



LANE WORKFORCE BOARD MEETING
Thursday, February 27, 2025
3:00PM – 5:00PM

MINUTES

In Attendance: Julie Davidson, Jeff Graham, Courtney Griesel, Solomon Harris, David Heavirland, Phil Hohnstein, Shondra Holliday, Heidi Larwick, Laura Luther, Grant Matthews, Chelsea Miller, Stan Pickett, Matt Sayre, Charlene Vermilyea, Steve Yamamori

Absent: Jennifer Adams, Monica Bielski Boris, Billy Dover, Bettina Hannigan, Lynn McDonald, Bailey McEuen, Jeff McGillivray, John Stapleton

Board Staff: Ashley Espinoza, Anne Nestell, Tiffany Cink, Cindy Perry

Others: Holly Mar-Conte

APPROVALS

Recommendation	Motion	Seconded	Status
Approve Full Board Meeting Minutes (December 11, 2024)	Solomon Harris	Dave Heavirland	Approved

I. CALL TO ORDER and INTRODUCTIONS

Shondra Holliday called the meeting to order.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were received.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

Solomon Harris moved to approve the December 11th, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes. Dave Heavirland seconded, and the motion was approved.

IV. PRESENTATION: STATE OF CHILD CARE

Presenter: Holly Mar-Conte, Child Care Sector Strategist, Onward Eugene

Overview: Holly Mar-Conte provided an overview of child care in Oregon, particularly in Lane County, covering the child care system’s structure, key partners, and existing challenges.

Oregon's Child Care Structure

The Department of Early Learning and Care is a state agency that oversees child care in the state. Within that there is:

- Child Care Licensing Division
- Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
- Early Learning Hubs
- Employment Related Daycare

State and Regional Partners

- Find Child Care Oregon
- Oregon Center for Career Development at Portland State University
- The Research Institute at Western Oregon University
- Early Learning System Initiative at Oregon State University

Different Types of Child Care:

- Registered Family Child Care, Licensed: typically, in-home child care and can serve up to 10 children.
- Certified Family Child Care, Licensed: they might hire a staff person, and they can serve up to 16 children.
- Certified Child Care Center, Licensed: typically, commercial buildings with multiple classrooms, serving infants, toddlers, and preschool aged children.
- Preschool Recorded Program, Unlicensed: programs that run half day or serve a lesser number of children, for example Montessori type programs.
- School-Age Recorded Program, Unlicensed: typically, after school programs, summer school, YMCA type programs.
- License Exempt Child Care, Unlicensed: typically caring for 3 or fewer children in their home – often referred to as family/friend/neighbor care.

Challenges Facing Child Care in Lane County:

Compensation Crisis:

- The average wage in the child care sector is \$30,392 per year.
- Many child care workers lack access to health, vision, and dental insurance, paid time off, and retirement savings.
- Workers often struggle to afford care for their own children.

Affordability Crisis:

- The annual cost of child care is approximately \$18,816, which is higher than in-state tuition at the University of Oregon for one year.
- Families earning between \$62,401 and \$268,799 do not qualify for subsidies but still struggle to afford care.
- The federal government has said that for child care to be affordable, the cost should be about 7% of a household's total income. For one child to meet that 7% marker, that household income would have to be \$268,800.

Access Crisis:

- There is a significant waitlist for Employment-Related Day Care assistance.
- Over 400 families in Lane County qualify for subsidies but are unable to access care due to facility limitations.
- Many child care programs report open slots, yet barriers exist in filling them due to workforce shortages.

Workforce Crisis:

- Hiring and retention challenges persist due to low wages and demanding job requirements.
- Education, training, and accreditation costs remain a barrier to entry for potential child care providers.
- Workforce shortages impact the sustainability of child care businesses.

Current Landscape in Lane County:

- Lane County remains a child care desert, with only 16 slots available for every 100 children in need.
- An estimated 500 to 2,500 additional child care slots are needed to meet demand.
- Care is expensive: Locally, the average monthly cost of full-time child care is \$886 per child.
- Many child care programs struggle to provide culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate services.

Promising Strategies and Solutions:**1. Recruitment and Retention Programs:**

- Community outreach, career pathway support, professional development, and coaching for child care providers.
- Business development support for new and existing child care operators.

2. Early Child Care Business Accelerator:

- Winter 2023 Cohort: 14 graduates created 11 new businesses and 100 new child care slots.
- Spring and Fall 2024 Cohorts anticipated to create an additional 200+ slots.

3. Affordable Housing and Child Care Partnerships:

- Developments such as Ollie Court and Elm Park integrate early learning centers into affordable housing projects.

4. Compensation and Benefits Initiatives:

- Developing a recommended wage scale to align early childhood educators' salaries with kindergarten teachers.
- Exploring strategies to provide comprehensive health insurance for child care workers.

5. **Early Childhood Education Registered Apprenticeship:**

- A structured program offering paid training and mentorship, leading to increased wages tied to skill development.
- Includes a youth-focused early childhood education opportunity.

6. **Employer-Supported Child Care Initiatives:**

- Development of an Employer Child Care Navigator and Oregon Employer's Child Care Toolkit.
- "Best Place for Working Parents" initiative to recognize family-friendly workplaces in Lane County.

V. **LWP MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Cindy Perry presented key highlights from the PY25 Mid-Year Performance Report (July – December 2024).

Key Goals & Progress:

- Strengthened partnerships between industries and classrooms.
- Expanded outreach, growing engagement across platforms.
- Focused on increasing workforce participation for youth, people of color, and individuals with disabilities.

Investments in Workforce Programs:

- Doula Training – \$277K
- Peer Support Specialist Training – \$5K
- NAACP Student Healthcare Program – \$188K
- Returning Citizens Program – \$41K
- Continued partnerships in construction, healthcare, technology, transportation, and biosciences.

Workforce Performance Highlights:

- **Job Placement & Earnings (WIOA Programs)**
 - Adults & Dislocated Workers
 - 84%+ secured employment within 6 months.
 - Average wages around \$8,400 – \$9,700 per quarter
 - Youth Workforce Programs
 - 82% employment rate after training
 - Average wages of \$5,562 per quarter
 - Total Economic Impact: \$2.5M (Adults), \$486K (Youth)

Demographics Served:

- 18,271 total participants, including:
 - 10,634 low-income individuals
 - 1,119 people with disabilities
 - 679 rural workers
 - 932 veterans

Cindy emphasized the ongoing commitment to building a stronger, more inclusive workforce aligned with regional economic needs.

VI. CHAIR'S REPORT

Shondra Holliday noted that action item summaries from the LWP Board, Executive Board, and Lane Council meetings are on page 17 of the board packet. Nominations for the Board Secretary position are open – members interested should contact Anne Nestell.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ashley Espinoza provided an update on key initiatives and accomplishments since the last board meeting.

- **Trauma-Informed Care: Train the Trainer Program:**
 - Hosted by LWP and Lane County in partnership with Trauma Informed Oregon (February 18 – 21, 2025).
 - Equipped 20 participants with trauma-informed care best practices.
- **Higher Education and Workforce Partnerships:**
 - Serving on the University of Oregon's President's Diversity Advisory Community Council (PDACC) from January 2025 – August 2027.
 - Monthly strategy meetings with Lane Community College to align workforce development efforts.
- **Re-Entry Workforce Programs:**
 - 27 participants enrolled since April 2024; six secured employment.
 - Lane County's 50% entered-employment rate exceeds the state average of 28%.
- **Awards and Recognition:**
 - LWP Recognized as an Impact Investor by Springfield Chamber of Commerce.
 - Team Oregon Build named Workforce Program of the Year by the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP).
 - Additional Recognitions:
 - Connected Lane County – Employer of the Year (Springfield Chamber)
 - Matt Sayre – Outstanding Economic Enhancement Award (Lane Council of Governments)
 - John Stapleton – Oregon Workforce Champion (Oregon Workforce Partnership)
 - Shareen Vogel – Oregon Career and Technical Education Administrator of the Year

- **Upcoming Events & Board Recognition:**
 - Encouraged members to attend the 2nd Annual Community Collaborative & Industry Luncheon.
 - Recognized Phil Hohnstein for his 12 years of service on the Lane Workforce Partnership Board of Directors, thanking him for his service and commitment.

VIII. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

- Julie Davidson, Workforce Services Operations Committee: Reported that evaluation committees for the three RFPs (Adult/Dislocated Worker, Youth, One-Stop Operator) have been filled, with meetings starting in March.

IX. BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

- Grant Matthews (Lane Community College)
 - Two new programs, the Respiratory Therapy Program and the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program, have been approved by the state and are in the final phases of development, set to launch in Fall 2025.
- Phil Hohnstein (Hillside Heights)
 - Hillside Heights continues to grow as a healthcare center, with increasing patient acuity.
 - Achieved the lowest turnover rate within the company over the past two years, while increasing staff from 62 in 2023 to 117 in 2024.
 - Serving as a clinical training site for the company, Bushnell University, and Lane Community College.
 - Developing multiple pilot programs to be implemented company-wide; last year, Phil was awarded Administrator of the Year for these initiatives.
 - The Director of Nursing for Hillside Heights and Phil serve on the LCC Nursing Advisory Board, working to increase RN student exposure to community-based care.
- Charlene Vermilyea (Emergence Addiction & Behavioral Therapies)
 - Emergence will visit the Oregon State Penitentiary next Friday with Nancy Pance (Opportunity Oregon).
 - Approximately 75% of Emergence's staff have personal experience with incarceration or the justice system. The organization takes pride in its efforts to recruit from this population.
- Chelsea Miller (Vocational Rehabilitation)
 - The Oregon Statewide Transition Conference takes place next week, focusing on improving transition services for youth with disabilities and helping them move into employment and independent living.
 - Program Update: Although not yet official, Vocational Rehabilitation is preparing for a shift into Order of Selection, meaning services will be prioritized for individuals with the most significant disability-related employment barriers due to budget constraints.
 - The Eugene and Springfield offices will merge into a single location at 10 Shelton McMurphy Blvd. in June.

- Jeff Graham (Danone/So Delicious)
 - No updates to report.

- Steve Yamamori (Reveille Foundation)
 - Appreciates the sponsorship for the Trauma-Informed Train the Trainer Workshop.
 - Hired 10 new W-2 employees in February.
 - Opened a job center in the new office, located across the street from Reveille's housing facility.

- Stan Pickett (Delta Sand and Gravel)
 - Hosting a Sand and Gravel Tour for high school students on Tuesday, April 8th.

- Courtney Griesel (Sierra Pacific Industries)
 - Currently in the midst of student tours, averaging two per week.
 - Hosted 700 students at the Logging Conference.
 - Broke ground on a new 210,000 square foot sawmill facility, a significant investment in the region. To support the project, a fabrication shop and division was built a year ago, bringing on approximately 15 new employees.

- Julie Davidson (Oregon Employment Department)
 - The Workforce Operations Modernization RFP went live yesterday, marking a major step toward workforce system technology upgrades, with implementation expected in 18 months.
 - The nine Oregon workforce boards and Oregon Employment Department area managers are meeting monthly to standardize best practices and ensure alignment of support and resources across the state.

- Laura Luther (Lane County)
 - The Mobile Crisis Unit is now operating 24/7 and expanding into rural areas.
 - Currently, five open Medical Assistant positions remain, down from 17, showing progress in staffing.
 - Excited about the CleanLane Resource Recovery Facility, a state-of-the-art waste processing center set to be the largest of its kind in the country, scheduled to open in 2026.

- Matt Sayre (Collaborative EDO):
 - Expressed appreciation for:
 - Sierra Pacific Industries for hosting students and teachers.
 - Delta, Wildish, Knife River, and Riverbend Materials for hosting the upcoming Sand and Gravel Day on April 8th.
 - Lane Community College for its role in a recent company recruitment meeting attended by Dr. Bulger, which focused on workforce development, apprenticeships, and talent pipelines.
 - Heidi Larwick for her 10+ years with Connected Lane County, which has positively impacted thousands of youth.
 - A celebration for Heidi will take place tomorrow at Connected Lane County/Spark Booth-Kelly from 4:30pm – 6:00pm.

- Heidi Larwick (Connected Lane County)
 - The Health Excelerator is currently underway. All participants passed their CNA1 practical exam and are now beginning clinicals. The Excelerator program has nearly 100% job placement in healthcare, tech, and manufacturing. Participants are 18 – 24 years old who did not have a successful educational experience.
 - Internships for rising high school junior and seniors: Received 224 applications for 50 available slots. Employers interested in hosting interns should reach out – students complete approximately 175 hours of work, with Connected Lane County covering all wages.
 - Upcoming Manufacturing Technology Excelerator (May start date): Provides 120 hours of paid training in OSHA safety, CAD basics, CNC operation, and welding. Applications are opening soon.

- Solomon Harris (CEI Coatings, Inc.)
 - Meeting with Ashley, Ryan Kounovsky, John Stapleton, and Commissioner Loveall to discuss expanding the Constructing a Brighter Future program beyond housing. More partners will be brought in as this continues to unfold.

- Shondra Holliday (Lane County Medical Society)
 - Transitioned from Executive Director to Foundation Director at the Lane County Medical Society, now focusing on physician wellness and suicide prevention.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was noted.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Shondra Holliday adjourned the meeting.