



**LANE WORKFORCE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING**

**Thursday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**11:30am – 1:00pm**

**MINUTES**

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**In Attendance:** Jeff Graham, Solomon Harris, Shondra Holliday, John Stapleton  
Lyndsie Leech, Dana Merryday, Michelle Webber  
**Absent:** Jennifer Adams, David Loveall  
**Staff:** Ashley Espinoza, Tiffany Cink, Anne Nestell, Stephanie Loveall

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<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Motion</b>	<b>Seconded</b>	<b>Status</b>
Approve Executive Board Meeting Minutes, April 18, 2024	Michelle Webber	Lyndsie Leech	Approved
Adopt the PY 2024/2025 General Operating Budget	Solomon Harris	Lyndsie Leech	Approved

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Shondra Holliday called the meeting to order.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**III. CONSENT CALENDAR**

Michelle Webber made a motion to approve the April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Executive Board meeting minutes. Lyndsie Leech seconded, and the motion was approved.

**IV. PROGRAM YEAR 2024 – 2025 BUDGET**

Tiffany Cink provided an overview of the 2024 – 2025 budget, noting a decrease in revenue largely due to the second-year funding status of State of Oregon programs and the conclusion of the Good Jobs Driving Prosperity program. Despite this, the Good Jobs Program has demonstrated success and established a proven system, positioning the organization to seek additional funding.

Total expenses have decreased in response to the revenue decline. The Reserve for Future Expenditures has also decreased due to fewer programs continuing into the next year. Personnel Services account for 18.7% of annual expenses and Materials and Supplies make up 5.4%. Community Investments, which directly support workforce services for Lane County residents, represent 75.9% of total expenses.

The budget remains focused on core workforce services, including one-stop operations, the Lane County Health and Human Services contract, and the youth services contract with Connected Lane County. New funding sources such as the QUEST healthcare training grant and the reentry program with the Oregon Workforce Partnership were also discussed.

Solomon Harris made a motion to adopt the General Operating Budget for Program Year 2024 – 2025 as presented. Lyndsie Leech seconded, and the motion was approved.

## V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ashley Espinoza reintroduced herself to the board, sharing her personal journey of overcoming challenges to achieve success. She emphasized the importance of understanding decision-making processes and operational methods and highlighted her commitment to empowering others. She also shared the importance of recognizing challenges that may be overlooked within the current system.

**Role of the local Workforce Development Board:** Oregon's local Workforce Development Boards are designated by the Governor and legislature to coordinate regional workforce development resources and programs, and convene diverse local perspectives including businesses, labor, community organizations, public agencies, education, and economic development organizations to address regional workforce challenges and opportunities.

### Highlights of Ms. Espinoza's Report:

- Socialize and Promote Strategic Plan
  - Engaging stakeholders and promoting awareness of our strategic initiatives for sustainable growth and impact.
  - Equipping board members with necessary skills, knowledge, and insights to fulfill their roles effectively.
  - Established two board committees: Workforce Services Operations and Community Engagement.
  - Conducting operational bridge planning with LWP and CEDO staff next week.
  - Scheduled a joint retreat with LCC leadership for June 17<sup>th</sup>, followed by outreach to chambers, LCOG, etc., to demonstrate alignment and collaboration with the region's training provider.
  - Benefits Navigator Consortia: Establishing a consortium of Lane County organizations that provide benefits navigation services, aiming to adopt and integrate referral technology for better service provision across the county.

- **Operationalizing Agreements**
  - Defining clear roles and responsibilities.
  - Strengthening partnerships to maximize funding efficiency and impact.
  
- **Responsive Service Providers**
  - Ensuring services evolve with the needs of individuals and businesses;
  - Championing systemic improvements for a more effective public workforce system.
  
- **Challenges**
  - Adopting a multi-faceted approach, including policy interventions, support for childcare and eldercare, mental health services, job training programs, and initiatives to improve job quality and wages.
  - Continuing to educate federal elected officials about the importance of WIOA reauthorization and the impacts of potential changes.
  - Addressing labor demands and trends, social and systemic barriers, training facilities and trainers, employer expectations, and occupational segregation.
  
- **Awareness Building**
  - Promoting program and event visibility to enhance brand and resource recognition.
  - Recent programs and events included: Oregon Coastal Caucus Summit, Oregon Talent summit, Oregon Association of Education Service Districts, 2024 State of Business Program (Springfield Chamber of Commerce), Travel and Industry Convening (Travel Lane County), NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner, and the BRAVA Event.

*Discussion:* John Stapleton attended the spring conference for the Oregon Association of Education Service Districts and shared an update on Constructing a Brighter Future, the combined school to work pipeline project, initially focused on the construction aggregate sector. Early efforts to achieve effective engagement were unsuccessful due to an agency-first hierarchical approach that failed to engage the industry. In response, we shifted to a values-first, collective impact model, incorporating student feedback and future workforce needs. This shift significantly improved engagement and enrollment.

The construction-aggregate sector was selected for its job opportunities and multiple entry points. After consulting with housing specialists, transitional housing was identified as a critical need. There is not a physical thing for a person to transition into when they are getting off the streets. This project avoided creating student enterprises that would compete with potential employers, a common pitfall in similar programs. Detailed planning and metrics were established, starting with fire recovery efforts up the McKenzie, progressing to transitional shelter units, and now, the 4J School District is moving towards full-scale housing construction. This provides students with a comprehensive skill ladder, from basic employability skills to professional trades, ensuring job readiness upon graduation. The program, which began with three high schools in Lane County, has now expanded statewide, involving over 3,000 students.

The program's design is adaptable to other pathways, such as manufacturing and EMS, supported by a robust methodology. The ESD network serves as the portal for this work, as tackling individual districts one at a time has proven ineffective. The regional ESD network, Oregon Community Housing, and the Oregon Department of Education are all involved in this project. Our workforce board plays a key role, addressing barriers as they arise and serving as a flexible gap filler.

Mr. Stapleton highlighted two key takeaways: Lane Workforce Partnership's effectiveness in supporting innovative school-to-work pipelines and the importance of integrating students into a collective impact space for work readiness. He emphasized the R & D focus on outcomes over products, noting that purchasing transitional shelters from a national vendor costs upwards of \$30,000 each while the ones being built by students cost \$4,300 each.

Looking ahead, we want to explore other sectors, such as healthcare. Southern Oregon has successfully integrated youth (ages 16 and up) into health care settings, and John expressed interest in piloting a similar initiative. He plans to reach out to Shondra Holliday to discuss this further.

## **VI. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER UPDATES**

- Solomon Harris: No additional updates.
- Dana Merryday: No additional updates.
- Jeff Graham:
  - Implementing a \$7M capital investment in a new refrigeration project, set for installation in September/October.
  - Participated in the Job Fair held at Spark at Booth-Kelly, highlighting the need for us to consider seasonal/temporary/part-time options.
- Lyndsie Leech:
  - WellMama is excited to announce hiring for two positions: a bilingual Traditional Health Worker/Peer Support Specialist to assist with rural expansion programs, and an Administrative and Development Assistant.
  - WellMama has received a Community Health Council Grant aimed at expanding services in rural areas, with a particular focus on supporting Spanish-speaking families.
- Michelle Webber:
  - Attended the 2024 State of Business Program organized by the Springfield Chamber of Commerce, where the economist did a wonderful job of presenting the data.
- John Stapleton:
  - Lane ESD with LWP support has applied for a resiliency grant to support the EMS pathway model. Due to the high demand and difficulty in hiring firefighters and EMS crews, they are often recruited from each other. If awarded, this funding will be used to establish resiliency hubs that integrate with the EMS training process. This sustainability grant aims to create agencies with resiliency hubs capable of housing EMS training programs.

- Additionally, LWP is supporting UO, Lane ESD, 4J School District, and Connected Lane County to explore a larger grant focused on integrating SPED students into applied learning programs. This initiative will provide alternative career pathways for students on Individual Education Programs (IEPs), enabling them to access productive and good careers. Securing these two grants will significantly strengthen our school-to-work pipeline.
- Shondra Holliday:
  - The issues surrounding Optum/Oregon Medical Group's non-compete contract clauses have been significant and ongoing. Optum faced criticism for its use of non-compete agreements, which restricted clinicians from working for other local healthcare providers after leaving the Oregon Medical Group. In response to mounting pressure and the Federal Trade Commission's proposed ban on most non-compete agreements, Optum/Oregon Medical Group representatives said they are letting clinicians know that they will not be enforcing non-compete contract clauses, allowing clinicians more freedom to seek employment opportunities without restriction. Additionally, the representatives said that prescription medication refill requests will continue to be managed and granted by the OMG clinic.
  - Provided an update on the collaboration with CEDO for the Oregon Talent Concierge program, which aims to support the employment of spouses/partners of new hires. The program's goal is to connect these individuals with job opportunities more quickly, with CEDO serving as the central hub and engaging various sectors. Additionally, a career center will be added to the Lane County Medical Society's website to list available job opportunities. John Stapleton suggested he and Shondra should discuss housing solutions, mentioning that he knows a few developers considering reserve blocks for employers, offering short and medium-term leases to assist individuals while they search for homes in the area.

## **VII. OTHER BUSINESS**

No additional matters were recorded.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Shondra Holliday adjourned the meeting.