



**LANE WORKFORCE BOARD MEETING**

**Thursday, December 8, 2022**

**3:00PM – 5:00PM**

**MINUTES**

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| <b>In Attendance:</b> | Julie Davidson, Shondra Holliday, Shaun Hyland, Heidi Larwick, Scott Littlejohn, Josh McClaughry, Bailey McEuen, Jeff McGillivray, Grant Matthews, Sarah Means, Miles Pendleton, Holly Powell, Stan Pickett, Tony Scurto, Margaret Theisen, Laura Vinson |
| <b>Absent:</b>        | Jennifer Adams, Allan Benavides, Travis Brooke, Bettina Hannigan, Solomon Harris, David Heavirland, Phil Hohnstein, Katie Jeremiah, Teri White   |
| <b>Board Staff:</b>   | Ashley Espinoza, Anne Nestell, Tiffany Cink, Cindy Perry, Lyle Lang, Jesse Quinn, Stephanie Lovell   |
| <b>Others:</b>        | Deanna Strachan-Wilson, Caitlin Little, Matt Sayre, Nicole Desch, Caitlin Vargas, Holly Mar-Conte, Skye Ten Eyck   |

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| <b>Action Summary</b>                                  | <b>Motion</b>    | <b>Seconded</b> | <b>Status</b>      |
|--|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Approved Full Board meeting minutes September 22, 2022 | Margaret Theisen | Julie Davidson  | Unanimous Approval |

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**I. CALL TO ORDER and INTRODUCTIONS**

Shondra Holliday called the meeting to order.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**III. CONSENT CALENDAR**

Margaret Theisen made a motion to approve the September 9, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes. Julie Davidson seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

**IV. ONWARD EUGENE PRESENTATION**

Matt Sayre, Holly Mar-Conte, Nicole Desch, and Caitlin Vargas presented on the work Onward Eugene is doing throughout Lane County.

*Matt Sayre, Managing Director:* Onward Eugene is a regional economic development organization. Our core values include fun, progress, and partnership. The COVID-19 pandemic reset and restarted many things along with making room for new ideas, new organizations, and exciting collaborations. Onward serves as the business arm of Lane Workforce Partnership. Our work is impact and mission driven. Mission: Prosperity for All. Vision: A thriving regional economy that raises everyone's

standard of living. Onward has an independent board of directors comprised of 14 members. LWP board members Shaun Hyland and Allan Benavides also serve on Onward's Board of Directors. Mr. Sayre noted that there are good synergies between the two boards.

Onward is a small team and the reason we are able to make such a big impact is because we work under a collective impact model. Because the partnership has been going so well with Lane Workforce Partnership, Onward will be hiring a sector strategy director to lead the sector work.

*Holly Mar-Conte, Child Care Sector Strategist:* The Child Care Sector Strategist position is a brand new position and is housed with Onward. The position is funded by United Way and supported by a host of partners. The pandemic really brought to light all the challenges and barriers that exist within the child care system. In Lane County, there is one child care slot for every four children ages 0 – 5 and one slot for every seven infants/toddlers. Locally, the average monthly cost of full-time child care is \$886 per child. With a family living at the federal poverty level, that is over half their income each month. An emerging issue is that the care is not meeting the cultural, linguistic, or developmental needs which deprives personal opportunity and increases societal costs/inequities.

For child care workers in the field, the work is labor-intensive and the pay is low wage without any benefits offered. During the pandemic, approximately 1/3 of the workers statewide experienced disruption. For providers, as employers and businesses, 49% closed during the pandemic and some may not return. The requirements during the pandemic really impacted this highly regulated work of child development and safety. There is also the issue of worker shortage which feeds into a lot of the other issues.

The Lane Child Care Steering Committee is being formed and will follow the Next Generation Sector Strategy Model. Members will include: child care providers (in-home and center-based; Relief Nursery; Head Start; Early Childhood CARES). 50% of membership will be comprised of parents and families with a focus on representation from BIPOC communities and rural communities.

Data is an important piece in the conversation. Moving forward, there are two primary ways we are collecting data:

- Lane County Preschool and Child Care Survey: designed to better understand the preschool and child care needs of families across Lane County. Partnership with the Lane Early Learning Alliance and community-based organizations.
- Employer Survey (rolling out in January 2023): designed to set a baseline for the child care benefits offered by employers, determine employer interest and support needed to offer additional child care benefits.

In conjunction with the surveys, we will be releasing an Employer Toolkit which provides tools and strategies for employers who may be interested in on-site child care but don't know where to start.

*Nicole Desch, Business & Talent Engagement Director:* Onward is a contractor of Lane Workforce Partnership for the On-the-Job Training (OJT) program. The OJT program provides up to \$3,500 to help offset the cost of training new hires or upskilling an existing employee. Over the last two years, we have connected with over 600 diverse businesses in Lane County talking with them about the challenges and opportunities they face and sharing the benefits of the OJT program. This outreach is both proactive and intentional. We track not only our engagement but also diversity metrics to ensure we are reaching a broad audience. Our goal is to expand the number and types of businesses that know about OJT. It is not a sales pitch but rather a conversation about their business

can use this program to grow. At its core, this program unlocks employment opportunities that would otherwise be just out of reach for a job seeker.

Onward Career Tours is a program in conjunction with the U of O Career Center. During COVID, we had online virtual panels featuring different careers within a particular industry. Since last year, we have held in person career tours featuring Bioscience careers as well as a Green Tech Tour. We also worked with the U of O Summer Bridge Program to bring underrepresented first year pre-health college students to visit Cascade Health, Oregon Medical Group, and PeaceHealth RiverBend. So far this academic year, we held a tech focused tour (visited SentinelOne and Palo Alto Software) and coming up will be the Banking and Financial Sector in January followed by the Food and Beverage Sector in April. We are working to expand the career tours to include more LCC, Bushnell University, and high school students with a focus on careers that require some post-secondary education.

The RISE Leadership Institute has been a cornerstone program since Onward's inception. For years, the local business community expressed a need for leadership training - incumbent workers have been moved into leadership roles with little to no training and struggle to effectively lead teams. The RISE Leadership Institute was created to address these needs. This fall we launched additional RISE programs to give access to a broader range of leaders in our community. Thanks to a grant from LWP, we are able to provide 40 scholarships to under-represented local leaders.

Looking to the future, Onward is relaunching the Rural Inclusive Hiring Panel Roadshow working with Connected Lane County, state economists, as well as local businesses that have used an innovative approach to recruitment and retention. Onward will be hosting a panel presentation in February with Business Oregon sharing their resources for international trade. The purpose of this panel is to educate local traded sector businesses about resources available through Business Oregon to support their growth into international markets. This is strategic in that it diversifies revenue streams to offset a domestic economic slowdown.

*Caitlin Vargas, Startup Community Director:* Ms. Vargas works locally with entrepreneurs. When the Eugene RAIN program ended, there was a gap for entrepreneurs and that is where Onward came in. We decided to offer a Pre-Accelerator and an Accelerator program. The ID8 Pre-accelerator 8-week program is the first step in helping founders turn ideas into companies. The class curriculum is based on the Stanford Lean Launchpad framework and includes participants talking to real customers, partners, and competitors as they encounter the chaos and uncertainty of real startup life.

EUG Launchpad Accelerator is a 12-week program based on curriculum from the Disciplined Entrepreneur curriculum developed at MIT, Stanford, and YCombinator. The fall cohort had 11 companies.

In partnership with U of O, Onward Eugene operates out of 942 Olive Street, aka The Innovation Hub. The space offers a classroom and homebase for program participants. The family-like atmosphere is an important piece of the puzzle in the entrepreneurial journey.

Onward hosts coffee meetups every third Thursday of the month at the Innovation Hub. Along with offering free coffee, there are exploratory conversations among mentors and entrepreneurs. On average, attendance ranges from 15 – 22 individuals.

## V. 2022 STATE OF THE WORKFORCE REPORT

Cindy Perry reviewed the 2022 State of the Workforce Report. The theme of this year's report is focused on: who is in the workforce, how can businesses recruit them, and how can business tap

into their talents and retain those in the workforce. The report is structured to provide information on the current economy in Lane County and then delves into the various populations of Lane County who are in the workforce.

As we think about our economy, we celebrate its diversity. Lane County was once dominated by the timber industry. While that industry still remains important to our overall economic health, we now have a very diverse economy in terms of industry sectors with the Bioscience Industry emerging as our newest sector.

Ms. Perry highlighted a few sections of the report.

- Lane County's Employment Growth Projections by Sector
  - Employment growth projected for all sectors except federal government
  - Highest growth projected in Leisure and Hospitality with 6,100 jobs closely followed by private education and health services (in terms of job growth)
  - Federal government declines – however local government is expected to add 2,100 jobs (largely in education and including the addition of the Knight Science Campus at the U of O).
  - Lane County is expected to add 23,900 jobs overall – representing a 15% increase in employment.
  
- Lane County Wages
  - In 2021, an improved labor market and low overall inflation caused real average annual wages to top \$52,000 for the first time since 1979 at \$52,596.
  - The wage gap between Lane County and Portland continues to be a problem and reached 24% in 2021. We are having a difficult time retaining talent here in Lane County. Ashley Espinoza noted that there will be a new platform integrated with the qualityinfo.org site that will provide information regarding migration. It was noted that the qualityinfo.org site is an excellent resource for economic data.
  - 2022 minimum wage of \$13.50 per hour is well under what a family needs for self-sufficiency in Lane County.
  
- Education Still Pays
  - The report highlights that education still pays. The data demonstrates that the higher a person's education level, the lower the chance of becoming unemployed and the higher a person's education level, the higher the wage. This doesn't apply for every single person and it doesn't consider the technical occupations you can get without having a college degree. Lane County has an impressive percent of the population that are high school graduates – higher than the state and the nation.
  - Heidi Larwick noted that the 2021 data is still showing some COVID recovery. It would be great to look at the data for where we are right now. She believes youth should have the opportunity to choose whatever they want to do and not get pushed one way or the other.
  
- Changing Diversity of the Workforce in Lane County
  - There is an increasing diversity in Lane County's workforce. The net change is the Hispanic population – 139% increase from 2000. All populations have grown within the workforce with the exception of the white population which is now a smaller percentage of the workforce.

- Heidi Larwick mentioned that she would be interested to see if over time, there is a specific demographic that is seeing higher transitions/exits so that we know we need to work with employers around being more welcoming, etc. We see this a lot with young people who do not feel safe at some work places and are transitioning quite a bit. As our community continues to become more diverse, we need to be looking at ways that we can help make places more welcoming etc. so that there are fewer transitions.
- Populations in the Workforce - Generations
  - There are currently five generations in the workforce with gen Z being the newest. Gen Z are the most tech savvy and most diverse. While they themselves are likely not immigrants, they are the children of immigrants.
  - Rural communities – estimated at 80,000 Lane County residents. The unemployment rates of the rural communities’ trend higher than Eugene and Springfield. We need to look at how we can think differently about tapping into this resource of workers.
  - Re-entry population – highly skilled and talented. These returning citizens move back to their communities with vast and diverse skills.
  - Immigrants – highly trained and perfect for OJT. Catholic Community Services is one of the programs in Lane County assisting the immigrant population. Employers can also invest in upskilling immigrants through programs such as OJT. Margaret Theisen asked if there is anyone in the community working the legal support aspect for the immigrants. Ms. Espinoza responded that Lane Community College received funding to do a planning grant around how the workforce can be more responsive to the immigrant and refugee population. The Career Pathways Department at LCC is leading that work alongside Catholic Community Services.
  - Gig workers: great for project work. More and more people are engaging in gig work. Businesses can tap into gig workers for short term projects.

The last full section of the report introduces the most recent data on each of our priority industry sectors.

- Industry Sector Highlights
  - BioScience: Lane County is home to 159 bioscience establishments that employed 1,663 workers with a total payroll of \$128M in 2021.
  - Construction/Aggregate: After bottoming out in 2011 at 5,256 jobs, employment has grown by 2,956 (56%) to reach 8,212 in 2021.
  - Transportation: The transportation sector combines the truck transportation, transit and ground passenger transportation, warehousing and storage, and related activities industries. Combined, these industries include 187 firms that produced annual average employment of 2,957 and \$151M in total payroll in 2021.
  - Technology: Tech firms employed 3,693 workers in 2021 and contributed over \$312M in total payroll.
  - Food and Beverage: This sector is expected to add 610 additional jobs by 2030 for a 16% growth rate, compared to 15% for all industries.
  - Wood Products: Numbers from the Oregon Forest Resources Institute show that the sector had 7,585 jobs and over \$419M in total payroll in Lane County in 2019, the most of any county in Oregon.

- Health Care: In Lane County, this sector had 1,041 firms that employed 21,102 people in 2021. Payroll in Lane County equaled \$1.4B in 2021. This is the only industry that did not decline during the pandemic.
- Creatives: There were 565 establishments with 4,027 employed and over \$171M in total payroll in 2021.

Shaun Hyland asked if there are any stats showing low unemployment but still not able to find individuals to work. In the construction/aggregate industry, it is still hard to find people to work. Even though more people are in the workforce today, he's not seeing that and he's hearing the same from multiple trades. Ms. Espinoza believes some of the reason is due to the diversification of the economy – there's more opportunities for individuals to choose from. We need to be very clear on how an employer becomes an employer of choice. Several in the room noted that job seekers are not only interested in wages (although that's still very important) but that they also care about work/life balance, flexibility of schedules, etc. Ms. Espinoza noted that it is important to look at the populations we have put to the side to help with the shortages.

## VI. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Jesse Quinn introduced himself as the new Community Engagement Director for Lane Workforce Partnership. Mr. Quinn comes to LWP via United Way where he served as the Director of Annual Giving working with business leaders across the community and over 216 partners. Prior to serving at United Way, Mr. Quinn was the Development Manager for HIV Alliance.

What is a Community Engagement Director? Summary of Key Responsibilities:

- Develop an organization-wide outreach strategy for LWP (what can we do to elevate our profile, etc.)
- Increase awareness, collaboration, and help achieve greater advocacy;
- Deploy marketing and promotional campaigns;
- Empower job seekers to meet the current and future workforce needs.

## VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Espinoza thanked everyone for their support during the transition of her stepping into the Interim Executive Director position and then to the Executive Director position.

Ms. Espinoza shared the most recent LWP organizational chart. Along with Mr. Quinn coming on board, Ryan Kounovsky has accepted the position of Workforce Project Manager. Mr. Kounovsky was previously the Chief of Staff for Representative Reardon who was instrumental in the Future Ready Oregon Bill. Mr. Kounovsky's first day will be Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup>.

LWP in partnership with the Southern Oregon Workforce Investment Board (SOWIB) and the Rogue Workforce Partnership was awarded a Driving Prosperity Good Jobs Challenge Grant through the EDA. The \$3.4M grant award is for:

- Funding to recruit and train 325 truck drivers over 3 years (100 truck drivers for Lane County);
- Targeted recruitment, wrap around support and industry awareness;
- Purchase of shared assets including a mobile CDL simulator.

The LWP Team attended the Working Together 2022 Conference in Bend, Oregon this past November. The conference was sold out with 420 people attending. It was great to be with peers from across the state as well as those board members who attended.

Ms. Espinoza reviewed the Future Ready Oregon/Prosperity 10K awards that were recently given out by LWP. The Customized Training RFA focused on empowering businesses to be their own training provider due to the lack of training providers in our region while the Industry-Wide Training RFA focused on recruitment and retention of the workforce. A total of \$1,270,086 was awarded to 16 businesses/organizations. This funding needs to be spent by June 2023. There is a second allocation of funding coming from ARPA with contracts needing to be in place by 2024 with spending completed by 2026.

Ms. Espinoza noted that she serves on several boards and committees around strategic planning and systems innovation. This has allowed her to be a cohesive voice at the table that can start to connect the dots for people.

We have engaged the Center for Workforce Excellence International (CWEI), an arm of Prince George Maryland's Workforce Board (nationally recognized) to work with us on board and staff development and engagement. The work will focus on:

- Ensuring that LWP staff and board know and understand the basic elements and principles of operative an effective local workforce system;
- Ensuring that LWP staff and board know the basic elements and principles of building and operating an effective local workforce development board;
- In partnership with LWP, developing the steps the organization can implement to increase the capacity of the organization's staff, board, and local workforce system.

Upcoming Events:

- Oregon Legislators Coffee Meet-up (December 16). We invited the Oregon House of Representatives and Senators for our region to meet with us, learn about the work of and learn how we can partner more effectively together.
- Manufacturing Apprenticeship meeting with BOLI (December 16)
- Workforce Systems Executive Team (WSET) Retreat being hosted in Eugene on January 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>
- LWP is sponsoring a table at the 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration of Business Event (January 24<sup>th</sup>). If you are interested in attending, please let us know.

## VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was noted.

## IX. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Holliday adjourned the meeting.