



LANE WORKFORCE BOARD MEETING

Thursday, September 23, 2021

3:00PM – 5:00PM

MINUTES

In Attendance: Jennifer Adams, Travis Brooke, Julie Davidson, Solomon Harris, Phillip Hohnstein, Shondra Holliday, Katie Jeremiah, Scott Littlejohn, Joshua McClaughry, Bailey McEuen, Jeffrey McGillivray, Celeste Marshall, Stephen Parac, Stan Pickett, Margaret Theisen, Laura Vinson, Teri White

Absent: Alan Benavides, Sabrina Cunliffe, Fiona Gledhill, Bettina Hannigan, David Heavirland, Shaun Hyland, Grant Matthews, Sarah Means, Tony Scurto

Board Staff: Kristina Payne, Tiffany Cink, Anne Nestell, Cindy Perry, Lyle Lang, Ashley Espinoza, Stephanie Lovell

Others: Rachel Soto, Deanna Strachan-Wilson, Kathy Smith

| Action Summary | Motion | Seconded | Status |
|--|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Approved Full Board meeting minutes May 27, 2021 | Margaret Theisen | Julie Davidson | Unanimous Approval |

I. CALL TO ORDER

Jennifer Adams called the meeting to order.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

Margaret Theisen made a motion to approve the May 27, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes. Julie Davidson seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

IV. 2020 – 2024 STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW AND UPDATE

Kathy Smith facilitated an annual action plan update in June with LWP staff. The filters applied for LWP staff were:

- 1) Are we focused and aligned with the strategic plan?
- 2) Are we forward thinking and adaptable?
- 3) What are the legacy learnings we want to take forward with us in our work?

LWP’s strategic plan has two “strategic pillars” and below those pillars are five overarching goals. The strategic pillars are the heart and the work of our mission: Support Industry & Workers in a Constantly Changing Economy and Move the Dial on Systemic Challenges. The five overarching goals are:

- Prepare workers for self-sufficiency employment in a new and changing economy.
- Connect individuals to education, skill building and employment opportunities in occupations most impacted.
- Prepare our youth for employment.
- Catalyze community around DEI to expand workforce leadership and participation by all.
- Align strategic partnerships to expand collective capacity to address systemic workforce challenges.

Ms. Smith shared the draft action plan that staff generated in June which aligns with the two strategic pillars and the five overarching goals. Potential high value actions are listed under each goal.

In August, Ms. Smith met with the Lane Community Collaborative group and they identified the following as the top five:

- Partner to bring additional workforce funds into Lane County.
- Post-pandemic reconnecting industry-education partnerships.
- Expand rural youth reach.
- Create better awareness of how industry can engage youth.
- Create more earn and learn opportunities.

It was noted that even though the DEI components did not rise to the top five, DEI is the lens which we look through and is an integrated component of the work that LWP does. DEI is embedded in all our work.

Ms. Smith opened the floor for reactions, questions, etc. Scott Littlejohn expressed that DEI has become a political hot button and that it is possible we are excluding a percentage of the population because they do not feel involved. It feels like there is a hyper focus on marginalized communities but we have to remember that we are here to serve everyone. The branding of what has happened over the last year with certain words/phrases is something that we need to be mindful of as people have taken off with it and made it a lot of things that it is not. Ms. Payne noted that we are in difficult times and these are difficult conversations to have. When we say Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, we are truly wanting to bring everyone to the table and have everyone feel welcomed. If we do it right, no one should feel excluded. There may be an undercurrent of people who may not appreciate this work but there are leaders in this community who do and want to be inclusive. As a community, when we say Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, we are talking about all people. We need to bring our whole community up and work together collectively. Another board member noted that equity is not equality and that we need to recognize that there is a significant percentage of people that whether it is rural communities, disabilities, economics, race, or gender who have systemic barriers that prevent them from having the same opportunities as others. Equity is really about addressing that head on and looking at the system to see how we can help remove some of those systemic barriers. Ms. Payne expressed her appreciation to the board for having these difficult conversations - this should be a place where we are all professionals and can have tough conversations and feel safe about it.

Bailey McEuen noted that it has become very evident during the pandemic that there is under employment in our area and believes there is a lot of value in supporting a unionized workforce in the private sector. Ms. Payne replied that the role of the board is focused on educating industry on living wages and not forcing/endorsing one model over another but making sure that people understand where the wage gaps are and what a family wage truly is. We want to bring it all together and educate everyone on good practices.

V. LWP YEAR-END PERFORMANCE REPORT

Cindy Perry and Ashley Espinoza highlighted work that has been accomplished over the past year.

- Goal #1: Prepare workers for self-sufficiency employment in a new and changing economy. In spite of COVID, all of our major workforce programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) exceeded their goal for entered employment rate. It was noted that our adult provider, Lane County Health and Human Services, is no longer on a corrective action plan for performance. A number of new things were put in place which has really helped their program operations. Lane County Health and Human Services was formally taken off corrective action in July.
- Goal #2: Connect individuals to education, skill-building and employment opportunities in occupations most impacted. We continued to do a lot of training this last year with the majority of it being focused on transportation. Our provider has done a great job on helping people navigate their training programs, complete training, and go to work.
- Goal #3: Prepare our youth for future employment. In spite of COVID, our youth providers have engaged hundreds of youth/young adults in workforce type activities.
- Goal #4: Catalyze the community around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) to expand workforce leadership and participation opportunities for all. LWP implemented the equity lens almost four years ago. We were very intentional with our service provider around reaching out to our partners, stakeholders, community colleges, community-based organizations, etc. to increase awareness in the community about the training opportunities available through the WorkSource Center and our funded programs. There have been small gains made over the years with the largest gain in reaching workers 50+ in age. We are taking a critical look at the lens to see if it is time to be updated.
- Goal #5: Align strategic partnerships to expand our collective capacity to address systemic workforce challenges.
 - We are expanding our participation with the Lane Community Collaborative group by leveraging our virtual platform. The virtual platform allows our rural communities to participate.
 - Discard Upcycling/Viking Textile Maker Hub: In a very short time, an Industrial Sewing/Classroom curriculum was developed. To date, 13 trainees completed the industrial sewing course with four trainers (one bilingual in English and Spanish). Funding was provided by Business Oregon, Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, and Lane County totaling \$75,000. This model will be used as a template to launch two other hubs in the State.
 - LWP, in partnership with the Technology Association of Oregon, Southern Willamette Valley Region, has launched a series of cultural intelligence training workshops. The five-week cohort workshop series is designed for HR and Hiring Managers to upskill around Cultural Intelligence for team performance. 13 participants in the first cohort took part in a Cultural Intelligence (CQ) Assessment that covers knowledge, drive, strategy, and action. A follow-up session was offered that allowed space for shared language, peer to peer reflection, and community building. Opportunities such as this allow individuals to assess why we do what we do, is there a better way, are there things we are not considering, is there unconscious (or conscious bias), etc. By offering these opportunities, individuals can make these assessments on their own and we can help support them through that process. A second cohort will be offered in November. Through this DEI initiative, we are hearing from people that they are starting to do things differently with the new information they have. It is important to create the space for learning and not allow our personal beliefs into that learning space.

- Growing People, a cohort brought by Eugene’s Table, focused on food and beverage manufacturing. This was done in partnership with Knowledge Waits Consulting and Northwest Food Solutions. This was the first time it was done in Lane County and it provided over 300 hours of learning, hands on analysis, and problem solving. 11 food and beverage professionals from seven companies participated. The curriculum included safe workplace, transforming culture, improving production effectiveness, daily management, and food safety culture. Each participant received a lean manufacturing certificate upon completion.
- World Class Industries Right Here – Phase 2: In 2018, we launched a World Class Industries Right Here campaign at the Eugene Airport. Featured sectors at that time were Tech, Food and Beverage Manufacturing, and Wood Products. Based on the tremendous success, we are looking at doing a 2.0 version that will bring a cohesive message throughout the County. We will be utilizing video, brand journalism content focusing on sector industries and participating businesses, website landing page, etc.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): There is a DEI tab on our website which provides research-based information and resources. There are many challenges to overcome including: economic inefficiencies; labor force shortages and under-utilization; organizational readiness; recruitment and retention worksite culture including: occupational segregation; implicit bias and unconscious bias; microaggression; marginality; oppression; and stereotype threat. We talk about what we think things are like but once you start digging into the numbers and seeing how things historically were put into place to exclude and not include, then we begin to realize there is more to this story. From there we can work on how we move forward together so that everyone is included.

VI. CHAIR’S REPORT

Ms. Adams reviewed LWP Board, Executive Board, and Lane Council action items to date in Calendar Year 2021.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

- Legislative Updates

The nine local workforce boards are doing advocacy work around getting people back to work. It is not to say that there are not opportunities – we are going to see people return to work as unemployment benefits expired September 5th. However, we will in all probability see more significant skills gaps. To ensure an equitable economic recovery, we need to help local businesses and provide a hand-up for Oregonians most impacted by COVID-19. The State has received a significant amount of recovery funds and to address the workforce challenges, we are asking for a \$50 million investment in three broad, proven workforce strategies to transition 10,000 Oregonians to good jobs. The three strategies are:

- Increase Local Service Capacity: implemented through established networks of local partners that provide start-to-finish career coaching services including outreach, referrals to skill development and training opportunities, and referrals to wrap around support services that enable participation and success.
- Earn and Learn Opportunities to Re-Career: providing paid internships, paid community service work, stipends, and other income supports in conjunction with occupational training and placement into middle-income career opportunities. This would be the piece that is most beneficial to an employer.

- Wrap Around Supports: including childcare, housing, and behavioral health support.

We are asking for support from industry, partners, etc. If you would like to have your company logo included on the piece that will be going out, please send it to Anne Nestell.

- 2021 WORKing Together Conference

The annual WORKing Together Conference is taking place this November in Bend. We would love for as many board members as possible to participate. At this point we are still planning for an in-person conference. As a reminder, if the cost for you to attend is prohibitive, please let us know so that we can identify scholarship funds and assist you with your registration. If anyone is interested in their organization being one of the sponsors for the conference, please reach out to Ms. Payne.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was noted.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Adams adjourned the meeting.

Lane Workforce Partnership is an equal opportunity employer. With 48 hours of notice, auxiliary aids and services, and alternate formats are available to individuals with limited English proficiency free of cost. Requests can be made directly to LWP or with the assistance of TTY: Oregon Relay Services at 1-800-735-2900.