



**LANE WORKFORCE BOARD MEETING**  
**Thursday, September 25, 2025**  
**3:00PM – 5:00PM**

**MINUTES**

**In Attendance:** Julie Davidson, Billy Dover, Jeff Graham, Courtney Griesel, Bettina Hannigan, Dave Heavirland, Phil Hohnstein, Laura Luther, Bailey McEuen, Jeff McGillivray, Chelsea Miller, Stan Pickett, Matt Sayre, John Stapleton, Tandy Sturgeon, Shelley Tinkham, Steve Yamamori

**Absent:** Jennifer Adams, Solomon Harris, Shondra Holliday, Lynn McDonald, Charlene Vermilyea

**Board Staff:** Ashley Espinoza, Anne Nestell, Tiffany Cink, Cindy Perry, Stephanie Lovell, Ryan Kounovsky, Jesse Quinn

**Others:** Jessica Ericta, Codi Seitz, Sue Sierralupe, Bobbie Risner, Bridget Wolf, Hailey Johnston, Kat Kilbourn, Yazzie Chee, Nicole Matthews, Chelsea Irvine

**APPROVALS**

Recommendation	Motion	Seconded	Status
Approve Full Board Meeting Minutes (May 22, 2025)	Matt Sayre	Jeff Graham	Unanimous Approval
Amendment to Minutes: Shelley Tinkham requested to reopen the minutes to make two corrections to her Board report-out from the May 22, 2025 meeting: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Medical Assisting Program: Lane Community College has redesigned its Medical Assisting program to shorten the time to completion following a programmatic review.</li> <li>2) LEAP: This long-standing tuition-free opportunity for high school students has now been officially branded. Beginning in fall 2025, high school juniors and seniors in Lane County make take two courses, tuition free, through the LEAP Program.</li> </ol>	Courtney Griesel	Dave Heavirland	Unanimous Approval

## **I. CALL TO ORDER and INTRODUCTIONS**

Stan Pickett called the meeting to order.

## **II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments were received.

## **III. PARTNER SPOTLIGHT**

Board members and service providers participated in an interactive session designed to strengthen collaboration and mutual understanding.

- Board Member Reflections: Several board members expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage directly with service providers, noting that the conversations were informative and fostered stronger connections. Highlighted the value of this format as a way to encourage dialogue and collaboration during meetings.
- Service Provider Reflections: Providers shared that the session was beneficial, allowing them to connect personally with board members and identify potential avenues for future communication and collaboration. Discussions helped build new relationships that could lead to ongoing engagement beyond the meeting.

## **IV. CONSENT CALENDAR**

Matt Sayre moved to approve the May 22, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes. Jeff Graham seconded, and the motion was approved.

## **V. LWP YEAR-END PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Presenter: Ryan Kounovsky

Ryan Kounovsky presented an overview of the streamlined format for this year's annual report, noting that the intent was to make information more accessible and visually engaging. The new approach prioritizes concise text, data visualization, and simplified summaries in place of lengthy narrative reports.

### **Strategic Plan Progress (FY 2024–2028)**

Ryan reviewed the Strategic Plan (page 18 of the packet), highlighting key achievements and ongoing efforts:

- Plan Overview: The plan runs through 2028 and LWP has already achieved or exceeded many early-year targets.
- Community Engagement: Under the leadership of Jesse Quinn, LWP has increased social media engagement across Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Metrics include higher platform impressions and more earned media coverage (e.g., news features and interviews).
- Classroom Engagements: FY 2024–25 served as the baseline year, with approximately 30 classroom engagements. The goal is to increase this by 10% annually (adding approximately three new classroom presentations per year) to strengthen connections between industry and students.
- Youth Workforce Participation: Data shows a slight decline in employment among ages 16 – 19, but a significant increase among ages 20 – 24. LWP continues to work with youth providers to expand access to first-time job opportunities and early career experiences.

- **Public Reporting and Transparency:** LWP will continue to produce reports and is developing a public-facing dashboard to display live data on program impact, funding allocations, and participant demographics.
- **Website Update:** LWP has migrated to a new WordPress platform that will support enhanced visuals and video integration. The redesigned website and dashboard are forthcoming.
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** KPIs have been linked to each strategic pillar. These will evolve as data collection and outcomes mature.

### **Sector and Rural Progress**

- **Industry Sector Partnerships:** LWP has achieved 100% activation of targeted sector partnerships. The Healthcare Sector Partnership, launched last week, completed this goal. Appreciation was expressed to Collaborative EDO (CEDO) for leading sector engagement.
- **Rural Outreach:** The Bridge Lane initiative continues to ensure full representation of rural communities in workforce programming and Benefits Navigator access.

### **Equity and Economic Opportunity**

Ryan noted that targeted industries are seeing measurable increases in the participation of people of color, notably within manufacturing, where workforce diversity is up approximately 33%. With Lane County's non-white population just over 11%, LWP is working to expand equitable access to high-wage opportunities.

### **Investment Overview**

Referring to pages 19 - 20 of the packet, Ryan summarized how LWP's discretionary and partner-aligned funds were allocated:

- **WIOA Programs:** Federal funding continues to support adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs, including healthcare training through QUEST.
- **Industry Engagement & Sector Strategy Funds:** Includes U.S. Department of Labor funded hospitality initiatives on the Oregon Coast and ongoing CEDO led engagement.
- **Other Funded Programs:** Notable initiatives include Future Ready Oregon, Nurturely, Benefits Navigator, and Team Oregon Build. Future Ready Oregon's conclusion this year marks the end of a significant funding stream that enabled several innovative pilots.
- **State of Oregon Funds:** General state funds continue to support workforce services across the region.

### **Program Impact Highlights**

- **Sector Engagements:** Updated definitions will clarify that "engagements" reflect meaningful, two-way conversations with businesses to identify workforce needs and solutions.
- **WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker Services:** The final year under Lane County H&HS showed performance on negotiated metrics related to employment, credential attainment, and wage outcomes. LWP's economic impact analysis demonstrates a high return on investment, as re-employed participants generate tax and wage contributions to the community.
- **WIOA Youth Services:** Although the direct ROI is lower than adult programs, the youth impact remains significant in preventing long-term disengagement and building early workforce participation.
- **System-Wide Impact:** Across all workforce partners (LWP, OED, DHS, LCC, Vocational Rehabilitation, and WIOA providers) approximately 13,000 individuals were served. Collectively, this generated roughly \$40 million in economic value, with participants earning an average wage of \$21 per hour upon re-employment.

Ryan concluded by reaffirming that this report reflects Year One of a four-year plan, emphasizing continued focus on measurable outcomes, community transparency, and collaborative progress toward high-wage, equitable employment across Lane County.

During discussion of the Year-End Performance Report, Courtney Griesel noted that while the report primarily highlights outcomes related to individuals served, it is equally important to recognize the broader impact of employer engagement. She observed that employers function as customers as well, and interactions with them can influence the economic wellbeing of large employee populations.

Courtney emphasized that when LWP partners with an employer, such as a business with 400 employees, the impact extends beyond direct job placements. These engagements often support initiatives such as employee retraining, upskilling, or wage growth, all of which contribute to overall economic vitality.

She suggested that future reporting could incorporate metrics to capture this employer-focused impact, recognizing the value of these partnerships in strengthening both the workforce and local businesses.

## **VI. AMENDMENT TO MAY 22, 2025, FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Shelley Tinkham requested to reopen the minutes to make two corrections to her Board report-out from the May 22, 2025, meeting:

1. Medical Assisting Program: Lane Community College has redesigned its Medical Assisting program to shorten the time to completion following a programmatic review.
2. LEAP Program: This long-standing tuition-free opportunity for high school students has now been officially branded. Beginning in fall 2025, high school juniors and seniors in Lane County may take two courses, tuition-free, through the LEAP Program.

Courtney Griesel moved to approve the amended May 22, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes. Dave Heavirland seconded, and the motion was approved.

## **VII. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Ashley Espinoza presented the Chair's Report in Solomon Harris's absence. Ashley noted that a summary of the meetings (Lane Workforce Council, Executive Board, and Full Board) can be found through the link included in the board packet as well as on our website.

She highlighted two key updates from the last Lane Workforce Council meeting:

- New Lane Workforce Council Representative: Commissioner Heather Buck has been appointed to the Lane Workforce Council and will also serve as Chair of the Lane Workforce Council.
- New Labor Representative: Tandy Sturgeon has been appointed as a new labor representative on the Lane Workforce Partnership Board of Directors. Three labor representatives are required for compliance, and this appointment brings the LWP Board of Directors into full compliance with membership requirements.

## VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ashley Espinoza provided the Executive Director's Report and shared that the communication document is intended to help keep the Executive Director's report brief while giving the Board updates on organizational progress and community impact.

- **Board Buddy Program:** Early input from board members has been valuable. Feedback collected through these meetings will be compiled and reviewed by the LWP team to enhance future board meeting materials and engagement. She thanked board members for their participation.
- **National Engagement:** Ashley reported on her attendance at the National Association of Workforce Development Professional (NAWDP) Business Services Academy, where she connected with national peers, including Grant Associates, LWP's new adult service provider. She noted that Grant Associates has been collaborative and supportive as they establish operations in Lane County. The NAWDP conference provided valuable opportunities for networking and knowledge-sharing across regions.
- **State and Systemwide Workforce Efforts:** Noted the committee work underway at the state level focused on public workforce system modernization, thanking Julie Davidson and other LWP team members for their active participation in shaping reform efforts and representing Lane County's perspective.
- **Community Recognition and Outreach:** Shared that LWP submitted five nominations for the annual 20 Under 40 Awards; three were selected: Dre Charles (NAACP), Alyssa Dodds (Willamette High School), and Henry Fields (Oregon Employment Department. Ashley also highlighted LWP's proactive outreach through the State of the Workforce roadshows, presenting to chambers, Rotary Clubs, LCOG Board and others, emphasizing that these efforts have generated strong community engagement and partnership interest.
- **Sector Partnership Updates:** Celebrated the successful launch of the Healthcare Sector Partnership, with over 80 attendees at Lane Community College. She thanked Ryan Kounovsky and Jesse Quinn for their leadership and facilitation. She also noted that the Transportation Sector Partnership has also reconvened. LWP's internal capacity to facilitate these meetings will save costs and improve efficiency, eliminating the need for outside facilitators.
- **September Appreciation Month:** September marks Workforce Development Professionals appreciation month – started 20 years ago with the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals. Ashley, along with LWP staff and John Stapleton, visited service providers to deliver small thank-you gifts (bundt cakes) and express gratitude for their partnership. She also recognized Hispanic Heritage Month, noting the importance of representation and leadership diversity in the workforce system. 30% of the U.S. is Latino and only 1% of executives are Latino.
- **Federal and Legislative Updates:**
  - Looking at the expansion of the Pell Grants and apprenticeships. LWP as a team have been meeting with Boli and partners to figure out how do we do apprenticeships beyond the trades. The new director of apprenticeships with Boli did say that not every sector is appropriate for an apprenticeship program.
  - The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) has not been reauthorized yet. There was discussion on different scenarios that could potentially happen and the need to continue to monitor these developments closely. LWP is being conservative in those places where we can be.

- The state legislative session starts in January 2026. LWP will continue to participate in OWP's advocacy efforts and is planning legislative tours to strengthen relationships with policymakers. Recently, Representative Lisa Fragala toured the WorkSource Lane center, which provided an opportunity to showcase local impact and discuss ongoing priorities related to workforce.
- **Events and Upcoming Engagements:**
  - WORKing Together Conference: Invited board members to attend the upcoming WORKing Together Conference, scheduled for October 15 – 16 in Salem, with a Board and Elected Official Reception on October 14<sup>th</sup>. She encouraged attendance at the reception even if board members are not able to attend the conference.
  - Reminded board members to stay connected through LWP's newsletter and social media channels and encouraged participation on the LWP board committees.

## IX. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

**Workforce Services Operations Committee:** Julie Davidson reported that the Workforce Services Committee has been on a short hiatus since the spring proposals. Ryan and Julie have been discussing new topics and objectives for the group. Ideas include:

- Bringing board members more directly into service delivery. For example, participating in workshops at the center and talking with job seekers about what it is like to work in healthcare, local government, other industries, etc.
- Identifying issues board members see in their own work that could be brought into committee discussions.

The committee will kick off again at the start of the year with these new objectives. With LWP serving as the One-Stop Operator and Grant Associates as our new adult provider, there are more opportunities for the board to shape service delivery.

**Community Engagement Committee:** John Stapleton reported that the committee has been making strong progress, particularly in aligning communications around the K – 12 pipeline development. Partnerships with CTE providers and schools has been excellent – schools are welcoming us in to help build meaningful work-based learning experiences, train staff, and support apprenticeships through Lane Community College. We are building bridges so students leave high school with clear plans for what comes next, whether that is college, training, or work. John encouraged board members to join the committee.

Jesse Quinn shared the latest metrics which can be found in the board communication document. Highlights include:

- Strategic Plan Goal: Reach 6,400 followers by 2028. As of today, we are already at 4,300.
- Newsletter: Now at 940 subscribers, up significantly in the last few quarters.
- Social Media: Averaging about 55,000 impressions per quarter, with Facebook as our largest channel, followed by LinkedIn.

Jesse noted that the Community Engagement Committee has expanded beyond board members to include representatives from Lane ESD, Collaborative EDO, PIVOT Architecture, and others.

## X. BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

- Billy Dover (Ireland Trucking):
  - Provided an update on the Transportation Sector Partnership, noting ongoing challenges with industry participation. Despite the large number of transportation-related businesses in Lane County, estimated at 500 to 600 companies, attendance at sector meetings remains low, with approximately 10 employers regularly participating. Billy shared that the sector currently engages primarily with 2–3 of the 32 transportation-related vocations, indicating an opportunity to broaden representation and participation across additional occupations. He emphasized that the team will be exploring strategies to increase employer engagement and expand the sector’s reach within the broader transportation industry.
  
- Dave Heavirland (Veterans Representative):
  - Shared that he will continue serving on the Lane Workforce Partnership Board as a Veterans Representative, noting that he is no longer representing the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. He expressed appreciation to the Board for supporting his continued membership and reaffirmed his commitment to contributing as a subject matter expert in veterans’ employment and workforce development.
  - Thanked board members and partner organizations who participated in the recent Lane County Stand Down event, emphasizing the importance of their presence and support for veterans in the community.
  - Noted his appreciation for the Board Buddy Program, highlighting the value of engaging in one-on-one conversations outside of formal board meetings.
  
- Laura Luther (Lane County):
  - Provided an overview of the Lane County Policy Lab, a strategic partnership between Lane County and the Institute for Policy Research and Engagement (IPRE)/Planning, Public Policy, and Management (PPPM) program at the University of Oregon. This collaboration represents an advancement in local government policy research, designed to leverage the skills and talent of university students to support data-driven decision-making within Lane County. Through Capstone projects, students gain valuable real-world experience while assisting the County in assessing and addressing policy challenges. Laura invited board members and partner organizations to reach out if their agencies are interested in partnering with the Policy Lab on future projects.
  
- Bailey McEuen (Homes for Good):
  - Lazy Days (Blue River/Holiday Farm Fire Recovery): The property is near full lease-up. A barbeque celebration is planned at Lazy Days to mark this milestone.
  - Bridges on Broadway (599 E. Broadway, Eugene): Leasing has begun at this newly converted supportive housing community (former Red Lion Hotel). The project provides stability, rental assistance, and comprehensive support services. Eligibility: tenants must be currently and chronically homeless and have a disabling condition.
  - Organizational Update: Homes for Good FY2026 budget and new contract were ratified by the Homes for Good Board.

John Stapleton thanked Homes for Good, noting a Lane County-Homes for Good grant that engaged students countywide to construct storage units for the Lazy Days project, providing hands-on construction experience and community service.

Dave Heavirland also thanked Homes for Good for its contributions in support of the veteran's population.

- John Stapleton (PIVOT Architecture):
  - Reported that after nearly 10 years of focused work, we are now seeing measurable progress in preparing youth for employment and community college entry. Noted that while schools were already doing pretty well in preparing youth for college, new efforts are emphasizing industry involvement in developing career and technical education (CTE) programs. Highlighted the importance of connecting students with employment opportunities while still in high school, as they are more difficult to reach once they graduate.
  - Commended the Education Service District (ESD) and LWP for building stronger partnerships that are increasing employer engagement and demonstrating clear benefits for both students and businesses. Shared an example of success: Eugene 4J School District is one of our key educational partners in this work. The 4J FutureBuild students built a free clinic for individuals transitioning from homelessness at Everyone Village, as well as constructing recovery village units for sheltering unhoused individuals recovering from serious injury. Emphasized that this collaboration illustrates the power of education, workforce, and industry systems working together to solve community challenges while providing real-world experience for students.
  
- Chelsea Miller (Vocational Rehabilitation):
  - Talked about the impact to the Order of Selection process. Explained that an exception process is in place for individuals who are currently employed and need services to maintain employment. These cases are vetted individually to bypass the waitlist and receive limited, job-sustaining services only.
  - Youth services continue with two local counselors assigned to various school districts. For the schools that are not contracted with us, we do have a staff member providing resource connections and online job clubs, etc.
  - Shared that statewide regional trainings are underway to refocus on foundational program goals, key performance measures, and data accuracy to ensure outcomes reflect the actual work being done.
  - Mentioned that branch managers across Oregon are working with national quality assurance specialists to implement new strategies for improving local accountability and budget management.
  - Announced that a new Workforce Business Coordinator will soon be appointed. This individual will serve Lane County and ten additional counties, creating an opportunity for enhanced collaboration and closer partnerships with local employers.
  - Described ongoing efforts to strengthen Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) partnerships and expand job training opportunities, ensuring smoother coordination between VR staff and job development providers who handle job applications, interview preparation, placement, etc.
  - Oregon Developmental Disability Services (ODDS) has made an exception allowing them to fund initial job development and coaching, complementing VR's traditional services. This collaboration ensures applicable individuals on the VR

waitlist can still access initial employment support while long-term services transition to Medicaid-related coaching. It has been a learning curve with our job developers adapting to ODDS contractors.

- Phil Hohnstein (Hillside Heights):
  - Reported that the organization continues to thrive as an educational facility, hosting clinicals for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) and nursing programs.
  - Expressed appreciation to Lane Community College for maintaining a strong and collaborative partnership.
  - Shared that following a meeting with the company's CEO in July, a succession plan has been developed. Phil plans to step down as Administrator in February/March 2026 and transition into a special projects role.
  - Upcoming and Ongoing Projects:
    - Internal recruiting success: Nine CNAs have entered nursing programs; five are now working as LPNs and the other four passed their RN exams with two remaining with the organization and two transitioned to hospital positions. Two additional CNAs recently became LPNs, and three LPNs enrolled in RN programs have joined Hillside Heights staff.
    - Retention Program Development: a new employee retention initiative will be designed to improve retention rates (currently approximately 5%).
    - Community Service Initiative: Planning to launch a community service project to encourage staff participation in local volunteer efforts. Recently participated in the 15<sup>th</sup> Night Giveback event, with eight staff members volunteering – an experience that was highly positive and well received.
    - Provider Trauma Care and Resilience Training: Developing a program focused on trauma-informed care and resilience-building for caregivers who have experienced trauma, supporting both professional well-being and patient care.
  
- Shelley Tinkham (Lane Community College):
  - Announced that Dr. Stephanie Bulger, President of Lane Community College has been appointed to serve on the National Commission on Workforce Readiness, part of the American Association of Community Colleges' Commission on Economic and Workforce Development. This national appointment strengthens LCC's connection to peers across the country who are advancing workforce readiness and innovation in higher education.
  - Noted that relevance in higher education is being questioned by the public, particularly around: ensuring credentials lead to meaningful employment; and addressing concerns about the rising cost of higher education and its perceived value to students and communities. We know it is worth it, but we need to do better at connecting learning to meaningful outcomes with the workforce.
  - Shared that President Bulger has proposed her goals for the upcoming year, which are currently under review by the board.
  - LCC is working on positioning itself as a recognized leader in workforce development for Lane County and beyond. The vision is to establish the college as a central hub for workforce collaboration.

- Reported that LCC now offers two bachelor's degrees:
  - Applied Business Management – currently in its second year.
  - RN to BSN program – launching Monday.

These degrees are designed to reach populations that may not have otherwise pursued four-year degrees, thereby expanding the baccalaureate-prepared workforce.

- Julie Davidson (Oregon Employment Department):
  - Reported that the Oregon Employment Department welcomed its new Director, Andrew Stolfi, in June.
  - Explained that Director Stolfi's appointment includes a 150-day review plan established under the Governor's direction.
    - The agency is currently in the 90-day review phase, which focuses on collecting feedback. A business survey is underway, and a QR code for participation is included in the LWP September Newsletter.
  - Shared that the agency will soon move into the 60-day planning phase, with plans to submit outcomes and next steps in November.
  - Noted that the review encompasses Francis online.
  - Expressed excitement about the progress being made and Director Stolfi's leadership.
- Matt Sayre( Collaborative EDO):
  - At the time of the previous update, the community Collaborative Industry Luncheon had just concluded and it was known, but not yet public, that Eugene would receive \$500,000 from Business Oregon for industrial land development. Present day: celebrated with a groundbreaking event featuring “gold-painted shovels,” and company recruitment efforts are now underway. CEDO co-wrote the grant application with industry, following hosting a free information session about the funding opportunity for the community.
  - Shared updates on Bridge Lane community outreach events, noting that since the last meeting, events have been held in Blue River, Florence, and Veneta, continuing to expand engagement with rural communities.
  - Reported that Cascades West Regional Innovation Hub has secured funding to support traded-sector, innovation-driven businesses across the region. Collaborative EDO is leading the effort for Lane County and other organizations are supporting the same coordinated work across a four-county region: Linn, Lane, Benton, and Lincoln Counties. The first regional partner convening is scheduled for next week.
- Tandy Sturgeon (International Union of Painters & Allied Trades):
  - No updates to report at this time. Expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve on the Lane Workforce Partnership Board of Directors.
- Stan Pickett (Delta Sand & Gravel):
  - Expressed appreciation for the Board Buddy Program, noting that it will help increase engagement among board members. He believes the program will help to strengthen communication and understanding between board members and staff, particularly given the limited time available for individual conversations outside of meetings.

**XI. OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was noted.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

Stan Pickett adjourned the meeting.