

# MINUTES

## **NORTHWEST OREGON WORKS JOINT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

April 23, 2021 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Zoom Call

### **Present:**

#### **Board:**

**Tony Erickson**, Oregon AERO, Chair; **Lauren Smith**, DHS, VocRehab; **John Hawkins**, Service Employees International Union; **Linda Dugan**, Linda Dugan Insurance, Treasurer; **Stephanie Hurliman**, Oregon Employment Dept.; **Zach Poole**, Pig' n Pancake, Vice Chair/Secretary; **Josh Kvidt**, Alyrica; **Ann Buchele**, Linn-Benton Community College; **Henry Balensifer III**, LEKTRO; **Todd Simmons**, Tillamook Peoples' Utility District; **Whitey Forsman**, Pacific Oyster; **Rod Belisle**, NECA-IBEW Electrical Training Center; **Cami Aufdermauer**, Tillamook County Habitat for Humanity; **Mario Calderon**, Local 737

#### **Consortium:**

**Doug Hunt**, Lincoln County Commissioner

**Excused:** **Birgitte Ryslinge**, Oregon Coast Community College; **Terre Cooper**, Tillamook County Economic Development; **Amanda Morris**, Samaritan Health Service; **Heather Clark**, Alterations by Heather

#### **Staff:**

**Heather DeSart**, NOW Executive Director; **Jason Swain**, NOW CFO; **Karen Litvin**, Program and Compliance Director; **Jerry Hardman**, Business Services Manager; **Alfonso Salazar**, Project Manager; **Emily Schwartz**, NOW Office Manager

#### **Guests:**

**Shawna Sykes**, Oregon Employment Department; **Erik Knoder** Oregon Employment Department; **Diana Nish**, Equus; **Angeline Chan-Pepper**, Equus; **Camille Padilla**, Equus; **Kendall Lenhares**, One-Stop-Operator; **Pegge McGuire**, CSC; **Kathy Wilcox**, OWI HECC; **Arlene Soto**, TBCC SBDC; **Teresa Rivenes**, TBCC; **Katrina Gasser**, TPJCC; **Gail Muller**, HR Answers, INC.; **Josh Hall**, Oregon AFL-CIO

### **1. CALL TO ORDER, CONFIRMATION OF POSTING, and ROLL CALL**

*Chairman Erickson called the Meeting to order at 10:02 am.*

Chairman Erickson asked for confirmation of the public posting of the meeting; Ms. Schwartz confirmed; Roll Call taken, and Quorum established.

**2. REVIEW and APPROVE AGENDA**

*There were no inclusions of any emergency items, or deletion of any items. Chairman Erickson reminded everyone that a revised agenda and packet was sent out and posted on Monday April 19, after adding items 5 and 8.*

**MOTION: Rod Belisle**

**SECOND: John Hawkins**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION**

Ms. Padilla of Equus announced she would be leaving for a new position and relocating to Arizona and that Ms. Chan-Pepper would be taking over as Project Director for the contracted programs in NOW's area.

**4. DISCUSSION and POSSIBLE ACTION**

Accept Staff's recommendation to approve the Minutes of the January 22, 2021 Board Meeting.

**MOTION: John Hawkins**

**SECOND: Henry Balensifer III**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**5. DISCUSSION and POSSIBLE ACTION – Heather DeSart, NOW Executive Director**

Accept staff's recommendation to approve the MOU between Northwest Oregon Works (NOW), the Chief Local Elected Official representing Benton, Clatsop, Columbia, Lincoln, and Tillamook counties (CLEO), Willamette Workforce Partnership (WWP), and CLEO representing Linn, Marion, Polk, and Yamhill Counties. The purpose of this MOU is to support alignment in the provision of workforce services to individuals and businesses in Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties.

Ms. DeSart gave an overview of the draft MOU attached in the packet. Mentioned that there would be no exchanging of funds and the MOU was mostly to better serve the Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties as they shared a community college and labor shed.

**MOTION: Rod Belisle**

**SECOND: Henry Balensifer III**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**6. INFORMATION – Linda Dugan, NOW Board Treasurer**

PY2020-21 Budget to Actual

Ms. Dugan expressed the biggest concern from the FAT meeting was specific funds need to be spent by June 30. She explained that Jason was forecasting that most of the funds would be spent, but the Industry Engagement funds were cause for some concern.

Commissioner Hunt asked how WIOA Admin, Disaster Recovery, Employment Recovery, and Wildfire funds would be spent. Jason explained that Admin funds were targeted to expire June 30. He also explained Disaster Recovery, Employment Recovery, and Wildfire funds do not have a June 30 expiration date so there will still be time to spend them down in the next Program Year.

Chairman Erickson asked if the board was expecting any more Wildfire Recovery funds. Ms. DeSart explained that we have a grant agreement with the state for one million and that the funds will be doled out as it is spent.

**7. INFORMATION** – Kendall Lenhares, OMEP  
One-Stop-Operator Follow Up Report

Ms. Lenhares gave an update to the January presentation of reopening WorkSource Oregon. She stated they turned their reopening plan in to the state and that it was under second review. Next steps were to figure out how to bring the plan that is on paper to implementation after the final approval.

**8. INFORMATION** – Cami Aufdermauer, Tillamook County Habitat for Humanity Executive Director  
Tillamook County Habitat for Humanity Update

Ms. Aufdermauer discussed what Habitat for Humanity does in Tillamook County and shared her background and how she became involved with Habitat for Humanity. This year, they are serving 5 partner families, quadruple the number of families they are usually able to serve due to the pandemic and housing costs in general. She mentioned that they really need volunteers and partnerships.

Ms. DeSart stated she would like to put together a youth crew for Habitat after Ms. Aufdermauer mentioned she was hoping to involve more youth in the program so they would be able to learn trades. Ms. Litvin said she would set up a follow up meeting to discuss the possibilities further.

**9. INFORMATION** – Karen Litvin, NOW Program and Compliance Director  
Program Report and Strategic Plan Update

9.1: Ms. Litvin gave an overview of the program report and let the board know that numbers had gone up in a lot of areas. She mentioned that employment placements were especially difficult at this time, as well as youth placements in the program.

9.2: Ms. Litvin updated the board on where staff was at regarding the Strategic Plan goals. She stated that a major goal was focusing on career pathways and sector work. She mentioned the new grant funds that have come in and let the board know that with the six-month YDD grant, they have enrolled 60 youth in the two and half months the program has been going.

**10. INFORMATION** – Karen Litvin, NOW Program and Compliance Director  
Introductions: Jerry Hardman, NOW Business Services Manager and Alfonso Salazar, NOW Project Manager

Ms. Litvin introduced the two new NOW employees: Alfonso Salazar and Jerry Hardman.

Mr. Salazar gave an overview of the HOW TO project he is managing called the Behavioral Health Work-Based Learning Career Pathway. The goal of the program is to increase the number of certified licensed staff as well as promoting diversity in the behavioral health workforce.

Mr. Hardman stated that right now his main focus as the new Business Services Manager is getting the medical assistance program back up.

**11. INFORMATION** – Camille Padilla, Diana Nish, and Angeline Chan Pepper, Equus Program Success Stories

Angeline introduced the video for Gracie Boehm, a dual-enrolled youth and adult participant. In the video, Gracie gave her impressions of the programs and working as a packaging operator at the Tillamook Creamery. She stated that she appreciated the flexibility of the programs, especially because she was still attending school. She hopes to continue working at the Creamery until she can move to Texas.

**12. INFORMATION** – Erik Knoder and Shawna Sykes, OED Oregon Employment Department Economic Update

Mr. Knoder presented the first half of the presentation which covered a regional update of Northwest Oregon. Leisure and Hospitality was the industry that suffered the greatest losses but was probably going to make the quickest comeback after pandemic restrictions were lifted. Mr. Knoder mentioned that the unemployment rates listed may not be completely accurate because of temporary layoffs, and these people believe they will be going back to their jobs once restrictions are lifted.

Ms. Sykes presented the second half of the presentation which gave a Tillamook County focus. She explained that Tillamook County grows slower than other counties but even so was becoming more diverse. One of the major impacts of COVID-19 in Tillamook County, nonfarm employment dropped by 15% from March to April 2020. Unemployment in the county jumped from 3.5% to 18% when restrictions due to COVID-19 hit.

The last part of the presentation covered some of the reasons why employers are having difficulty finding workers at this time. Mr. Poole shared challenges the restaurant industry has faced with finding employees. One of the biggest challenges was the uncertainty for the workers with keeping their jobs as risk levels changed. Another issue was customer abuse from customers who were not happy with regulations.

A couple other issues that came up were drug screening in a state where THC is legal, as well as housing issues. A lot of workers can either not be able to find a place or not be able to afford the housing prices.

Mr. Calderon mentioned that they are continually hiring CDL drivers with the Local 737.

**13. INFORMATION** – Teresa Rivenes, TBCC Vice President of Instruction State of Tillamook Bay Community College Community College

Ms. Rivenes mentioned that the main thing TBCC was working on was equity and diversity. The college is also working on expansion and opening simulation labs for the healthcare programs. High-flex classes are also being offered for students who need more flexibility in their schedules. She explained that the college's truck driving simulator is mobile and can go to high schools and businesses for trainings on site.

**14. INFORMATION** – Arlene Soto, Small Business Development Center Director State of SBDC in Tillamook County

Ms. Soto gave an update on the SBDC in Tillamook County. One of the premier programs is the Small Business Management Program, offered October-June. In Tillamook, the SBDC meets the needs of about 7.5% of their business community compared to the national average that is about 3%. In 2020, the SBDC of Tillamook helped people find over \$880,000 to help their businesses. She explained that the next steps for the SBDC was to figure out post COVID business training needs.

**15. BOARD CHAIR REPORT** – Tony Erickson, Chair

*Chairman Erickson passed on report.*

**16. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT** – Heather DeSart, NOW Executive Director

Ms. DeSart introduced Pegge McGuire, the Executive Director of the Community Services Consortium who is currently our Youth service provider in Lincoln and Benton Counties.

Ms. DeSart announced that in partnership with Willamette Workforce Partnership, they are submitting a grant to the state for apprenticeship expansion through the Department of Labor. The grant is complementary to the HOW To grant that be board received.

**17. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS** – Roundtable

Commissioner Hunt mentioned that he was excited to hear the presentation Ms. DeSart would be making to the state board in June.

Mr. Poole thanked Ms. DeSart and the board for supporting the hospitality industry.

Mr. Hawkins mentioned he had been to a labor meeting and the recognition during that meeting of the great resource workforce boards are.

**18. SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT SECTION**

Please clearly state your name and address for the record. Each public comment will be limited to three (3) minutes at the Chair's discretion.

Ms. Gasser of Tongue Point Job Corps Center gave an update on the RFP and contract that is coming out. Originally one thing the Department of Labor took out was housing which meant 15 families, including Ms. Gasser, would be evicted October 1. With community and legislative support, they were able to get that off the RFP. Unfortunately, they still have 3.5 trades that are being cut and are working on trying to get that changed.

**19. ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 a.m.