



LANE WORKFORCE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

Thursday, April 16, 2026

11:30am – 1:00pm

MINUTES

In Attendance: Billy Dover, Jeff Graham, Solomon Harris, Shondra Holliday, Heather Buch, Lyndsie Leech, Dana Merryday, Kori Rodley
Absent: John Stapleton
Staff: Ashley Espinoza, Tiffany Cink, Anne Nestell, Stephanie Lovell

APPROVALS

Recommendation	Motion	Seconded	Status
Approve Executive Board Meeting Minutes (February 19, 2026)	Kori Rodley	Heather Buch	Approved
Approve the update to the Compensation Policy to reflect the title change from Director of Finance to Chief Operating Officer	Jeff Graham	Kori Rodley	Approved
Approve a new three-year employment contract for Ashley Espinoza for the period July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2029, and an increase to her annual salary by 5%, effective July 1, 2026	Shondra Holliday	Kori Rodley	Approved

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Solomon Harris called the meeting to order.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were received.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

Kori Rodley moved to approve the February 19, 2026, Executive Board meeting minutes. Heather Buch seconded, and the motion was approved.

IV. HECC FINAL MONITORING REPORT

Tiffany Cink provided an overview of the annual monitoring process conducted by the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) Office of Workforce Investments, which serves as the primary pass-through entity for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds. She explained that monitoring occurs annually on a calendar-year basis, with LWP's review taking place each February and the final report issued in April.

Tiffany reported that the 2026 monitoring resulted in no findings and no observations. She noted that the state monitoring team conducts both entrance and exit conferences with staff, provides sufficient time for document submission, and offers valuable technical assistance. She emphasized the strong, collaborative working relationship with the state team and their consistent professionalism.

This item was presented for informational purposes only. No action was taken.

V. BOARD COMPENSATION POLICY REVISION

Tiffany Cink provided an overview of the Lane Workforce Partnership's Compensation Policy, noting that it is a board governance policy that establishes compensation for the organization and was last revised in 2018.

She explained that LWP has historically used detailed nonprofit salary survey data from the MBL Group to set salary ranges. The survey allowed for comparisons by organization size, budget, and position type. The MBL Group conducted its final survey in 2023, and staff are now identifying alternative sources to inform salary ranges, including the Nonprofit Association of Oregon and Lane County position descriptions.

Tiffany shared that the current policy requires market pricing every two years. Due to the loss of the MBL detailed survey tool and the level of work required to complete a market analysis, staff are proposing to revise the policy to conduct market pricing every four years, while continuing annual reviews of employee placement within salary ranges.

Board members discussed the proposed timeline and the availability of reliable data sources. It was agreed that additional discussion is needed before finalizing changes to the market pricing cadence.

Tiffany Cink and Jeff Graham will work together to further evaluate the market-pricing timeline and potential data sources and bring a recommendation back to the Executive Board at the May 2026 meeting.

The Board did take action to update a title change in the Compensation Policy. Jeff Graham moved to approve the update to the Compensation Policy to reflect the title change from Director of Finance to Chief Operating Officer. Kori Rodley seconded, and the motion was approved.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANNUAL EVALUATION

Per ORS 192.610, the Executive Board conducted an executive session to discuss matters of personnel and per LWP Board By-Laws, the Executive Director and all staff left the meeting during the Executive Session.

Following the Executive Session, Chair Harris called the regular meeting back to order.

Shondra Holliday moved to approve a new three-year employment contract for Ashley Espinoza for the period July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2029, and an increase to her annual salary by 5%, effective July 1, 2026. Kori Rodley seconded, and the motion was approved.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ashley Espinoza, Lane Workforce Partnership

- **NAWB:** This year's National Association of Workforce Board's conference was held in Las Vegas. Ashley, along with Anne Nestell, Jeff Graham, and Nancy Pance attended this year. The conference included opportunities for relationship-building and engagement with workforce professionals, as well as discussions on national workforce topics.

Key discussion topics from the conference included the role and value of workforce boards, federal workforce conversations, and potential state-level consolidation concepts for states with populations under five million. Additional topics included apprenticeship, work-based learning, engagement of different workforce populations, and the role of intermediaries. Ashley noted that these discussions align with LWP's work.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) was a significant topic at the conference, including its use in workforce settings. Ashley noted that staff are exploring how AI may be incorporated into the One-Stop Operator work.

Solomon Harris shared how his business in using AI, including reallocating staff time toward AI tools, using AI to integrate and navigate multiple systems, streamline information, and improve efficiency. He described plans to implement AI agents to support frontline workers by providing task director, reminders, and real-time guidance, while noting both the opportunities for workforce applications and the risks related to privacy, security, and ease of use.

- **Collaborative EDO Luncheon:** Noted that this was the third annual event. The keynote speaker was Francie Genz, who has been involved in advancing sector partnerships since the reauthorization of WIOA in 2014. A sector strategy video was created that overlays the process and operational elements of sector partnerships with real examples of businesses and work occurring in the region. Feedback on both the luncheon and the video has been positive.
- **Partnership Development – Lane Community College:** Ashley shared that Adult Basic Education is a required partner under WIOA through Lane Community College's (LCC) career pathway program, while a different division of the college is represented on the LWP Board. She noted that LWP previously held a facilitated retreat with LCC leadership to identify partnership opportunities. Ashley recently met with board members Courtney Griesel, Billy Dover, and John Stapleton along with LWP staff Jesse Quinn and Ryan Kounovsky to discuss CDL training availability, career-connected learning opportunities aligned with K-12 systems, and employer-driven customized training. There are potential opportunities, including workforce impacts related to Medicaid work requirements, investments in the iTech building, and updates to the medical assistant program to better align with industry needs.

- **Latino Professionals Connect (LPC):** LPC was established in 2016 and has evolved over time. The events are free and include networking, food, and community engagement, along with highlighting Latino professionals. Ashley shared that a new “Table for 12” initiative is being launched to create smaller, more intentional networking opportunities, with the first gathering scheduled for April 23. Collaborative EDO serves as the backbone organization for Latino Professionals Connect.

VIII. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

- Dana Merryday
 - Shared that Cottage Grove is facing a challenging budget situation due to an accounting error and noted that upcoming budget committee meetings are expected to be difficult.
- Billy Dover
 - Mentioned that the Oregon National Guard Employment Administrator will be presenting at the upcoming LWP Full Board meeting on May 28th. Focus will be on the Guard’s capacity to provide cross-sector talent and foundational training support.
- Lyndsie Leech
 - Shared that Jenny Hariyama, the new Eugene City Manager, started yesterday and held her first meeting with the City Council. Lyndsie is really looking forward to working with Jenny and encouraged LWP to meet with Jenny. Lyndsie also noted that the city is midway through long-range financial planning, with upcoming work sessions and a summer workshop planned. This work is really being informed by the work of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) – a group of individuals from a broad sector of the community.
 - Ashley mentioned the U.S. Conference of Mayors Workforce Development Council that she serves on. Ashley would like to meet with Lyndsie to talk more about the work of the U.S. Conference of Mayors Workforce Development Council and what the City would like to see in terms of available opportunities.
- Commissioner Buch
 - Shared that Lane County is entering its budget process, with the budget statement from the administrator expected to be released around the 27th. Noted efforts to develop a balanced budget while minimizing workforce impacts but emphasized that the County is facing tightening resources from federal and state levels, no longer has ARPA funding, and continues to be impacted by Measures 5 and 50, requiring ongoing adjustments, efficiencies, and in some cases, not being able to continue certain programs.
- Kori Rodley
 - Shared that the City of Springfield will hold its first public hearing on a potential payroll tax, following a year-and-a-half process led by a mayor’s task force with significant community input. She noted differing perspectives within the community. While the payroll tax may generate revenue, it will not address all needs and budget cuts will still be necessary.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

No additional matters were recorded.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Solomon Harris adjourned the meeting.