



**LANE WORKFORCE BOARD MEETING**

**Thursday, May 26, 2022**

**3:00PM – 5:00PM**

**MINUTES**

---

<b>In Attendance:</b>	Jennifer Adams, Allan Benavides, Kianna Cabuco (Proxy for Shondra Holliday), Julie Davidson, Bettina Hannigan, David Heavirland, Phillip Hohnstein, Katie Jeremiah, Joshua McClaughry, Bailey McEuen, Jeff McGillivray, Grant Matthews, Stan Pickett, Tony Scurto, Margaret Theisen, Laura Vinson
<b>Absent:</b>	Travis Brooke, Sabrina Cunliffe, Fiona Gledhill, Solomon Harris, Shaun Hyland, Scott Littlejohn, Celeste Marshall, Sarah Means, Stephen Parac, Teri White
<b>Board Staff:</b>	Ashley Espinoza, Anne Nestell, Tiffany Cink, Cindy Perry, Lyle Lang, Stephanie Lovell
<b>Others:</b>	Brian Rooney, Holly Powell, Deanna Strachan-Wilson, Jennifer Purcell

---

<b>Action Summary</b>	<b>Motion</b>	<b>Seconded</b>	<b>Status</b>
Approved Full Board meeting minutes February 24, 2022	Margaret Theisen	Tony Scurto	Unanimous Approval

---

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Jennifer Adams called the meeting to order.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**III. PRESENTATION: LANE COUNTY'S CURRENT EMPLOYMENT SITUATION AND FORECAST**

Brian Rooney, the Regional Economist for Lane County and Douglas County presented on the current employment situation and forecast.

Definition of unemployment rate: The unemployment rate = number of unemployed/the total labor force. Total labor force = number of unemployed + number of employed. To be counted as unemployed, an individual must be age 16 or older, not on active duty in the military, not in an institution, AND:

- not employed;
- available for work;
- making specific efforts to find employment within the last four weeks.

Lane County is approaching pre-pandemic employment levels. Lane County lost 26,600 jobs (16%) between February and April of 2020. It had gained back 21,400 (80%) of what was lost by April

2022. Statewide, Oregon lost 14% between February and April 2020. It had gained back 88% of what was lost by April 2022. Lane County's April 2022 unemployment rate stood at 4%, down from 6.3% in April 2021 and a high of 14% in April 2020. Oregon's statewide unemployment rate was 3.7% in April 2022 and the US unemployment rate was 3.6% in April 2022. Lane County reached a record low unemployment rate of 3.6% in November 2019.

What is fueling record levels of job vacancies?

- The economy got much more stimulus much faster during the pandemic than during the Great Recession.
- Higher household incomes and savings fuel more demand for goods and services and the jobs needed to make/provide and provide them.
- Less in-migration (a major source of Oregon's labor force growth).
- Record quits
- Retirements

Labor Shortage:

- Employers reported a record number of vacancies in the fall of 2021. Lane County employers have been trying to fill at least 10,975 job openings in recent months.
- Lane County workers collecting unemployment benefits dropped rapidly in late 2020.
- There were also 3,300 people in Lane County whose PUA benefits ended too. As the program drew to a close, four out of five of these workers were self-employed.
- Statewide, the labor force participation rate is above pre-pandemic levels.
- More workers should slowly enter the labor force as:
  - Schools reopen and child care shortages are addressed.
  - Sickness from COVID abates.
  - Concern for getting or spreading COVID lessens.
  - Households run out of savings.
  - In-migration increases as pandemic abates.

Forecast:

- Lane County jobs are projected to increase 15% by 2030 (Leisure and hospitality adds the most jobs due to recovery from the COVID recession).
- Oregon statewide is expected to increase 16% by 2030.
- Other areas expected at fastest rate are Central Oregon (18%), Portland area (17%) and Northwest Oregon (16%).
- All industry sectors provide opportunity through replacement openings.

#### IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

Margaret Theisen made a motion to approve the February 24, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes. Tony Scurto seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

## V. LWP PROJECTS

Cindy Perry, LWP's Director of Workforce Programs provided an overview of projects that LWP staff are working on on behalf of the board. The projects relate to the goals that were set in the 2020 – 2024 Local Strategic Plan. There are five goals in the plan but a lot of the work that is done centers around three goals:

- 1) Prepare workers for self-sufficiency employment in a new and changing economy;
- 2) Connect individuals to education, skill-building and employment opportunity in occupations most impacted;
- 3) Prepare our Youth for Future Employment.

We do consider business to be our primary customer – without supporting businesses, we have no place for our job seekers to go. Primary Partners:

- Industry Sector Partnership; Strategists and Champions;
- Community Collaborative Members;
- County, City, and State Economic Development Partners and Stakeholders.

Projects and Community Impacts:

- Support goals of established Industry Sector Partnerships (Technology, Food & Beverage, Construction/Aggregate, Creatives)
- Support Business Growth: On-the-Job and Customized Training Projects
- Support Arcimoto's planned workforce expansion (Arcimoto would like to almost double their workforce and add a second shift).

The way in which we have been trying to secure funding to support business growth in Lane County includes the following:

- State of Oregon Innovation Funds:
  - Arcimoto Expansion Project: \$200,000 (Not Awarded)
  - Department of Commerce: Good Jobs Challenge Grant – Sector Partnership Projects - \$18,908,084 (Pending)
  - Associated General Contractors: Construction/Aggregate Sector Partnership support - \$10,000 (Awarded)
- State of Oregon Funds: Future Ready Funding – Prosperity 10,000. Projects TBD - \$1,220,358 (Awarded)

Good Jobs Challenge Grant Projects:

- Occupational skills mapping within and across industry sectors
- Support workforce training goals:
  - Transportation Sector – CDL
  - Construction/Aggregate Sector – Heavy Equipment Operators
  - Healthcare Sector – Medical Assistants
  - Food and Beverage Sector – Growing People Program
- Re-start and support expansion of Wood Products Industry Sector Partnership
- Creation of Industry Sector Partnerships for Transportation, Healthcare, Bio-Science
- Entrepreneurial Training and Support

We do a lot of work that is very specific to youth and young adults (up to the age of 24). We primarily partner with Connected Lane County on our youth programs. There are several projects that we have planned out:

- Lane YouthBuild
  - Dedicated career pathway training
    - Construction/Manufacturing Tech
    - Support CTE/Tiny Homes Construction Projects
- Oregon Youth Employment Programs
  - Expansion of WIOA Youth Programs
    - Work Experience
    - Manufacturing Tech Training
- Young Adult Employment Center
  - Dedicated youth employment center
  - Expansion of SparkLab into Springfield
- Expansion of Young Adult Training Programs

Our youth programs are primarily funded by WIOA dollars. Proposed Funding:

- DOL YouthBuild: \$1,349,289 (Not Awarded)
- State of Oregon, Oregon Youth Employment Program: \$577,914 (Awarded)

#### Oakridge Industrial Park

Oakridge is in need and the City of Oakridge has done a lot to help their own community. The partners in the project are: LWP, SWFC (Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative), City of Oakridge, RAIN Oregon, Lane County, Lane ESD, and Oakridge School District.

Planned Project:

- Expand utilization of the Oakridge Industrial Park
- Create a Biomass Utilization Campus
- Create a space for small business development
- Create a Rural Innovation Center

Through this project we are trying to accomplish:

- Reduce the poverty rate in Oakridge (official rate is currently over 50%)
- Provide space for job creation
- Industrial hub for forestry product development
- CTE training for emerging young adult workforce
- Job Training for Residents
- Support Entrepreneurs & business development

Oakridge Industrial Park Funding:

- City of Oakridge: Infrastructure, facility
- Oakridge School District: CTE Program Development
- RAIN Oregon: Entrepreneur in Community
- RISE (Rural Innovation Strategies Economy) Grant: Proposed request for \$1,697,713 (Pending)

An exciting investment that we were able to do through the creative sector is the Viking Textile Maker Hub. Primary Partners: Discard Upcycle and Viking Sewing, Vacuum Spa and Stove

Offerings:

- Classroom space for textile craftsmanship and industrial sewing;
- Alterations, piece, and gig work;
- A textile makerspace

Funding the Maker Hub:

- Seed funding provided by Lane Workforce Partnership
- Program Year 2020 – 2021 funding provided by Lane County, Business Oregon, and Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments

Due to time constraints, Ms. Perry noted that at the next meeting, we will cover our project with Nurturely, LWP's COVID funding response, and the response to the Lane County Holiday Farm fire.

## VI. FUTURE READY OREGON

Jennifer Purcell, Governor Brown's Workforce Policy Advisor joined the meeting to talk about Future Ready Oregon implementation.

Future Ready Oregon is a comprehensive \$200 million package of investments to advance an equitable workforce system by supporting people with the education, training, and resources they need to get into good-paying jobs.

### **Summary of Investments**

Leveraging Success:

- Prosperity 10,000: \$35M (Local Workforce Boards)
- Career Pathways: \$14.9M (Community Colleges)
- Scaling-up Registered Apprenticeship: \$20M (BOLI)
- Youth Reengagement through Work Readiness: \$10.5M (YDD – Youth Development Division)
- Supporting Credit for Prior Learning: \$10M (will be grants administered by HECC (Higher Education Coordinating Commission) through universities and community colleges)

Encouraging Innovation:

- Workforce Ready Grants: \$95M (HECC)
- Workforce Benefits Navigators: \$10M (HECC)
- Statewide Industry Consortia: \$1M (HECC)

Measuring Impact:

- Assessment, Accountability and Continuous Improvement: \$1.5M

#### Principles for Implementation:

- Decisions are grounding in racial justice and centered on serving priority populations
- Leverage existing successes as well as doing things differently
- Focus on employer and job-seeker needs
- Require meaningful and inclusive collaboration
- Assessment, accountability, and continuous improvement

Ms. Purcell mentioned that Governor Brown recently met with the Executive Directors from the nine Oregon workforce boards and she is so impressed with the work that is happening. Governor Brown also had the opportunity to tour Spark on 7<sup>th</sup> (formerly Spark Lab) and had really great things to say about that visit.

#### VII. CHAIR'S REPORT – Jennifer Adams

- Board Action Items
  - Ms. Adams reviewed board action items and highlighted that at the April 2022 Executive Board meeting, the Executive Board approved changing Ms. Espinoza's title from Interim Director to Executive Director. Ms. Espinoza's new contract is effective April 2022 – June 2023. A formal review will occur in September 2022.
  - At the May Executive Board meeting, the general operating budget for Program Year 2022 – 2023 was adopted.
  - It was also noted that Celeste Marshall will be leaving the board at the end of June 2022 due to work commitments. As Ms. Marshall was the Chair-Elect, all current board officers will be moving up one position. Starting July 1, 2022, Shondra Holliday will serve as Chair-Elect and Solomon Harris will serve as Treasurer. The Secretary position will remain vacant until filled. If any business member on the board is interested in the Secretary position, please reach out to Ms. Espinoza.

#### VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Ashley Espinoza

This is the first time that we have been able to get together since all of the changes have taken place. Ms. Espinoza shared the updated LWP Staff Organizational Chart and explained changes that have been made to date. Changes include job titles being updated to more accurately reflect the work that each team member is doing and the creation of a new position, Community Engagement Director. We identified this position as filling a gap when Ms. Espinoza stepped away from the Sector Strategy Director. Jennifer Carrion has accepted the Community Engagement Director position and will start on June 6, 2022.

#### LWP Team Roles and Responsibilities:

- Procurement
- Monitoring
- Program Management and Coordination
- Policies and Procedures: Development, Integration, and Advocacy (Federal, State, Local)
- Community and Stakeholder Engagement, Education, and Activation
- Data Analysis
- Fiscal Management and Support
- Local Workforce System Reporting

The LWP Team has attended a few national conferences since the beginning of the year. In March, the entire team attended the National Association of Job Training Assistance conference in San Francisco.

In April, Ms. Espinoza, Ms. Adams, and Ms. Perry attended the National Association of Workforce Board conference in Washington DC, and most recently Ms. Espinoza and Anne Nestell attended the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals in Las Vegas. These conference experiences center us in reminding us the critical role we play in our communities in changing people's lives.

Ms. Espinoza noted that she would like the opportunity to meet 1:1 with all board members to hear from you and get your perspectives on workforce issues. Please feel free to reach out to her.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was noted.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Adams adjourned the meeting.