



LANE WORKFORCE BOARD MEETING

Thursday, December 3, 2020

3:00pm – 5:00pm

MINUTES

Present:	Jennifer Adams, Sabrina Cunliffe, Angela Miller-Pomlee (Proxy for Julie Davidson), Fiona Gledhill, Bettina Hannigan, Solomon Harris, David Heavirland, Shondra Holliday, Shaun Hyland, Katie Jeremiah, Scott Littlejohn, Joshua McClaghry, Bailey McEuen, Jeffrey McGillivray, Grant Matthews, Stephen Parac, Stan Pickett, Tony Scurto, Margaret Theisen, Laura Vinson
Absent:	Travis Brooke, Michael Caven, Noreen Dunnells, Justin Freeman, Phillip Hohnstein, Celeste Marshall, Sarah Means, Debra Miller
Staff:	Kristina Payne, Anne Nestell, Ashley Espinoza, Cindy Perry, Lyle Lang, Tiffany Cink
Others:	Henry Fields, Rachel Soto, Deanna Strachan-Wilson

Action Summary:	Motion	Seconded	Status
Approved Board Meeting Minutes, September 24, 2020	Margaret Theisen	Tony Scurto	Unanimous Approval

I. CALL TO ORDER

Stan Pickett 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 24, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes. Tony Scurto seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

IV. 2020 STATE OF THE WORKFORCE REPORT

Henry Fields, Workforce Analyst/Economist with the Oregon Employment Department and Ashley Espinoza, Sector Strategy Director with Lane Workforce Partnership provided an overview of the report.

This report highlights the gaps, barriers, and challenges as well as the complex opportunities that exist in our region. The report discusses the following in detail: Economy, Trends, and Statistics; Labor Market; Wildfire Impact; Lane County Employment Growth; Wages; Education and the Education Gap; Rural Lane County; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Child Care; and Sector Based Strategies.

Main points summarized by Mr. Fields and Ms. Espinoza included:

- Job loss in 2020 was sharp and severe.
- Ten-year job growth (2019 – 2029) is expected to be fastest in healthcare and construction - no major industry is expected to decline.
- Wages are a continuing challenge in our region. Lane County (in real terms) has lower wages than it did in 1976 which is not the case for the rest of Oregon and the United States. Rural areas face this issue even more so with Rural Lane County earning lower wages. In 2018, the annual average wage for Lane County was \$43,503 compared to \$37,818 for Rural Lane County.
- Lane County's workforce is rapidly growing more diverse – all workers increased 11% from 1999 – 2019. Greatest increases came from the Hispanic/Latino population at 147%, or 8,512 workers followed by the Black/African American population at 111%, or 1,319 workers.
- Women are 50% of the workforce in Lane County (more than the US overall) but depending on the industry, make up 20 – 75% of any given industry.
- In Oregon, the average annual cost for one infant in a day care center is \$11,322 and \$6,885 for an in-home child care center. For lower-income workers there is little to nothing left to pay for child care after taxes, housing, utilities, and food costs.
- Data suggests that only 60% of low-income students are regularly logging into online instruction compared to 90% of higher-income students. Engagement rates are also lagging in schools serving predominantly Black and Hispanic students, where only 60 to 70 percent are logging in regularly. This lack of engagement may result in low-income and minority students falling behind by as much as one year academically.
- Sector-Based Strategies: All of our targeted sectors offer above average annual wages. More than 30% of Lane County's high-wage, high-demand jobs in 2019 were in targeted sectors with the largest being health care, construction, and technology.

Tony Scurto shared some of the challenges that are playing out as a result of distance learning. Making sure students can get connected is still an on-going challenge. There are some rural areas where there just isn't any cell phone coverage so it's not as easy as getting a hot spot to those areas. There are also areas where there is cell coverage but the hot spot has to be aligned with whichever provider is in that area. Connected Lane County and the Lane ESD IT Department have partnered to get more students connected.

Mr. Scurto also touched on the issue of engagement. There is professional engagement happening with a large group of teachers in the county. Specific initiatives launched to date include:

- Black/African American Student Success Plan: navigators are reaching out and connecting with these students;
- Partnered with Education Northwest to help create a more county wide approach for students where English is their second language.

Ms. Espinoza's final thoughts focused on wanting to ensure that our current and future workforce is strong in numbers and skills, and that our businesses have what they need to sustain and expand here in Lane County. She also encouraged board members to share the report widely with their networks and partners.

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Pickett reviewed the Focus on Employment – Racism and the Economy seminar that the Federal Reserve hosted in November. Their mandate is to “promote effectively the goals of maximum employment, stable prices, and moderate long-term interest rates”. The Federal Reserve is hosting a Seven Part Conference Series that discusses the economic implications of racism in America and ways to address them. Take-a-ways included creating multiple pathways for individuals to be hired through update training programs, skill-based interviewing, etc. Kristina Payne noted that there will be more efforts nationally in recognizing skill sets and rather than screening people out, more emphasis will be on screening people in based on individual talents and skills. Hiring and interviewing practices will need to change and evolve.

Ms. Payne said that as future series dates are announced, they will be forwarded to board members. Mr. Pickett encouraged members to participate as their schedule allows.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- COVID-19 Layoff Aversion Funds

Ms. Payne noted that we received additional layoff aversion funds (approximately \$67,000) for the recent two-week freeze. This round of funding focused on restaurants, bars, gyms, fitness organizations, and other indoor recreational facilities with fewer than 20 employees and priority was given to woman/minority/veteran owned businesses. We were able to help 27 businesses that were in the priority group. We are working on finding additional funding for the 13 businesses that were eligible but did not fall within the priority group. Ms. Payne thanked new board member Bettina Hannigan (Florence Area Chamber of Commerce) for her help in spreading the word about these funds to businesses in Florence.

- SHIFT VR Training

SHIFT has developed an Implicit Bias VR Training and several community leaders from Lane County are going to participate in the 8-week, on-line training. This training is being utilized in hospitals and school districts across the country and provides the opportunity for individuals to go through their own personal journey and explore what biases they have. If you are interested in participating, please let us know.

- Workforce Services at the Eugene Public Library

We have partnered with the Eugene Public Library to offer workforce services at the library. We have the technology set up and are able to maintain social distancing guidelines. Workforce services are being provided Monday – Friday.

- National Dislocated Worker Grant – Fire Restoration

The State of Oregon has been awarded National Dislocated Worker Grant funding (approximately \$19.5M) from the Department of Labor in response to the devastating wild fires during the summer and early fall. Lane Workforce Partnership has been awarded \$5M over a two-year period from this funding to assist the impacted communities in Lane County with fire restoration and cleanup efforts. These funds may be used to employ work crews whose sole purpose will be to work on projects related to fire restoration and cleanup. The

clean-up and recovery efforts include demolition, repair, renovation and reconstruction of damaged and destroyed structures located within the disaster area. We will be convening community leaders, partners, and others in the community who would be working on these projects, and ask them to bring their projects forward. This is our opportunity as a community to pull together and show that in two years, we brought the resources in and we executed.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was noted.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pickett 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.