



LANE WORKFORCE BOARD MEETING

Thursday, September 26, 2024

3:00PM – 5:00PM

MINUTES

In Attendance:	Monica Bielski Boris, Billy Dover, Jeff Graham, Courtney Griesel, Bettina Hannigan, Solomon Harris, David Heavirland, Phil Hohnstein, Shondra Holliday, Heidi Larwick, Laura Luther, Lynn McDonald, Jeff McGillivray, Chelsea Miller, Stan Pickett, Matt Sayre, Charlene Vermilyea, Steve Yamamori
Absent:	Jennifer Adam, Julie Davidson, Bailey McEuen, Grant Matthews, John Stapleton
Board Staff:	Ashley Espinoza, Anne Nestell, Tiffany Cink, Cindy Perry, Jesse Quinn, Ryan Kounovsky, Stephanie Lovell, Luke McCullough
Others:	Spencer Rosenau, Noel Woods, Deanna Strachan-Wilson

Action Summary	Motion	Seconded	Status
Approved Full Board meeting minutes May 23, 2024	Solomon Harris	Bettina Hannigan	Unanimous Approval

I. CALL TO ORDER and INTRODUCTIONS

Shondra Holliday called the meeting to order.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

Solomon Harris made a motion to approve the May 23, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes. Bettina Hannigan seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

IV. LEGISLATIVE PRESENTATION

Presenter: Iris Chavez, Equity Action Partners

Since 2019, Iris Chavez and Doug Riggs have worked as contract lobbyists for the Oregon Workforce Partnership (OWP), collaborating closely with the executive directors of Oregon's workforce boards to identify legislative opportunities, secure funding, and streamline processes.

As OWP prepares for the 2025 legislative session, Iris and Doug are meeting with local workforce boards to discuss priorities and strategies for advocacy. With legislative sessions often involving thousands of bills, they anticipate a resource-constrained environment similar to past sessions like 2010 – 2012.

Key legislative areas of focus include: the State School Fund formula and allocation; a transportation package; hospital provider tax; behavioral health workforce development; the “ARPA Cliff”; and higher education funding. Oregon’s hospital provider tax is a state-imposed tax on hospitals designed to help fund the Oregon Health Plan (OHP), which is the state’s Medicaid program. The tax works by generating state revenue that can then be used to draw down federal matching funds. Medicaid programs are funded jointly by state and federal governments, and states must contribute their share to receive federal dollars. By implementing the hospital provider tax, Oregon can leverage additional federal funding to support healthcare services for low-income individuals, including those covered under OHP.

Oregon Workforce Partnership (OWP) Legislative Priorities for 2025:

- **Prosperity 10K:** Securing appropriations for this program, originally funded through FutureReady Oregon.
- **WorkSource Reentry Program:** Advocating for \$3M to expand this program, a collaboration between the Department of Corrections, the Oregon Employment Department, and OWP, which brings workforce services into Oregon’s correctional facilities for adults.
- **Inclusion of Local Workforce Boards:** Ensuring local workforce boards are involved in priority legislation focused on workforce development in key industries.

Oregon’s Budget Development Process:

- **Agency Request Budget:** Each agency outlines its policies, financials, and staffing needs for the upcoming biennium.
- **Governor’s Budget:** Governor presents recommended budget to the legislature during odd-numbered year legislative sessions (due for release in December 2024).
- **Legislative Budget Priority Setting:** Legislative leadership sets spending priorities and agency allocations (distinct from the Governor’s Recommended Budget).
- **Legislative Review:** Committees review the proposed budget, hold public hearings, and gather feedback.
- **Budget Bills:** Each agency’s budget is developed into a bill and voted on by the legislature.
- **Legislatively Adopted Budget:** The final budget bills that pass into law.

Governor Kotek has taken a conservative approach to agency budgets, limiting increases to 1% for 2025 due to increasing caseloads and fiscal constraints. OWP is actively working to ensure its priorities, such as workforce program funding, are included in the governor’s recommended budget and the legislature’s funding discussions.

Actions for Local Workforce Boards:

- Engage with local partners, including labor unions, hospitals, non-profits, school health organizations, homeless youth providers, community colleges, etc.
- Raise awareness within the community about ongoing efforts.
- Schedule meetings with local state representatives and senators to highlight the impact of workforce programs.

V. PY 2024 – 2025 BUDGET OVERVIEW

Presenter: Tiffany Cink, Lane Workforce Partnership

Each year, an initial budget is developed in May based on estimated costs for the upcoming program year, which runs July 1st to June 30th. These estimates are based on anticipated future expenses and any unspent funds from the previous year. In September/October, the budget is modified to reflect the actual funds available after the fiscal year closes.

This year has been particularly challenging due to a \$2.9M revenue decrease, primarily affecting the reserve for future expenditures. The decrease in revenue is largely due to the second-year funding status of State of Oregon programs and the conclusion of the Good Jobs Driving Prosperity program. While not an immediate crisis, this reduction will impact future planning. The total revenue decreased from \$9.5M to \$6.5M. Current expenditure allocations include 18.6% for personnel, 5.4% for materials and supplies 5.4%, and 75.9% for community investments, meeting our target of 75% for community investments. Tiffany is currently working on a budget modification, aiming to increase the reserve to \$900,000 over the next nine months, with \$777,000 already included, through cost-cutting measures and additional funding sources.

In response to a question about community investments, Tiffany explained that these include direct funding to providers for services such as the Lane County Health and Human Services contract for adult services, Connected Lane County's contract for youth services including the OYEP contract, Collaborative EDO's programs including workforce benefits navigators, and Nurturely's doula training. Further details can be found on page 11 of the board packet. Personnel costs for subcontractors are included within these community investments, as the service providers are essential for program delivery.

Steve Yamamori expressed his gratitude, stating how appreciative they are for the funding they have received.

Some funding, such as that for Opportunity Oregon, is layered with other contracts received by organizations which amplifies the impact at the ground level. These additional contracts enhance the work of organizations aligned with the overall mission, allowing for more comprehensive support through these partnerships.

Tiffany also addressed the variability in funding from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), explaining that although federal funding increased by 20%, LWP's allocation only rose by 10% due to the state holding back more funds than in previous years.

Tiffany concluded by noting that the "ARPA Cliff" is a real concern and will need to be carefully addressed in next year's budget preparations.

VI. LOCAL STRATEGIC PLAN METRICS

Presenter: Ryan Kounovsky

As a follow-up to the previous board meeting, one unfinished aspect of the strategic plan requires finalizing a key metric. Over the past few months, LWP has focused on simplifying this metric, which involves increasing the percentage of people of color working in higher-wage jobs in Lane County.

The initial target is to raise the percentage of people in higher-wage jobs, defined as earning above the median wage of approximately \$5,000. The goal is to focus on industries where there is a significant opportunity for growth in employment for people of color.

The data reveals that some industries have greater potential for impact. After evaluating the options, the four recommended sectors for focused efforts are:

1. Construction
2. Manufacturing
3. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
4. Utilities

These industries were chosen because they offer clear career pathways, strong industry engagement, and significant potential for hiring. For example, to meet baseline targets, construction would need 223 new hires, manufacturing 175, professional and technical services 92, and utilities 31.

Recommended Goal: The current average employment of people of color in these industries is 8.5%. The goal is to reach at least the baseline percentage of 10.8 in the industries identified above, focusing targeted efforts on training and hiring programs.

Discussion: There was a conversation about the importance of not only providing training programs but also ensuring that employers are prepared to foster inclusive workplaces. Some sectors, historically lacking in diversity, require attention to cultural competency and creating environments where employees feel safe and valued.

A suggestion was made to focus on employer education and support, alongside workforce training, particularly in industries that have not traditionally been diverse. Ryan mentioned that we will be working on a "Quality Jobs Playbook" for Lane County, utilizing federal guidelines to establish clear expectations and resources for employers.

Formal reporting will be shared twice a year in the semi-annual reports.

A concern was raised regarding the state's current capacity to investigate workplace discrimination claims, which may impact efforts to ensure equitable hiring practices. This highlighted the need for stronger partnerships with businesses to create more controlled and intentional outcomes for workforce training programs.

The discussion concluded with a shared understanding of the importance of combining workforce development with intentional employer partnerships to create lasting impact.

VII. LWP YEAR-END PERFORMANCE REPORT

Presenter: Cindy Perry, Lane Workforce Partnership

Cindy Perry presented the final LWP Year-End Performance Report for the 2020 – 2024 Local Strategic Plan. With the new 2024 – 2028 strategic plan taking effect on July 1, future performance reports will be restructured to align with the updated strategic objectives.

Key Highlights:

- **Customer Engagement:**
 - From July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, 6,123 customers utilized services at the WorkSource center, representing an increase of 77 customers compared to the previous year. These individuals sought basic services such as job search assistance, workshops, and training services.

- **WIOA Performance Outcomes:** Performance at or above 80% of goals is considered particularly good.
 - **Youth/Young Adult Performance:**
 - Connected Lane County exceeded 90% of the goal in three of the five performance categories and achieved over 80% in the remaining two categories, demonstrating exceptional performance.
 - **Adult Performance:**
 - Lane County Health and Human Services (H&HS) surpassed 96% of the goal in three categories and exceeded 76% in the remaining two. Notably, the Measurable Skill Gain metric improved from 50% to 76.7%, reflecting significant progress.
 - **Dislocated Worker Performance:**
 - H&HS achieved over 96% in three categories and above 71% in the other two categories. Efforts continue to improve the Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gain performance.
- **Fund Development:**
 - An update was provided on the status of various grant proposals submitted by LWP to support continued program funding.
- **Youth Services at Connected Lane County:**
 - **Participating Youth:**
 - 263 youth/young adults served in the WIOA program.
 - 110 high school students participated in industry tours.
 - 697 youth engaged in the Career Expo.
 - **Employment-Related Services:**
 - 39 youth completed job shadows.
 - 32 youth participated in internships.
 - 11 youth enrolled in paid work experiences.
 - 60 youth enrolled in the Oregon Youth Employment Program (OYEP).
- **WIOA Adult Services at WorkSource Lane (H&HS):**
 - **Career Services:**
 - 203 customers received Basic Career Services (career guidance, resume assistance, NCRC testing, etc.).
 - 149 customers received Individualized Career Services (career exploration/navigation, individual employment planning, etc.).
 - **Training Services:**
 - 41 individuals participated in On-the-Job Training.
 - 70 individuals enrolled in the Driving Prosperity CDL Training program.
- **Industry Sector Partnerships:**
 - Leadership for each industry sector partnership is provided by Collaborative EDO (CEDO).
 - Since 2015, the program has grown from a single partnership in the Tech sector to 10 sector partnerships, now including Bioscience, Healthcare, and Leisure & Hospitality.

A concern was raised about the categorization of some sector strategies. It was suggested that the team reassess these categories to ensure that limited resources are focused on the most viable sectors.

- **PY 2024 – 2025 Procurement:** This is a procurement year for LWP service providers. Both the adult and youth contracts will be up for bid to align their contract cycles (the adult contract is being procured a year early). The One Stop Operator contract will also be up for renewal, as required every four years. Evaluation committees will be established and board members are encouraged to participate in the procurement process.
 - Service Provider Procurement
 - 5-year Procurement: PY 2025/2026 – PY 2029/2030
 - Adult/Dislocated Worker (1 year early)
 - Youth
 - One Stop Operator Procurement
 - 4-year Procurement: PY 2025/2026 – PY 2028/2029

VIII. 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 page 36 of the board packet.

IX. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ashley Espinoza introduced herself to those she hasn't yet met, noting that before her current role as Executive Director, she served as the Sector Strategy Director with Lane Workforce Partnership.

Highlights from Ms. Espinoza's Report:

- **Year-At-A-Glance Report:** This report summarizes LWP's accomplishments, strategic initiatives, and financial investments. It serves as a valuable resource, providing detailed insights into the scope and impact of LWP's work. Ashley encouraged members to explore the resource, available via QR code or under the "Reports" section on the LWP website.
- **Retreats and Strategic Planning:**
 - Ashley shared updates from recent strategic planning sessions, including a successful retreat with Lane Community College (LCC). During this retreat, the importance of LCC's representation in workforce development was discussed and opportunities were identified for greater collaboration. Going forward, LCC will attend monthly sector strategy meetings and a recurring joint meeting with the LWP Team will begin in January to ensure alignment and foster communication.
 - Bethel School District:
 - Ashley highlighted the impactful work happening at the Kalapuya Alternative High School, noting their successful tiny homes project, food insecurity initiatives, etc. She emphasized that despite its reputation as an alternative school, Kalapuya is achieving remarkable outcomes for students. Kalapuya will be hosting an Open House on October 2nd.
 - Willamette CTE Building: Willamette High School has a new state-of-the-art CTE (Career and Technical Education) building, which offers diverse programs including culinary arts and automotive training.
 - Middle School Lunch Mentor Program: Ashley encouraged participation in the middle school mentorship program, specifically noting the need for male mentors.
 - As a side note, Ashley serves on the Bethel School Board.

- **Oregon Coast Visitors Association (OCVA):** Ashley discussed her involvement with OCVA through the critical sector grant and recent strategic planning retreat. She and Matt will be presenting on sector strategies at OCVA's annual summit in Florence, and Ashley was invited to serve on their board.
- **Oregon Workforce Partnership (OWP) Podcast Launch:** Ashley announced that OWP, which represents Oregon's nine workforce boards, is launching a podcast on October 1st, which she will be hosting. She encouraged everyone to subscribe on Spotify or Apple Music.
- **US Conference of Mayors – Workforce Council Fall Board Meeting:** Ashley shared her experience attending the US Conference of Mayors' Workforce Development Council meeting, where she learned about innovative collaboration strategies from other high-performing workforce boards across the country. She also toured a correctional facility with a 6% recidivism rate due to robust workforce programs.
- **Public Workforce System Overview:** Ashley reiterated the importance of the public workforce system, which includes agencies such as the Oregon Employment Department, Oregon Department of Human Services, working together to support workforce development. She emphasized the need for continued collaboration and understanding of how contractors engage with the community.
- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Reauthorization:** Ashley updated the group on the ongoing efforts to advocate for the reauthorization of WIOA. LWP submitted 32 letters of support to the Senate HELP (Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions) Committee and has been working with national workforce organizations to push this forward.
- **Working Together Conference:** Taking place October 22 – 23, at the Riverhouse in Bend. Registration is still open. This conference offers a valuable platform for businesses, educators, public agency leaders, community-based organizations, elected officials, and workforce professionals to explore best practices, emerging workforce trends, and innovative solutions at local, state, and national levels. A reception for board members will be held the night of October 21st.
- **Communications Document:** Ashley shared the latest quarterly communications document that consolidates updates from staff and is designed to enhance the flow of information to the board.

X. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

- Ryan Kounovsky, Workforce Services Operations Committee
 - The committee will be meeting soon to begin work on the RFPs. This will provide a valuable opportunity to gain external perspectives and strengthen collaboration with our partners.
- Jesse Quinn, Community Engagement Committee
 - John Stapleton is currently traveling to Eastern Oregon for professional development related to Team Oregon Build. There are currently 409 orders across 22 counties, with participation from over 80 unique schools.
 - The committee will meet tomorrow from 2 – 3pm via Zoom. A primary focus is exploring CTE (Career and Technical Education) talent matches, with a presentation from Collaborative EDO scheduled for the October meeting.
 - Additionally, we are identifying other guest speakers, reviewing the community calendar, and refining our public relations strategy.

- The committee is open to new members, and we encourage anyone interested to reach out – we would love to have you involved.

XI. BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

- Matt Sayre (Collaborative EDO):
 - Highlighted the upcoming Bridge Lane events, which serve as a platform for service providers, community-based organizations, educational resources, and employers to connect with community members. The next event will be held on October 30th in Cottage Grove.
- Jeff McGillivray (UA Local 290):
 - UA Local 290 is consistently onboarding new apprentices every two weeks. Those interested in plumbing can explore opportunities at 290tech.edu, with the next opening scheduled for October 7th.
- Dave Heavirland (U.S. Dept. of Veteran Affairs):
 - Reported on the successful Stand Down event at the Roseburg VA Campus and is looking forward to the upcoming Eugene event, which offers community resources and employment opportunities for local veterans. He emphasized the involvement of Oregon Employment Department's BES (Business Employment Specialist) and DVOP (Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program) staff, along with Reville staff, in supporting the Eugene Stand Down.
 - Noted that the VA Supported Housing Program (HUDVASH) in Eugene is nearing full staffing, marking a significant milestone in the 14 years that Dave has been with the VA. This will enhance case management for veterans in Lane County around housing and employment.
 - Looking forward to attending the WORKing Together Conference in Bend and in participating with the Workforce Services Operations Committee at the next meeting.
- Bettina Hannigan (Florence Chamber of Commerce):
 - Recently attended the US Chamber Masterclass on school board engagement in Houston and has appointed a new school board member to the Florence Chamber Board to strengthen ties with the education sector.
- Chelsea Miller (Vocational Rehabilitation):
 - Discussed the Vocational Rehabilitation Business Career Advancement Program Grants, a collaboration with community colleges like Lane Community College aimed at assisting students with disabilities in navigating accessible accommodations on campus. The program is gearing up for the new school year.
- Charlene Vermilyea (Emergence Addiction & Behavioral Therapies)
 - No updates to report.
- Phil Hohnstein (Hillside Heights)
 - Noted that Hillside Heights, the smallest skilled nursing facility in Lane County, employs approximately 85 staff members.
 - Previously reported significant investments and wage adjustments, resulting in a monthly average of four to six new hires, with roughly four departures.
 - Identified as an educational facility, Hillside Heights serves as a clinical site for nursing and CNA programs. Currently, seven CNAs are in nursing programs and five LPNs are in other programs.

- Hillside Heights will be participating in an 8th grade Career Fair in November.
 - Over the next number of months, Phil will be training his replacement as he prepares for retirement.
- Monica Bielski Boris (Oregon AFSCME Council 75):
 - Oregon AFSCME represents approximately 35,000 workers statewide, covering various levels of government in Lane County. Monica advocates for city employees in Eugene, Springfield, and Albany, as well as those at Willamalane Parks and Rec District and Homes for Good (Lane County Public Housing).
 - She highlighted recent wage improvements for Public Works seasonal workers in Springfield and is focusing on enhancing childcare education/training for at-home providers and advocating for better wages and training opportunities in behavioral health.
- Heidi Larwick (Connected Lane County):
 - Wrapped up a successful summer program, employing 150 youth in industry internships, totaling approximately \$500,000 in wages.
 - Announced new funding to launch the Culinary Excelerator and reported a grant award of \$10M over five years to support programs for disconnected youth with disabilities, in collaboration with the University of Oregon's Center for Human Development.
 - Announced her upcoming departure as Executive Director at the end of the year, with the application process for her successor closing soon.
 - Connected Lane County was selected as the Youth Program of the Year by the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals, with an award ceremony at the National Youth Symposium in Phoenix, Arizona, in November.
- Solomon Harris (CEI Coatings):
 - CEI Coatings is a small powder coating company in Eugene that primarily supports local fabrication, construction, and manufacturing firms.
- Shondra Holliday (Lane County Medical Society):
 - The Lane County Medical Society, representing all licensed Doctors of Medicine and Osteopathy in Lane County, recently held its Biennial Gala for the Physician Wellness Program, which offers free and confidential counseling sessions to physicians in need.
- Jeff Graham (Danone/So Delicious Dairy Free):
 - Reported that Danone/So Delicious Dairy Free leads the market in plant-based ice cream sandwiches and bars and holds the second position in pints.
 - Announced that Donovan from Business Services will present job openings at the Eugene Stand Down event tomorrow.
- Laura Luther (Lane County):
 - Announced the opening of a new clinic on West 11th and the upcoming opening of another clinic in South Lane this fall, along with plans to host job fairs.

- Lynn McDonald (IBEW #280 Electrical Workers):
 - Newly elected as Business Manager for IBEW Local 280, representing 1,800 electrical workers across several counties (Yamhill, Polk, Marion, Lane, Linn, Benton, Crook, Jefferson, and Deschutes).
 - Noted that the apprenticeship program had stopped taking new applicants for a period of time due to a strong existing pool but has now resumed accepting new applicants, currently supporting around 330 apprentices.
- Stan Pickett (Delta Sand and Gravel):
 - Reported that two more individuals have successfully completed CDL training, with another individual in process.
 - Shared plans for a breakfast tomorrow honoring six retirees (ranging from 8 years to 38 years), representing about 5% of their workforce.
- Courtney Griesel (Sierra Pacific Industries):
 - Described Sierra Pacific Industries as a vertically integrated wood products company active in forestry and forest management, lumber production, sustainable energy, windows and veneer, and logistics, with all operations in Lane County except for veneers, which are produced in Medford.
 - Celebrated the planting of the 300 millionth seedling, a milestone for the third-generation family-owned company. For context, Sierra Pacific planted 1.3 million seedlings in Oregon last year.
 - Praised Connected Lane County's Manufacturing Accelerator Internship Program for successfully integrating interns into their operations and fostering communication and training around workforce dynamics. Sierra Pacific has since hired one of the interns from the program who is doing well.
- Billy Dover (Ireland Trucking):
 - Recently joined Ireland Trucking after working with Tyree Oil, where he engaged with the Good Jobs Challenge Grant, which had supported 20% of Tyree's driving workforce.
 - In his short time at Ireland Trucking, he has gained substantial insights into the wood products and logging industry, noting that a significant portion of the current workforce will retire in the coming two decades.

XII. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was noted.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Holliday adjourned the meeting.