confirmed that Anthony Suggs and Julie-Ann Peeples, representative of the Electrical JATC of Southern Nevada, were present for the hearing. Prior to proceeding, Council Member Kephart asked both parties whether they had any additional information to present beyond the materials already submitted in writing. Ms. Peeples confirmed that the Electrical JATC had no additional information beyond what had already been submitted. Mr. Suggs also indicated that he had no additional documentation or evidence beyond his written appeal.

Council Member Kephart reviewed several points from Mr. Suggs' written appeal, including his statement requesting reconsideration due to his belief that he had not received sufficient training or guidance to meet program expectations and that he would like the opportunity to continue in the program under an improvement plan. Mr. Suggs clarified that his main concern was that he needed additional tutoring and support to pass required examinations, and that he wished to continue pursuing the opportunity to complete the program. Council Member Kephart asked Ms. Peeples whether the testing and evaluation standards applied to Mr. Suggs were the same standards applied to all apprentices in the program. Ms. Peeples confirmed that all apprentices are subject to the same testing procedures and requirements, and that no different standards were applied to Mr. Suggs. In accordance with the procedures outlined in NAC 610, State Apprenticeship Director Toni Giddens reminded the Council that the apprentice must first be allowed to present their appeal.

Chair Walden then invited Mr. Suggs to present his case for reinstatement.

Mr. Suggs stated that he believed he could have successfully passed the required test if he had received additional tutoring. He explained that he was advised not to take the final test and that failing the test ultimately led to his dismissal from the program. He expressed that he would like another opportunity to continue with the apprenticeship. Chair Walden noted that he had reviewed the documentation submitted by both parties and stated that the dismissal appeared to involve multiple issues, including maintaining

the required grade point average in related instruction and documented work performance concerns. Chair Walden noted that the apprentice had previously appealed the dismissal to the training trust, which upheld the decision to remove him from the program.

Ms. Peeples confirmed that the Electrical JATC followed its established policies and procedures in addressing the matter and in making the decision to terminate the apprenticeship agreement.

Before the Council acted, Labor Commissioner Brett Harris clarified the legal standard governing appeals before the Council. Commissioner Harris stated that the Council may overturn a program's decision only if evidence demonstrates that the decision was arbitrary or capricious, or based on erroneous conclusions of law.

Chair Walden called for a motion to deny the appeal of Anthony Suggs and uphold the decision of the Electrical JATC Local 357 to terminate the apprenticeship agreement.

William Kephart motioned, with a second by Jordan Krahenbuhl. Motion carried.

12. Apprentice Appeal.

Chairman Walden asked for Ebenezer Yeko to confirm his presence. Mr. Yeko confirmed he was present and ready to proceed. Chair Walden stated that Mr. Yeko had been removed from the Electrical JATC of Southern Nevada apprenticeship program and the Council had received the written materials related to his appeal. Mr. Yeko was invited to present his appeal. Mr. Yeko began by providing background information about himself, explaining that he is a military veteran. He explained that he entered the apprenticeship pathway through the Veterans Electrical Entry Program (VEEP), previously known as Helmets to Hardhats, and was accepted into the Electrical JATC program as a second-year apprentice. Mr. Yeko stated that entering directly as a second-year apprentice created a learning curve for him, as he had not completed the full first-year orientation process alongside a typical class of apprentices. He indicated that his initial orientation was conducted privately with the former training director and that some information about program procedures was learned informally while working on job sites. Mr. Yeko explained that early in his apprenticeship he received violations related to attendance and reporting procedures, specifically regarding the requirement that apprentices notify the JATC directly when absent from work. He stated that, based on information he received from jobsite supervisors and foremen, he believed notifying his employer was sufficient and did not initially understand that notification to the JATC was also required. Mr. Yeko explained the issues that contributed to attendance violations and academic difficulties, ultimately affecting his required grade point average. Chair Walden then invited Julie-Ann Peeples, representative of IBEW Local 357 JATC, to respond. Ms. Peeples stated that all apprentices receive a policy handbook and program documentation during orientation, and apprentices sign documentation acknowledging receipt of these materials. She noted that while Mr. Yeko's orientation may have been conducted individually, the policies and expectations remain the same for all apprentices. She stated that program policies and procedures regarding attendance, documentation, and academic performance were followed in accordance with established guidelines. Chair Walden confirmed that documentation in the file showed that Mr. Yeko signed an acknowledgment on April 22, 2024, confirming receipt of multiple program documents, including a Committee Policy Book, General Policies and Procedures, Drug Misuse and Abuse Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, and Registered Apprenticeship Standards. Mr. Yeko confirmed that he had signed the document acknowledging receipt of those

materials. Chair Walden further confirmed with Ms. Peeples that Mr. Yeko's academic performance fell below the required 75% standard multiple times, and that the program provided him an opportunity to repeat the second year of the program, which he was unable to successfully complete. Ms. Peeples confirmed both statements. Chair Walden reiterated the standard referenced earlier in the meeting and outlined in **NAC 610.460**, which states that the State Apprenticeship Council may not overturn the decision of a joint apprenticeship committee unless the dismissal was arbitrary or capricious, or based on erroneous conclusions of law. Chair Walden indicated that while the Council understood the circumstances described by Mr. Yeko, the information presented did not demonstrate that the program's decision met the criteria required for reversal. Chair Walden called for a motion to uphold the decision of the IBEW JATC of Southern Nevada and deny the appeal. William Kephart motioned, with a second by Samantha Dugan. Motion carried.

13. Labor Commissioner Report.

Chair Walden invited Labor Commissioner Harris to present her report. Commissioner Harris reported that the Apprenticeship Utilization Act (AUA) reporting period closed on February 17, 2026. The reporting deadline typically falls on February 15; however, because February 15 fell on a Sunday and February 16 was a holiday, the reporting period was extended to February 17. Commissioner Harris provided the following reporting statistics:

- 853 AUA reports received
- 624 reports have been reviewed and closed as compliant
- 229 reports are currently under investigation
- 516 contractors did not submit required AUA reports

Commissioner Harris stated that while the number of non-reporting contractors was not ideal, it was not unexpected. She explained that during the previous reporting period the reporting portal had been reopened to provide contractors with an additional opportunity to submit reports; however, that exception was not extended this year. Commissioner Harris noted that contractors who failed to report may face a \$10,000 administrative fine, or disqualification from bidding on applicable public works projects, as outlined in statute.

Commissioner Harris also discussed the upcoming Office of the Labor Commissioner Apprenticeship No Debt Career Fairs, encouraging apprenticeship programs to participate as exhibitors. She reported that the events will take place during National Apprenticeship Week (April 26 to May 2, 2026), April 28, 2026 – Southern Nevada at the Culinary Academy of Las Vegas, and May 1, 2026 – Northern Nevada at Truckee Meadows Community College. Commissioner Harris stated that outreach efforts have included schools, workforce partners, legislators, the Governor's Office, and media outlets to promote strong attendance. She emphasized the importance of apprenticeship programs participating to showcase career opportunities that allow individuals to earn while they learn without incurring significant student debt.

Commissioner Harris also reminded Council members that if they are unable to attend an Apprenticeship Council meeting, they should notify staff in advance so that arrangements can be made to ensure a quorum. Commissioner Harris referenced NAC 610.461(7), which requires an apprentice appealing a

dismissal to present evidence that the dismissal was arbitrary or capricious, or based on erroneous conclusions of law.

She suggested that the Council may want to consider developing additional regulatory language requiring apprentices to submit documentation prior to the hearing that clearly identifies how the program's decision meets that threshold. Commissioner Harris explained that a similar standard is used in wage claim objections under the Labor Commissioner's jurisdiction, where objections must demonstrate merit before proceeding to hearing. Commissioner Harris offered to work with the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) to draft potential regulatory language for the Council's consideration. She suggested the topic could be brought forward at a future meeting as part of the Council's ongoing regulatory discussions.

Chair Walden expressed support for the idea and stated that clearer requirements for documentation could help focus appeals on the relevant legal standard and improve the efficiency of hearings.

14. State Apprenticeship Director Report.

Chairman Walden invited State Apprenticeship Director Giddens to present her report. Director Giddens reported the following apprenticeship statistics for the State of Nevada through January of 2026:

- 73 Registered Apprenticeship Programs
- 761 Active Employers
- 8,173 Active Apprentices
- 255 Apprentices completed training programs between November 2025 and January 2026

Director Giddens also addressed the issue of out-of-state apprentices working in Nevada. She requested that apprenticeship programs notify the State Apprenticeship Office when out-of-state apprentices are brought in for projects. This information is necessary for Public Works Projects (PWP), as out-of-state apprentices may work under reciprocity for up to six months. If the work extends beyond six months, the apprentice must be transferred into a Nevada registered apprenticeship program. Director Giddens also stated that proper documentation is necessary for accurate Apprenticeship Utilization Act (AUA) reporting. Director Giddens reiterated that National Apprenticeship Week will be observed April 26 through May 2, 2026, and encouraged apprenticeship programs and partners to submit official proclamations recognizing the week. Proclamations can be submitted through Apprenticeship.gov. Director Giddens posted the link in the chat for attendees.

15. Future Agenda Items.

Chair Walden asked for any discussion on future agenda items. Hearing none, Chair Walden closed this item.

16. Public Comment.

Chairman Walden called for public comment. Hearing no public comment Chair Walden closed this public comment period.

17. Adjournment.

Chairman Walden adjourned the meeting at 10:25 AM.