



LANE WORKFORCE BOARD MEETING

Thursday, May 23, 2024

3:00PM – 5:00PM

MINUTES

In Attendance:	Jennifer Adams, Julie Davidson, Billy Dover, Jeff Graham, Bettina Hannigan, Solomon Harris, David Heavirland, Shondra Holliday, Heidi Larwick, Laura Luther, Jeff McGillivray, Stan Pickett, John Stapleton,
Absent:	Courtney Griesel, Phil Hohnstein, Bailey McEuen, Grant Matthews, Holly Powell, Tony Scurto, Steve Yamamori
Board Staff:	Ashley Espinoza, Anne Nestell, Tiffany Cink, Cindy Perry, Jesse Quinn, Ryan Kounovsky, Stephanie Lovell, Luke McCullough
Others:	Lynn McDonald, Charlene Vermilyea, Noel Woods, John Prince (Representative Fahey’s office)

Action Summary	Motion	Seconded	Status
Approved Full Board meeting minutes February 22, 2024	Stan Pickett	Julie Davidson	Unanimous Approval

I. CALL TO ORDER

Shondra Holliday called the meeting to order.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

Stan Pickett made a motion to approve the February 22, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes. Julie Davidson seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

IV. LOCAL STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND MEASURES

Presenters: Cindy Perry, Jesse Quinn, and Ryan Kounovsky led the board through this agenda item.

Timeline Update:

- Final Local Strategic Plan submitted to the State on March 18, 2024.
- Feedback received on May 7, 2024, with two minor compliance requests.
- Workforce Talent Development Board meeting scheduled for June 14, 2024, to approve the plan.
- Plans submission to the Governor set for June 17 – 28, 2024.
- Approval notices to be sent to workforce boards July 1 – 12, 2024.

Strategic Priorities for 2024 – 2028:

1. Increase awareness and use of the workforce system.

Objectives:

- Create awareness of workforce system services
- Create more robust youth career pathway pipeline awareness across all sectors

Measures:

- Grow marketing communications impact.
 - Increase Engagement Platform followers by 200% (from 2,154 to over 6,400 across four platforms).
 - Increase Engagement Platform impressions by 200% (PY 23 Baseline is 128,938).
 - Increase earned media from 8 to 20 instances.
- Increase industry-classroom engagements by 10% annually, using PY 24/25 as a baseline.
- Increase youth workforce participation among 16 – 19-year-olds from 46% to 55%.
- Increase young adult workforce participation among 20 – 24-year-olds from 73.1% to 75%.

Census data categorizes 16 – 19-year-olds and 20 – 24-year-olds as separate demographics.

Discussion:

- A question was raised about the difference between an impression and a follower. An impression measures content display frequency, while a follower is a subscriber to updates.
- Heidi Larwick expressed curiosity about the accuracy of census data on youth workforce participation suggesting that the numbers might be higher in Lane County. Cindy Perry said that she will look into that.

2. Embrace accountability to workers and businesses through a culture of transparency.

Objectives:

- Transform WorkSource Oregon delivery to fit expected future needs of job seekers and employers to adjust to trends/tech changes.
- Prepare for data alignment for shared state/local performance scorecards.

Measures:

- Produce two semi-annual performance reports. The performance report will be redesigned to match our new strategic plan.
- Create an LWP website dashboard to present strategic plan baselines, targets, core measures, and progress reports.

3. Create strategic alignment and innovative collaboration among public and private partners and businesses.

Objectives:

- Influence the regulatory environment to align with the 21st century workforce.
- Require essential employability skills (EES) in all appropriate programs and services funded by LWP.
- Incorporate the voice of business in the workforce development conversation.
- Simplify navigation of the workforce system; reducing barriers to access and use.

Measures:

- Increase active industry sector partnerships from 8 to 10, including hospitality/leisure and healthcare, each with a business champion and backbone organization.
- Establish a Benefits Navigator Consortia.
- 100% of total rural communities (10 of 10) are active participants in the Benefits Navigator Consortia.

Discussion:

- Heidi Larwick highlighted the need for a sector strategy around the nonprofit sector to address underpayment and workforce retention. She emphasized the importance of creating employment pathways to attract and retain a diverse workforce.
- A question was raised about the number of rural communities. Jesse Quinn stated that LWP would review the scope of work to identify the rural communities involved and share that information with the board.
- Clarification was sought on using EES instead of Oregon Employability Skills (OES). Cindy Perry explained that we are using it as a universal term but that we intend to align OES with the work done by the Springfield Chamber of Commerce with employers.

4. Advance equitable prosperity through an inclusive workforce, overcoming barriers to participation.

Objectives:

- Increase diverse access and participation in all public workforce systems through targeted inclusivity initiatives.
- Operationalize and influence use of LWP Equity Lens.

Measures:

- Increase the number of individuals with disabilities participating in the workforce from 47% to 50%.
- Increase the percentage of people of color working in higher wage jobs in Lane County from X% to X%.

Discussion: Ryan Kounovsky led a discussion on addressing wage disparities among different demographic groups emphasizing the importance of targeted programs and training to support marginalized communities in achieving higher-paying jobs. The discussion highlighted that people of color are overrepresented in lower-paying jobs and underrepresented in higher-paying positions compared to their white counterparts.

It was noted that businesses and industries must become more inclusive and welcoming to diverse populations, as some environments may not currently be safe or supportive for people of color. Additionally, it was emphasized that marginalized individuals, who may have faced systemic disadvantages throughout their lives, need appropriate training and support to transition into higher-paying roles. This process requires time and resources to ensure they can succeed and feel comfortable in their new positions.

Next steps: LWP will forward the data and recommendations to the board for review and input on the second measure under Goal #4.

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

Shondra Holliday provided an overview, noting that the action item summaries from the LWP Board, Executive Board, and Lane Council meetings are outlined on pages 12 - 14 of the board packet.

Ms. Holliday welcomed two newly appointed board members, whose terms begin on July 1st: Charlene Vermilyea from Emergence Addiction & Behavioral Therapies and Lynn McDonald with IBEW #280 (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers).

VI. 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.
 - Conducted operational bridge planning with LWP and CEDO staff this week.
 - Scheduled a joint retreat with LCC leadership for June 17th, 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.
- **Board Member Appointment Process**
 - Solicited nominations for representatives from business (1 open position), labor (2 open positions), and economic development (1 open position).
 - Prospective board member interviews conducted by Shondra Holliday, Solomon Harris, and Ashley Espinoza.
 - Lane Council met May 16th and appointed the following new board member with terms starting July 1: Charlene Vermilyea (Business Rep), Monica Bieloski Boris (Labor Rep), Lynn McDonald (Labor Rep), and Matt Sayre (Economic Development Rep). Reappointed Julie Davidson, David Heavirland and Jeff McGillivray for additional 3-year terms starting July 1.
- **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.

VII. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATE

- John Stapleton, Chair, Community Engagement Committee
 - The committee's primary purpose is to advance the goals of the strategic plan. We have had one meeting so far and another is scheduled for May 31st from 2:00pm to 3:00pm via Zoom. Future meetings will be held in person and include tours across Lane County. Our focus is on promoting the workforce board to attract more partners, make more connections, and better serve our community. We aim to elevate our brand and presence and stay connected to the community. If you are interested in community engagement, please consider joining the committee.
- Julie Davidson, Chair, Workforce Services Operations Committee
 - The committee has met three times so far, initially focusing on gaining awareness. Our goal is to serve as subject matter experts on the workforce system, providing guidance and input from the board's perspective. Our next steps include reviewing RFPs for two upcoming contracts: one for the one-stop operator and another for the youth provider.

VIII. BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

- Solomon Harris (CEI Coatings):
 - Thanked everyone for the presentations and hard work.
 - Noted that hiring has significantly improved for his small business, with more candidates applying. However, he continues to face challenges with work readiness among new hires.
- Jeff Graham (Danone/So Delicious Dairy Free):
 - Implementing a \$7M capital investment in a new refrigeration project, set for installation in September/October.
 - Mentioned an internal recirculation line project aimed at reducing waste, scheduled to start in late June/early July.
 - Held a meeting earlier this week regarding an apprenticeship program for millwrights and maintenance mechanics, which we are excited about.
 - Shared that union contract negotiations are beginning tomorrow, with the current contract expiring at the end of July. He hopes to create more cohesive relationships and partnerships in the midst of this.
- Jennifer Adams (Northwest Community Credit Union):
 - Discussed the ongoing merger process and the implementation of a fully remote work strategy for all employees except retail branch staff. This is part of their talent strategy to help employees balance work and life.
 - Starting major upskilling efforts within the organization, focusing on developing both new and existing talent to prepare for future growth.
- Jeff McGillivray (UA Local 290 Plumbers & Steamfitters):
 - Reported hosting an Oregon Trades Women's Session, with a graduation ceremony happening this afternoon.
 - Mentioned that all apprenticeships are currently taking apprentices and work is good.

- Laura Luther (Lane County):
 - Announced the opening of two new clinics this summer and that Lane County will now be providing mobile crisis support services.
 - Expressed interest in connecting with individuals in the healthcare sector regarding training.

- Billy Dover (Tyree Oil):
 - Emphasized the need for the board to focus on Career and Technical Education (CTE) training. He stressed the importance of better preparing high school students for the workforce and suggested that the board has the opportunity to be a model for the state and nation.

- Stan Pickett (Delta Sand and Gravel):
 - Reported on the Sand and Gravel Tour held today at RiverBend, attended by about 40 Lane County students.
 - Announced the successful completion of CDL training by three individuals, with a second CDL school starting soon for three more students.
 - Noted the difficulty of attending multiple job fairs hosted by various high schools and suggested going back to having a single, coordinated job fair day for greater efficiency.

- Bettina Hannigan (Florence Chamber of Commerce):
 - Announced her acceptance into the US Chambers Master Class aimed at enhancing collaboration with school districts and systems for effective workforce development, which is a significant need in her area. She is excited to bring back insights to Florence.

- Heidi Larwick (Connected Lane County):
 - Reported the completion of the second cohort of their Manufacturing Exceleator program, involving 15 youth in a 10-week training and internship program. The goal is for these youth to be hired either by the company they interned with or by another company at the end of the program.
 - Hosted a hiring fair for graduating seniors, with 364 youth and 24 businesses attending. Follow-up in three months is planned to track placements/connections.
 - Announced plans to place 85 summer interns, the highest number to date, with a focus on marginalized youth or those underrepresented in higher-earning sectors. Funding is a limiting factor, as interns are paid \$17 per hour.
 - Exploring the expansion of the Exceleator program to include youth with disabilities. These are largely out of school youth who either did not graduate or who barely graduated. Anecdotal evidence suggests that about 50% of current participants have intellectual disabilities. We plan to conduct a formal study to better prepare and support these youth.
 - Planning to launch a Culinary and Hospitality Exceleator in 2025. While culinary positions may not offer the highest wages, they provide great entry-level opportunities for young people who have never held a job. This will help them learn customer service, communication skills, and how to navigate a workplace environment.

- Julie Davidson (Oregon Employment Department):
 - Launched the new online claim system, Frances. Emphasized that at the Eugene WorkSource Center, we focus on employment services while also serving unemployment customers. Significant effort has been made to provide in-person services to these individuals.
 - Discussed changes to access and processing designed to expedite claims, focusing on managing the necessary backend paperwork. The timeframe to get caught up is relatively short.
 - The Business Services Team is involved in numerous activities and events.
 - Mentioned pilot program in collaboration with the Area Manager in Baker City to allocate support service dollars for unemployed individuals aiming to help them return to work more quickly.

- Dave Heavirland (Department of Veteran Affairs):
 - Highlighted collaboration with the Oregon Employment Department to support veterans enrolled in their services.
 - Discussed partnerships with Goodwill and Easterseals through the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program to enhance employability and job placement for veterans.
 - Mentioned programs focusing on veterans with psychosis and the role of transitional work staff that help with contracts in the community and help individuals with that next job or that next step.

- Shondra Holliday (Lane County Medical Society):
 - Shared details about the collaboration with CEDO on the Oregon Talent Concierge program, which supports the employment of spouses/partners of new hires. The goal is to connect these trailing spouses/partners with job opportunities sooner, with CEDO acting as the central hub and various sectors joining the effort. Additionally, a career center will be added to the Lane County Medical Society’s website to list available job opportunities.

Question was raised about changing the term “trailing” spouse/partner. Ms. Holliday agreed that a better term could probably be used and will discuss this with Matt Sayre.

 - Announced a new leadership project for physicians to help them develop the leadership and business skills necessary to run their own practices. This will be a cohort of about 15 physicians.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was noted.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Holliday adjourned the meeting.