



LANE WORKFORCE BOARD MEETING

Thursday, December 4, 2025

3:00PM – 5:00PM

MINUTES

- In Attendance:** Jennifer Adams, Julie Davidson, Billy Dover, Jeff Graham, Courtney Griesel, Bettina Hannigan, Solomon Harris, Dave Heavirland, Laura Luther, Lynn McDonald, Jeff McGillivray, Matt Sayre, John Stapleton, Tandy Sturgeon, Shelley Tinkham, Charlene Vermilyea, Steve Yamamori
- Absent:** Shondra Holliday, Phil Hohnstein, Bailey McEuen, Chelsea Miller, Stan Pickett
- Board Staff:** Ashley Espinoza, Anne Nestell, Tiffany Cink, Cindy Perry, Stephanie Lovell, Ryan Kounovsky, Jesse Quinn, Luke McCullough
- Others:** Codi Seitz, Hailey Johnston, Caitlin Vargas, Nicole Matthews, Chelsea Irvine, Cat Colson, Sam Plager, Cam Phillips, Aniko Drlik-Muehleck, Zach Evans

APPROVALS

Recommendation	Motion	Seconded	Status
Approve Full Board Meeting Minutes (September 25, 2025)	John Stapleton	Julie Davidson	Unanimous Approval

I. CALL TO ORDER and INTRODUCTIONS

Solomon Harris called the meeting to order.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were received.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

John Stapleton moved to approve the September 25, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes. Julie Davidson seconded, and the motion was approved.

IV. PRESENTATION: UNIVERSITY OF OREGON INSTITUTE FOR POLICY, RESEARCH, AND ENGAGEMENT – BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE PATHWAYS PROJECT

Presenters: Cat Colson, Sam Plager, Cam Phillips

A team of undergraduate students from the University of Oregon’s Institute for Policy Research & Engagement (IPRE) presented on the first phase of a year-long project examining behavioral health workforce shortages in Lane County. This work builds on the pathway mapping project completed last spring and is supported through Lane County’s Policy Lab partnership. A graduate student team will continue the project beginning in January and will present final results in late spring.

The student team provided an overview of their 10-week effort focused on understanding and addressing critical shortages across behavioral health occupations, including social workers, counselors, psychologists, and other related professions. Local nonprofits and Lane County Behavioral Health reported similar concerns related to unfilled positions, extended wait times, and reduced access to care.

Project Activities: The students conducted interviews with behavioral health professionals in both the nonprofit and public sectors, reviewed case studies from other states facing similar challenges, and created preliminary behavioral health career pathway maps. These maps outline wages, education requirements, and licensure steps for roles across social work, counseling, psychology, and Lane County's behavioral health division.

Key Findings: The primary barriers contributing to workforce shortages include:

- Burnout: High caseloads, significant administrative demands, and persistent exposure to traumatic situations create challenging work environments.
- Compensation and Licensure Costs: Low starting wages, student debt burdens, and expensive licensure requirements make public and nonprofit roles less competitive compared to private practice.

The team also highlighted strategies used in other states and within Oregon including:

- Streamlined licensure transfer processes for out-of-state professionals (Washington)
- Establishment of a behavioral health workforce center to expand training pipelines and internships (Nebraska)
- Oregon's behavioral health loan repayment efforts, including data showing strong retention among program participants after the service period.
- Career and Technical Education investments, including a local high school pilot model and examples from other counties where students have graduated with entry-level licensure or credentials.

Preliminary Recommendations: The Team shared initial recommendations to be further developed by the graduate team, including:

- For Lane Workforce Partnership: continue strengthening career awareness, networking, career development, advising, and job search supports for emerging behavioral health professionals.
- For Lane County Behavioral Health: continue leveraging community partnerships to address needs amid uncertain state and federal funding conditions.
- For the graduate team: continue refining and standardizing the pathway maps to improve clarity and usability and expand outreach to schools and community partners.

Discussion: Board members expressed appreciation for the students' work and asked questions related to traditional health worker roles, including whether the pathway mapping included peer support specialists and other entry-level positions. Students explained that the pathway maps relied primarily on Oregon Employment Department classifications and that overlapping job classifications and variability in job posting requirements can make pathway mapping challenging. Additional discussion addressed differences between nonprofit, public, and private-sector career trajectories with students noting that their scope focused primarily on nonprofit and public employers, where caseloads and work environments differ significantly from private practice. Students also observed that despite systemic challenges, behavioral health professionals consistently demonstrate a strong sense of mission and commitment to serving the community.

V. **PRESENTATION: COLLABORATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OREGON**

Presenters: Matt Sayre, Caitlin Vargas, Nicole Matthews, Chelsea Irvine

The Board received an update on industry engagement activities delivered through Lane Workforce Partnership's contract with Collaborative Economic Development Oregon (CEDO), a 501(c)(3) regional economic development nonprofit serving all of Lane County. CEDO's work aligns with LWP's mission by directly connecting workforce investments to employer needs and advancing inclusive economic prosperity.

CEDO structures its work around three strategic pillars, Welcome, Innovate, and Thrive, which guide industry engagement, job creation, and access to quality employment. This close alignment between workforce and economic development was highlighted as a regional strength.

Industry Engagement & Sector Strategies

CEDO serves as LWP's industry engagement arm, convening employers around shared priorities and aligning those priorities with workforce investments. Their sector strategy model follows a consistent, NextGen framework used statewide and nationally. Work is organized across four primary focus areas:

- Leading industry sector partnerships
- Connecting workforce investments to employer needs
- Growing the entrepreneurial ecosystem
- Operating Navigator and Bridge Lane services (currently funded through June 2026)

CEDO reported a refreshed sector strategy approach implemented in 2025, emphasizing standardized frameworks, clear deliverables, and consistent evaluation. Sector partnerships currently include healthcare, construction aggregate, transportation, technology, hospitality, bioscience, and related industries.

Healthcare Sector Partnership: The Healthcare Sector Partnership was launched in September at Lane Community College, bringing together nearly 60 leaders from 33 organizations, including hospitals, clinics, behavioral health providers, long-term care facilities, youth-serving organizations, and education partners. Healthcare remains one of Lane County's largest and fastest-growing sectors, with more than 21,700 employees, over 1,100 establishments, strong wage levels, and substantial projected job growth.

Building on the momentum from the initial convening, participants formed three action committees in October, each identifying its top priorities. The Workforce committee is focused on addressing shortages across high-demand occupations - such as nursing, dental, medical assisting, imaging, and behavioral health - and on expanding clinical and internship placement opportunities. The Collaboration committee is working to improve communication systems, reduce duplication of efforts, and clarify partner roles. The Advocacy committee is concentrating on developing a unified regional voice and strengthening engagement with policymakers.

CEDO will continue to support and coordinate this partnership, guiding the action committees as they advance concrete workforce strategies to be implemented in 2026.

Construction & Aggregate Sector Partnership: The Construction and Aggregate Sector Partnership was re-launched in November at Lane Community College's ITEC building following a two-year pause. This sector employs approximately 8,100 workers, offers competitive wages, and is projected to grow by 15 percent over the next decade, with substantial replacement needs. During the convening, employers identified several shared challenges, including shortages of CDL drivers

and equipment operators, seasonal instability in available work, limited awareness of career pathways, and the need for stronger leadership development within the industry.

To address these issues, participants established three action committees focused on recruitment, development and training, and retention. These groups are charged with expanding the talent pool beyond word-of-mouth hiring, aligning educational programs with industry needs, and improving workplace culture, communication, and advancement opportunities. CEDO is supporting this partnership by coordinating the action committees and ensuring that employer feedback informs tools such as Career Ready Lane and guides future workforce investments.

Entrepreneurship & Innovation (Innovate Pillar): The presentation highlighted the region's expanding entrepreneurial ecosystem supported through CEDO's Innovate pillar. The Innovate team serves as the "front door" for emerging founders, offering navigation, introductions, and strategic guidance. This work strengthens the future employer base and supports LWP's long-term talent strategy.

Key Components

- **High-touch advising and navigation:** Founders consistently report that Innovate's support enabled them to progress when they otherwise might not have.
- **PubTalk Series:** The PubTalk series continues to be a highly attended monthly event delivered in partnership with the Oregon Entrepreneurs Network. These sessions regularly sell out and provide a valuable forum for founders to connect with experienced mentors. On average, each event results in about five founder-mentor matches, many of which lead to investment opportunities, acceptance into accelerator programs, and the launch of new businesses.
- **Inclusive entrepreneurship:** CEDO's inclusive entrepreneurship efforts focus on supporting rural, women, and other underrepresented founders, ensuring they have access to the region's entrepreneurial resources. This work is strengthened through close collaboration with partners such as Lane SBDC, local chambers of commerce, RAIN, and a network of industry mentors.
- **Latino Professionals Connect:** Latino Professionals Connect, a community-building program founded by LWP Executive Director Ashley Espinoza and supported by CEDO, continues to draw strong participation. Events regularly attract more than 60 attendees, including Latino entrepreneurs and first-time vendors, and provide an important space for connection, visibility, and a sense of belonging within the professional community.
- **Empower Pitch – Advancing Women Founders:** Empower Pitch, a program designed to address longstanding funding gaps for women entrepreneurs, has continued to generate strong outcomes. In its first cohort, the program received 40 applications and selected 20 participants; of those, 15 advanced into statewide investment programs and seven entered investor due diligence, representing nearly \$1 million in potential investment for the region. Several participants have since secured awards or external funding. A second cohort launched with another 20 founders, supported through a hybrid, no-cost model that expands access for women across the county.

New 2026 Initiative: A new Entrepreneurship 101 workshop series launching in 2026 in partnership with Lane SBDC and WorkSource, creating a formal pathway into self-employment and a direct pathway into SBDC's Business Plan Accelerator.

Employer Services & Talent Pipeline Development (Thrive Pillar): CEDO's Thrive pillar, connects employers with skilled talent and aligns education-to-career pathways.

Key Programs

- **Career Tours:** Immersive, on-site experiences that connect university and community college students and job seekers with local employers, offering a behind-the-scenes look at career pathways, workplace culture, and real-world job opportunities. Upcoming tours focus on life sciences and healthcare.
- **On-the-Job Training (OJT):** Up to \$5,000 reimbursement per new hire to offset training costs. Widely used by employers across Lane County.
- **Blueprint for Career Success:** Bringing teachers, counselors, and LCC instructors into businesses to better understand local career opportunities, required skills, and technologies—helping educators translate industry needs into classroom instruction.
- **Career Ready Lane (formerly Group Trail):** A streamlined, countywide platform that connects employers with K–12 classrooms across all 16 school districts. Through a single enrollment and background check, businesses can engage with multiple schools and choose how they would like to participate. Teachers can then use the platform to match with employers for classroom presentations, mentoring opportunities, site tours, and real-world applied learning projects.

Youth & Community Engagement

- **Sand & Gravel Day:** Annual hands-on career exploration event where students experience equipment, site tours, and industry interaction.
- **Bridge Lane Events:** Bridge Lane events are a series of resource-and-job fairs held across Lane County, including recent gatherings in Oakridge, Cottage Grove, Creswell, Junction City, Florence, and Blue River, with upcoming events planned in Eugene/Springfield and a return to Florence. These events bring together employers, training providers, youth programs, and community organizations, and include features such as a resume lounge and family-friendly activities. Funding for Bridge Lane is currently secured through June 2026, and CEDO is actively pursuing additional support to sustain the program.

CEDO emphasized that nearly all its work - sector partnerships, entrepreneurship support, employer services, and community events - is conducted on behalf of LWP and is tightly aligned with LWP's mission. The partnership between economic development and workforce development was described as a competitive advantage for Lane County.

CEDO concluded by inviting Board members to the 2026 Community Collaborative and Industry Luncheon on April 1, featuring keynote speaker Francie Genz, Co-founder and CEO of Formation and returning emcee Damon Runberg (Business Oregon). Board members were also encouraged to sign up for CEDO's monthly newsletter.

VI. BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Tandy Sturgeon (International Union of Painters & Allied Trades): nothing to report

Shelley Tinkham (Lane Community College): Reported that LCC hosted its inaugural Mentor Connect Program in partnership with the Springfield and Eugene Chambers of Commerce. The program currently includes 27 students matched with 27 community mentors, the majority of whom are local business owners. Shelley noted that the program is intended to strengthen connections and help inform future internship and employment opportunities.

Steve Yamamori (Reveille Foundation): Expressed appreciation for the Board Buddy program and thanked Jesse Quinn for coming by. He also acknowledged Ryan Kounovsky for his support as Reveille continues to develop its workforce development center. Steve gave recognition to Dave Heavirland and John Stapleton for their support of Reveille and shared that Reveille has workforce development initiatives in planning for 2026.

John Stapleton (PIVOT Architecture): Shared an update on ongoing efforts to strengthen the youth workforce pipeline. He noted that Nicole has been effectively bridging CEDO's industry engagement work with on the ground youth workforce initiatives. Over the past year, supported by multiple grants, this work has focused on engaging directly with classrooms to better align Career and Technical Education instruction with industry standards and to strengthen connections to employment opportunities. John highlighted intentional efforts to shift mindsets around career pathways, regional employment opportunities, and the relevance of work-based learning. He emphasized Lane ESD's significant role, noting that it has emerged as a central regional clearinghouse and a key partner through initiatives such as Career Ready Lane and Team Oregon Build. He noted that these programs are producing strong outcomes by engaging students in real-world, project-based experiences that build both technical and employability skills, reinforcing the value of learning environments that closely mirror actual work settings.

Charlene Vermilyea (Emergence Addiction & Behavioral Therapies): Reported that Emergence is opening its first office in Corvallis and will be providing services in support of the Benton County Drug Court. Through this work, individuals facing prison sentences for drug-related charges will have the opportunity to participate in Emergence's program, supporting recovery, life stabilization, and successful reintegration into the community as an alternative to incarceration.

Lynn McDonald (IBEW #280 Electrical Workers): Shared an update on the construction sector, noting that activity is currently slower than we would like. As a result, some apprentices are currently out of work, and the priority is to return those individuals to employment before bringing on a new cohort. Interviews have been paused as there is already a strong pool of qualified candidates awaiting placement. He emphasized the importance of managing expectations responsibly during this slowdown. He also expressed optimism about potential future projects, including the airport expansion, which may help stimulate activity.

Billy Dover (Ireland Trucking): Reported that his organization began utilizing the Work Share program this year to address seasonal slowdowns during the winter months. He noted that participation in the program has led to significant improvements in employee retention. Billy also shared that he and Ashley Espinoza attended the National Guard Work Summit, which he said was very informative. He suggested that the Board consider inviting a National Guard representative to a future meeting to discuss employment opportunities, highlighting the scale of the workforce and the availability of government-supported training.

Dave Heavirland (Representing Veterans): Highlighted the strong network of partners supporting veterans through workforce training and employment services. He acknowledged the contributions of US Department of Labor grantees, including the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program teams at Easterseals and Goodwill, as well as staff at the Oregon Employment Department, including Business Employment Specialists and DVOP representatives. Dave also recognized statewide leadership supporting veteran employment efforts and noted active engagement through job fairs and Stand Down events. In addition, he highlighted the work of Lane Community College's Maxwell Student Veterans Center in connecting veterans to education and supporting veteran-centered engagement in the classroom.

Bettina Hannigan (Florence Area Chamber of Commerce): Shared an update on Siuslaw Outreach Services. The center has moved into its new building and now serves as a centralized hub for social and human services, bringing multiple agencies and programs together under one roof to make it easier for community members to access a wide range of supports. Bettina noted that the facility includes meeting and event space and currently has availability for additional resources. Organizations interested in a temporary or permanent space are encouraged to consider locating services at the center to further support the Florence community.

Courtney Griesel (Sierra Pacific Industries): Noted that workforce conditions are stabilizing, with reduced turnover compared to recent years. This stability has created opportunities to focus on enhanced use of technology and more intentional one-on-one engagement with employees, including involving them in future planning efforts. Also shared updates on significant capital investments in Lane County, including the installation of new mill equipment and construction of a new approximately five-acre mill facility. Line 1 is scheduled to come online around July 1, with Line 2 anticipated to follow approximately one year later. In addition, Courtney shared a community update, noting the delivery of the community Christmas tree to Kesey Square, with the lighting scheduled for tomorrow evening.

Jeff McGillivray (UA Local 290 Plumbers & Steamfitters): Noted the continued economic slowdown impacting the industry. He reported that applications have been paused for approximately nine months but are expected to reopen at the end of January. Jeff shared that workload levels in Lane County are anticipated to improve by mid-January and encouraged referrals for individuals interested in entering the plumbing and steamfitting industry as opportunities reopen.

Julie Davidson (Oregon Employment Department): Reported that the Oregon Employment Department has launched the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) program, which requires participants to engage in job search, skills training, or work experience activities for at least 80 hours per month in order to maintain SNAP eligibility. She noted that early participation rates have been low and emphasized ongoing efforts to actively engage individuals in services that both support benefit continuity and connect them to meaningful employment. Also shared that she is working closely with Ryan and thanked him for his leadership in leading and managing the role of the One-Stop Operator. She highlighted efforts to streamline customer conversations to better identify whether individuals are seeking a job, a better job, or a career, and to more effectively connect them with appropriate workforce services that meet both immediate and future needs.

Chelsea Miller (Vocational Rehabilitation): Julie Davidson provided the updates on behalf of Chelsea. The Eugene and Springfield offices remain on track to move into a shared facility on January 5, 2026, located at 18 Shelton McMURPHEY Boulevard, Eugene, Oregon 97401. Public communications to community partners are expected to begin the following week, with client notifications to be mailed during the week of December 15. An open house is also being planned, with additional details to be shared once confirmed. At the statewide level, a Continuing Resolution passed on November 12 reversed recent staff reductions at the Rehabilitation Services Administration, restoring support capacity for state vocational rehabilitation programs. The Continuing Resolution will fund most programs, including Vocational Rehabilitation, through January 30, 2026. In addition, Oregon's state revenue forecast deficit has decreased significantly, from \$373M to \$63M, which is a positive development. The Legislature is expected to pass a statewide budget bill in February 2026 reflecting any adjustments to agency budgets for the 2025 – 2027 biennium. It was also noted that while the US Department of Education is transferring several programs to other federal departments, Vocational Rehabilitation is not included and will remain within the Department of Education.

Jennifer Adams (Peak Credit Union): After more than two years, the organization has officially rebranded as Peak Credit Union (formerly Northwest Community Credit Union), noting that the branding and public launch have been successful. She also highlighted the credit union's response during the recent government shutdown, explaining that as a community-based institution, Peak Credit Union was able to offer payment forgiveness and payment deferrals to affected federal employees. Jennifer also shared details on the organization's employee-led food drive, which will continue through December 20. To date, more than 10,000 items have been collected across all branches, supporting approximately 1,000 individuals. She shared that Peak Credit Union will contribute up to a \$10,000 match through its foundation to further support this effort. Noted that the credit union plans to launch new checking and savings account options in mid-December, along with competitive certificate of deposit offerings.

Laura Luther (Lane County): Shared an update on hiring activity, noting that over the past four years, they have posted nearly 600 job openings, with approximately 300 postings in the current year. Report strong applicant interest, with recent openings receiving approximately 125 applications. Laura also expressed appreciation for the Board Buddy program, describing it as an effective and meaningful way to stay connected to the work of the board.

Jeff Graham (Danone/So Delicious Dairy Free): Shared an update on operations, noting strong production demand for the company's plant-based ice cream products. To support this demand, approximately six temporary employees have been hired. He also reported that an eight-day plan shutdown is scheduled for the end of the year to complete planned maintenance projects. In addition, Jeff noted that the organization has participated in the Work Share program for several years and has found it to be a valuable tool in supporting workforce stability.

Solomon Harris (CEI Coatings): Reported that business activity has remained slow for over a year, with staffing levels down approximately 30% and revenue down roughly 40%. While he is hopeful for improvement, current conditions reflect an unusual pattern in which quoting activity remains strong, but projects appear to be delayed or on hold, contributing to the ongoing slowdown.

VII. TREASURER'S REPORT

Jeff Graham directed the Board to the final page of the packet and presented the quarterly financial report. The report will continue to be provided on a quarterly basis.

Board members were informed that overall expenditures are on track, with approximately 25 percent of the budget spent year-to-date, which aligns with industry best practices for first-quarter spending. The right-hand column of the report displays the percentage of the budget remaining, reflecting that spending levels are appropriate for this point in the fiscal year.

Attention was drawn to the Community Investments category, which currently shows 68% of the budget remaining. This variance is expected, as two new providers, Grant Associates and Looking Glass, are still in the early stages of implementation and are ramping up their expenditures.

A pie chart included on the page offers a visual breakdown of total expenses, corresponding directly with the line-item totals shown above it. Board members were reminded that all financial information presented is public and available on the LWP website.

During discussion, board members asked whether expenses were consistent across periods and aligned with expectations at this point in the year. Staff confirmed that spending aligns with industry best practices, which anticipate approximately 25% expenditure by the first quarter, and that the organization is not forecasting an over-budget position at year end.

Additional clarification was provided regarding budget percentages, noting that approximately 75% of the budget remains to be spent over the next nine months. It was also explained that some variances reflect revenues received in advance on certain funds, resulting in higher cash on hand early in the year, while total expenditures remain under 70%. Staff noted that the flexibility within the budget accounts for the timing of provider ramp-up and revenue advances, and that current spending trends remain appropriate for the quarter.

VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ashley Espinoza provided her Executive Director report, beginning by expressing appreciation for the positive feedback on the Board Buddy program. She noted that while the idea had been discussed for several years, the organization recognizes its value in building community and strengthening partnerships, and she thanked board members for their participation. Ashley also highlighted recent adjustments to the board agenda, including the addition of a Treasurer's Report and moving board member updates earlier in the agenda, as a reflection of staff listening to board feedback and being thoughtful and respectful of members' time and engagement.

Ashley shared highlights from recent conferences and professional activities. She noted that the "Working Together" conference, hosted annually by the Oregon Workforce Partnership and attended by all nine local workforce boards, was well attended by workforce leaders and elected officials from across the state. Lane County's work was featured through video presentations, and Nancy Pance of Opportunity Oregon participated in a nine-person panel that was highly successful and received the highest workshop ranking based on participant surveys. Ashley emphasized that Lane County continues to be well represented statewide.

In her role as a member of the Bethel School Board, Ashley also attended the Oregon School Boards Association conference, where the Bethel School Board presented on the Bethel Blueprint. She explained that the Blueprint is a newly developed strategic plan, the first in 16 years, and one of the few in the state that clearly demonstrates measurable progress. Feedback from attendees, including representatives from Eugene 4J and Springfield, highlighted strong collaboration within Bethel, and Ashley noted that many workforce and community initiatives are launching from this collaborative environment.

Ashley reflected on the earlier presentation from the University of Oregon's Institute for Policy Research & Engagement (IPRE) on behavioral health and connected it to prior work with Lane County Health and Human Services on a trauma-informed care train-the-trainer initiative. She explained that this approach allowed for local training rather than sending staff to Portland, aligning with priorities identified in the local plan prior to the pandemic. She shared that participation in a recent community of practice highlighted cross-agency collaboration among providers, including representatives from Opportunity Oregon, Oregon Department of Human Services, Veteran Services, and others, all focused on supporting both clients and staff through trauma-informed practices. Ashley noted that this work is supported by the Trauma Healing Project and that it was encouraging to see these efforts align with current discussions around workforce burnout and support infrastructure.

Ashley also reported on ongoing outreach efforts with Henry Fields, Workforce Analyst at the Oregon Employment Department. Together, they have been conducting presentations across the county at Rotary clubs and other community venues, receiving strong feedback. Upcoming presentations include the Lane County Human Resources Association in January and the Lane County Commissioners in February. Ashley shared that the HR Association presentation is being refined, with support from Ryan Kounovsky, to position HR professionals as key partners in workforce development.

Ashley provided an update on Senate Bill 623, passed during the 2021 legislative session, which established a Continuous Improvement Committee and a third-party system assessment process for the public workforce system. Ashley reported that she recently joined the committee due to leadership changes and is now serving as co-chair alongside the Executive Director of the Workforce Talent and Development Board. She described the work as challenging but promising, particularly in light of system alignment, data integration, and partnership coordination. Ashley emphasized the importance of in-person implementation, training, and support rather than solely issuing directives. She noted ongoing questions about how this work aligns with other state-level directives and oversight efforts and stated her intention to continue asking questions and keeping the board informed as the work progresses.

IX. CHAIR'S REPORT: No report was provided.

X. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATE: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Jesse Quinn provided an update on behalf of the Community Engagement Committee, noting strong momentum and increased participation in recent meetings, with approximately nine to ten attendees representing Lane Education Service District, LWP board members, and key partners such as PIVOT Architecture. The committee continues to place a strong emphasis on collaboration with education service districts and industry partners to strengthen workforce connections across the region.

Jesse highlighted continued growth of Career Ready Lane, which now includes more than 60 registered employers. This platform is designed to increase employer engagement across Lane County's 16 school districts and support post-pandemic efforts to reestablish direct interaction between employers and students, including increased classroom engagement and career exposure. The committee is also leaning into its work with Regional Advisory Committees by convening Career and Technical Education instructors across nearly 114 career pathways, spanning fields such as graphic design, transportation, welding, and other in-demand industries. This work focuses on aligning instruction with industry needs and ensuring students have clear employment opportunities following graduation.

Looking ahead, the Community Engagement Committee will host a focus group at its January meeting to gather feedback on LWP's new job quality presentation. The presentation is being developed for use as a regional "roadshow" to chambers, service organizations, and employers, with the goal of sharing best practices that support employee retention, engagement, and overall job quality.

LWP is showing strong progress in communications and outreach efforts and is currently leading other Oregon workforce boards in social media engagement benchmarks and has surpassed 1,000+ newsletter subscribers, reflecting continued success in elevating the visibility of workforce development efforts and reducing the perception of being the "best-kept secret."

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was noted.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Solomon Harris adjourned the meeting.