East Cascades WORKS
Connecting Talent To Opportunity

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: December 9, 2024
Time: 12:30-1:30 pm
Location: Virtual via Zoom or Phone

Attendees

- Board: K'Lynn Lane, Laurie Chesley
- Staff: Heather Ficht, Jessica Fitzpatrick, Matt Gorman, Nickelle Haffey

Meeting called to order at 12:34 pm.

Time	Topic	Presenter

12:30 pm **Consent Agenda** **K'Lynn Lane, Chair**

- Check-in
  - Everyone shared something they're looking forward to this week.
- Minutes from November 2024 Executive Committee Meeting – *vote required*
  - Laurie moved to approve the minutes as presented. K'Lynn seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

12:40 pm **Meet New CFO** **Heather Ficht, Staff**

- Matt Gorman, EC Works' new CFO, introduced himself and shared a bit about his personal and professional background. He has an undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan, has an MBA and has experience in project management, construction, life sciences, consulting, and oil and gas. He is a self-described numbers geek and names budgeting, cash management, and job costing as his biggest strengths.

12:50 pm **Legislative Agenda** **Heather Ficht, Staff**

- Heather shared our current legislative priorities: supporting Prosperity Programs, supporting WorkSource Reentry, and postponing the WIOA reauthorization vote. OWP has published summaries of these priorities on their website: Advocacy - Oregon Workforce Partnership.
- Heather recently sent an email to the board and our partners asking for their logos in support of OWP's priorities. She also met with senators to ask them to support this legislation. Heather noted that our top priority is passing Prosperity Programs at whatever funding level the legislators see fit; this money would go to us, while WorkSource funding would go to OED.

- Heather said she believes our most effective strategy is using news articles to get the attention we need.
- Heather expressed optimism that the WIOA reauthorization vote, which would decimate our budget, will not happen.
- K'Lynn asked who is developing the stories that will be shared with local media. Heather answered that:
    - OWP commissioned a third-party evaluation of Prosperity 10K to demonstrate its effectiveness, since HECC's data reports were not effective.
    - Heather worked with Jen Covitz on a Reentry article that was recently published.
    - Katy Brooks from Bend Chamber will be writing an op-ed supporting our legislative asks, and will also seek support from her board.
    - We are asking for support from community college presidents and economic development partners.
- Heather noted that she expects widespread support because our ask is reasonable, nonpartisan, and not provocative.

1:10 pm Strategic Plan Heather Ficht, Staff

- Heather recently convened a board subcommittee comprised of Dave Baiocchi, Brian Wiessmeyer, Susan Lewis, and Chad Young to take a closer look at our strategic plan outcomes. The group brought up some good points that may result in substantial changes.
    - Our legislative education and outreach work is not mentioned in our strategic plan; we may be too specific with our exclusive focus on customers.
    - We will likely need to shift our thinking to ensure our plan reflects the work we're actually doing.
- Heather noted that the executive committee will see the updated strategic plan before it goes to the full board.
- Heather shared that a follow-up meeting will be scheduled for January.
- K'Lynn expressed support for taking time, reflecting, and refining the plan; Laurie agreed.

1:30 pm Adjourn K'Lynn Lane, Chair

- Meeting adjourned at 1:07 pm.

Attachments:

- Draft November 2024 Executive Committee Minutes
- Strategic Plan 1-Pager

East Cascades Works Strategic Plan
2024-2029

Our Target Industries: Healthcare and Construction
Our Priority Populations: Low-income people, rural residents, the emergent workforce (16-24yo), people impacted by the criminal justice system, Veterans, people experiencing disabilities, and people who identify as Black, Indigenous, Latino/a, Asian, and People of Color (BILAPOC)

VISION	MISSION	VALUES	REPUTATION
We envision a thriving East Cascades region where communities have access to education and training that lead to living-wage jobs and where businesses find the qualified talent they need to succeed.	We support the talent needs of employers by maximizing and aligning investments in the career goals of individuals to fuel a thriving economy.	• We embrace equity and inclusion • We are experts in workforce development and rigorous stewards of public funds • We are neutral conveners and community collaborators • We inspire a call to action • We are results-driven • We are innovative problem-solvers	In partnership with our communities, EC Works leads through collaboration and advocacy to ensure a local talent pipeline that meets the needs of employers. We support, influence, and scale sustainable workforce solutions.

PRIORITIES	OUTCOMES	ACTIONS
Prepare the Emergent Workforce for careers across the East Cascades region	• Young people across our 10 counties have increased access to internships/work experiences before completing high school • Labor market participation increases for young people in our region	• Co-invest in building career pathways and increased awareness of transferable skills • Leverage our strategic partnerships to engage more young people in entry level customer service/hospitality roles to build essential employability traits • Expansion of the internship program, Youth Career Connect. • Increase tech skills of the emergent workforce through training resources
Equip Jobseekers to access living wage employment through skill building and training	• Increase the starting wage of WorkSource Oregon customers • Greater retention of employment by WorkSource Oregon customers	• Support the development and implementation of apprenticeships/pre-apprenticeships • Respond to employer feedback and invest in addressing the skills gaps of jobseekers • Increase tech skills of jobseekers through training resources
Address Employer Talent Needs, particularly in target industries	• Increase living wage job opportunities listed through WorkSource • Increase employer utilization of WorkSource and Youth programs coordinated by EC Works	• Invest in strategies to activate the latent workforce (people not currently seeking employment) • Advise employers, with an emphasis on small businesses, on best practices re: inclusive hiring practices, employee engagement, competitive wages, flex work schedules and retention • Convene education and industry partners to assess future workforce needs and develop action plans
Enhance Services to our priority populations	• Increase the percentage of people within our priority populations accessing services • Increase labor market participation of our priority populations	• Support the expansion of programs and services tailored to meet the needs of our priority populations • Enhance outreach about services specifically to our priority populations • Develop a communications strategy aimed at clearly defining and effectively conveying the significance, value, and influence of EC Works and our partners

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Our Data: Our Outcomes as measured by the efficacy of our investments

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PRIORITIES	OUTCOMES	ACTIONS
Prepare the Emergent Workforce for careers across the East Cascades region	• Increase the number of young people across the 10 counties placed in an internship before completing high school or equivalent • Increase the number of young people who are enrolled in post-secondary education or placed in employment following engagement in services	• Co-invest in building career pathways and increased awareness of transferable skills • Leverage our strategic partnerships to engage more young people in entry level customer service/hospitality roles to build essential employability traits • Expansion of the internship program, Youth Career Connect. • Increase tech skills of the emergent workforce through training resources
Equip Jobseekers to access living wage employment through skill building and training	• Increase the starting wage of WorkSource Oregon customers • Greater retention of employment by WorkSource Oregon customers	• Support the development and implementation of apprenticeships/pre-apprenticeships • Respond to employer feedback and invest in addressing the skills gaps of jobseekers • Increase tech skills of jobseekers through training resources
Address Employer Talent Needs, particularly in target industries	• Increase the median starting wage of job opportunities listed through WorkSource • Increase utilization of employer programs coordinated by EC Works	• Invest in strategies to activate the latent workforce (people not currently seeking employment) • Advise employers, with an emphasis on small businesses, on best practices re: inclusive hiring practices, employee engagement, competitive wages, flex work schedules and retention • Convene education and industry partners to assess future workforce needs and develop action plans
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