East Cascades WORKS
Connecting Talent To Opportunity

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: September 14, 2026
Time: 12:30-1:30 pm
Location: Virtual via Zoom or Phone

Attendance

- Board: Dave Baiocchi, K'Lynn Lane, Wendy Jackson
- Staff: Heather Ficht, Jessica Fitzpatrick, Teresa Weir, Matt Gorman, Nickelle Haffey

Time	Topic	Presenter

12:30 pm **Consent Agenda** **Dave Baiocchi, Chair**

- Meeting called to order at 12:32 pm.
- Everyone answered the check-in question: As a parent, what do you have time to do now that school has started?
- Approve Minutes from August – *vote required*
    - Wendy moved to approve the minutes as presented; K'Lynn seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- All were in favor of canceling the October Executive Committee Meeting since it is a busy month of conferences and meetings.

12:45 pm **Quarterly Financials** **Matt Gorman, Staff**

- Matt presented the Q1 budget-to-actual/FY25 year-end update. Highlights included:
    - Assets (liabilities + equity) decreased $1.7 million (26.6%) from prior year, and total liabilities decreased $973K (39.3%) from the prior year. Net revenue for the year was essentially breakeven at $16K.
    - Funding overview: $2.24 million carry-in, P10K and Benefits Navigator grants (which ended July 1, 2026) were spent down to $0, OYEP grant was $22,700 over budget (but this is the expected pacing on a 2-year grant and not a concern).
    - Board expenses: $273K (11.7%) under budget due to savings achieved in employee benefits, leases, data systems, and a brief vacancy in the youth program manager role.
    - Provider expenses: $776K (15%) under budget overall.
- Matt concluded that our budget picture is overall positive. There were no questions.

1:00 pm **Board Survey Results** **Heather Ficht & Nickelle Haffey, Staff**

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- Nickelle shared the Board Survey results in detail, focusing on differences between public and private sector members' responses and feedback that EC Works Directors identified as particularly important and actionable. Top action items included:
    - Develop a simple Board Member talking points sheet with EC Works' mission, current priorities, key accomplishments, and ways to describe/support the work.
    - Offer occasional site visits, program tours, or other "Board in the Field" opportunities; this wouldn't need to be limited to Board Members.
    - Consider an informal Board gathering where members can get to know each other and learn about each other's expertise, connections, and communities. This could include a holiday party, open house, or summer appreciation barbecue – something low-budget and located in each of the subregions.
    - Use meeting time for more strategic discussion, policy implications, and questions where Board input is genuinely needed.
- Regarding the Board gathering, K'Lynn suggested focusing less on us and more on getting people to WorkSource or service providers' locations. She suggested collaborating with community colleges, small business development centers, or other partners.
- Wendy voiced support for giving Board Members specific action items and providing them with tools to become more familiar with their mission, role, and responsibilities. She noted that the Executive Committee had a strong discussion on this topic last month and should build on that.
- Dave expressed surprise that the public sector wasn't more engaged in the survey and suggested prompting a few more people to fill it out.
    - Jessica guessed that public sector members might have been unsure which "hat" they are wearing and whether they're representing the system, their agency, the customers, or the Board/ECW.
- Dave shared a few other ideas for engagement:
    - Compile the Board Spotlight sections from our newsletter into a flipbook that could also be added to the orientation packet.
        - Heather pointed out that we could include staff members' bios as well.
    - The day before WORKing Together, have Board and Staff get together for an informal activity, similar to the taco dinner we did last year.
        - Heather suggested grabbing dinner after the conference reception on Monday evening.
- Dave offered the Executive Committee's support around action items.
- Heather shared some additional ideas for engagement:
    - Create a Board Portal for member-only access to relevant information and documents.
    - List our mission at the top of every agenda as a continuous reminder of why we do our work.
- Wendy pointed out that survey fatigue can be a barrier to thoughtful responses, which in turn can paint a false narrative. She suggested putting more weight on comments than multiple-choice ratings.
    - Heather agreed and noted that when we share the survey results at the January Board Meeting, we want to make it discussion-based rather than just a presentation. We plan to use PowerPoint to help tell a compelling story and share our action items.

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1:10 pm **October Board Meeting Agenda** **Heather Ficht, Staff**

- Heather shared the draft October Board Meeting agenda for feedback, highlighting a few points:
    - Most of the agenda will focus on sharing PY2025 WIOA performance. To encourage a more robust and engaging conversation, our partners will present their own data and we will hold time for Q&A after each presenter.
        - We are still unsure if Youth Build and ODHS Self-Sufficiency will be included.
    - The Strategic Plan Scorecard and Board Member Survey presentations will happen at the January meeting. Nickelle will share a brief agenda preview to reassure Board Members that the survey has not been forgotten.
    - Our asks/action items will include sharing a video clip that Kristyn and Nickelle will be putting together, and giving members who did not fill out the survey one last chance to respond.
- Dave wanted to clarify that after each bullet point under "WIOA Performance," there will be a pause for Q&A; Heather confirmed.

1:20 pm **Updates** **All**

- Heather invited everyone to reach out with any last-minute questions or needs regarding the WORKing Together Conference.
- Heather shared that she has recruited new private sector members to our Board, so help is no longer needed.

1:30 pm **Adjourn** **Dave Baiocchi, Chair**

- Meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Attachments:

- August Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
- Quarterly Financials
- Board Survey Results
- Draft October Board Meeting Agenda

EAST CASCADES WORKS

Budget vs. Actual

Fiscal Year-End Review — July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026

Executive Committee Report

September 2026

READING THE FINANCIALS

Two Statements, Two Purposes

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Balance Sheet — a point-in-time snapshot of everything accumulated since day one

- **Assets —** what the organization owns — cash, receivables, equipment
- **Liabilities —** what the organization owes — accounts payable, notes payable (loans), deferred revenue
- **Net Assets (Equity) —** the difference between the two — the organization's "net worth"

Assets = Liabilities + Equity

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

Income Statement — activity for a fiscal period, resets and starts fresh after designated close

- **Revenue —** grants, contracts, and funding received during the period
- **Expenses —** costs incurred delivering programs and operations
- **Change in Net Assets —** Revenue minus Expenses — this period's Net Income/Loss, which flows into Net Assets on the Balance Sheet

Revenue − Expenses = Change in Net Assets (Net Income / Loss)

BALANCE SHEET · YEAR-END POSITION

Where We Stand

$723K

total equity **+2.3% vs. prior year — essentially flat**

$1.70M

Total assets

-26.6% vs. prior year

$973K

Total liabilities

-39.3% vs. prior year

↓

-39%

total liabilities vs. prior year

Two major grants recognized revenue as planned

P10K & WBN

$355K + $347K wound down, recognizing ~$702K of deferred revenue

OYEP

New award covers 100% of the $194K deferred revenue remaining

COHC

~$115K in legacy grant cash spent down this year

🌱 **Bottom line —** Contraction reflects planned grant lifecycle timing, not weakening finances. Net revenue for the year was essentially breakeven at $16K.

BUDGET VS. ACTUAL — FYE 2025–2026

Funding Overview

CARRY-IN

$2.24M

+$141,880 vs. projected ($2.10M)

WIOA carry-forward is the primary driver

P10K & BENEFITS NAVIGATOR

Spent to $0

Both grants closed clean at program end

Provider underspend recaptured and reallocated before close-out

OYEP

-5.2%

$22,700 over budget

Expected pacing on a two-year grant — not a concern

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Carry-in landed $141,880 above projection

Actual carry-forward of $2.24M vs. the $2.10M originally projected — a healthy cushion heading into next fiscal year, driven mainly by WIOA program lines running under planned spend-down

P10K and Benefits Navigator closed at $0 balance, as planned

Both grants reached their program end dates fully spent. Provider underspend identified before close-out was recaptured and reallocated rather than left on the table

OYEP's modest overspend is normal pacing, not a concern

OYEP is a two-year grant; a 5% variance at this point in the cycle is well within expected range and will true up over the grant period

BUDGET VS. ACTUAL — FYE 2025–2026

Board Expenses

TOTAL BOARD EXPENSES

11.7%

$273,000 under budget ($2.06M vs. $2.33M)

Board + program expenses

STAFFING

5.9%

$94,240 under budget

Flat benefits renewal + youth manager vacancy savings

LEASES (COMBINED)

25.9%

$23,119 under budget

Board + provider office leases, tied to office move

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Total board expenses came in 11.7% under budget

$2.06M actual against a $2.33M budget — a $273,000 favorable variance across staffing, operating, and program expense categories

Employee benefits ran well under budget

A 10% renewal increase was built into the budget, but the actual renewal came in flat versus previous year, driving most of the staffing-side savings

Salaries reflect a period of vacancy in the youth manager role

The position sat open for part of the year before being filled, contributing modest additional savings within the staffing line

Data System and leases came in under budget, as expected

Data System tracked to a renegotiated contract already reflected in this current year's budget. Combined board and provider office leases also ran under budget, alongside ECW's office relocation

BUDGET VS. ACTUAL — FYE 2025–2026

Provider Expenses

TOTAL PROVIDER EXPENSES

15%

$775,980 under budget ($4.39M vs. $5.16M)

Across all subrecipient / pass-through grants

PGE

-7.7%

$8,380 over budget

Grant runs through Sept. — expected to true up this quarter

P10K & BENEFITS NAVIGATOR

$0

Fully utilized before close-out

Provider underspend recaptured by ECW; remainder rolled forward

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Provider expenses came in 15% under budget overall

$4.39M actual against a $5.16M budget across all subrecipient grants — a $775,980 favorable variance for the year

PGE ran slightly over budget, with time left to true up

A modest $8,380 overspend, but the grant continues through the end of September this budget year — expected to correct itself this quarter

P10K and Benefits Navigator provider underspend didn't go to waste

As those grants approached close-out, provider underspend was recaptured and utilized directly by ECW

	Public Sector (n=4)	Private Sector (n=7)	Takeaways?
Satisfaction with experience serving on the EC Works Board			Private sector is slightly more satisfied
Very satisfied	2 (50%)	5 (71%)	
Satisfied	1 (25%)	2 (29%)	
Neutral	1 (25%)	0	
I receive meeting materials with enough time to review them			
Strongly agree	4 (100%)	6 (86%)	
Agree	0	1 (14%)	
I feel prepared to participate in board meetings/votes			Private sector feels more prepared to participate
Strongly agree	1 (25%)	5 (71%)	
Agree	3 (75%)	2 (29%)	
Board meetings make good use of my time			
Strongly agree	2 (50%)	4 (57%)	
Agree	2 (50%)	3 (43%)	
Board discussions focus on the issues that matter most			
Strongly agree	2 (50%)	4 (57%)	
Agree	2 (50%)	3 (43%)	
I have meaningful opportunities to contribute			
Strongly agree	1 (25%)	5 (71%)	
Agree	3 (75%)	2 (29%)	
Do you generally prefer attending board meetings:			
In person	2 (50%)	4 (57%)	
Virtually	1 (25%)	2 (29%)	
It depends	1 (25%)	1 (14%)	
Enough opportunities to engage/connect outside of meetings?			
Yes	4 (100%)	6 (86%)	
No	0	1 (14%)	
Confidence in explaining EC Works' mission and purpose			
Very confident	2 (50%)	2 (29%)	
Somewhat confident	1 (25%)	5 (71%)	
Neutral	1 (25%)	0	
Confidence describing role as a board member			
Very confident	1 (25%)	3 (43%)	
Somewhat confident	3 (75%)	4 (57%)	
Confidence discussing workforce needs/priorities of our region			Private sector is more confident
Very confident	1 (25%)	5 (71%)	
Somewhat confident	2 (50%)	2 (29%)	
Neutral	1 (25%)	0	
Feel informed about work/initiatives across the region			
Strongly agree	1 (25%)	2 (29%)	
Agree	3 (75%)	5 (71%)	
County/sector receives adequate attention in discussions/priorities			
Strongly agree	2 (50%)	4 (57%)	
Agree	1 (25%)	2 (29%)	
Neutral	1 (25%)	1 (14%)	

Feedback about board meetings	Sector
Meetings are run well and on time. Sometimes it is hard to hear when on Zoom call, but that is a normal problem for meetings. Make sure to leave enough time for report outs at the end of meeting. We get a lot of good information from that.	Public
The ECW team is always thoroughly prepared.	Private
I do not feel that I am doing enough and I would love to be more engaged and involved in any way I can.	Private
As a newer member, wrapping my head around all the agency names and acronyms is quite a challenge! Any resources that lay out the relationship between all the different entities would be really awesome!	Private
It's important to remember what a board's role actually is — and from there, figure out what each of us can personally add to make it stronger. I think we need more discovery around what each person has to offer, both on the board itself and in other ways they can connect off the board and out in the community.	Private

How might we better engage you in our work?	
I would love to learn more about the work being done and how I can truly be involved more than just the meetings.	Private
I appreciate the opportunities to engage (WORKing Together Conference, Talent Summit, Board Meetings, in person community engagement). Thank you Kristyn, Teresa and Heather for SHOWING up.	Private
I would like to understand more about how the key programs work, and maybe see them in action.	Private

Topics/issues to spend more time discussing over the coming year?	
Re-establishing workforce training grants.	Public
I would love to better understand the programming happening across our region and better learn to advocate for both ECW and KFalls	Private
Information on legislative news and insights for how things impact ECW is helpful as a Board Member.	Private
Workforce Pell grants and industry participation in the creation of eligible programming.	Public
Policy in Oregon vs other states and how that translates into attracting a work force, attracting businesses and similar.	Private
I think we need to talk more about high school and student engagement when it comes to emerging workforce issues. A few things come to mind: Barriers & Relationships: What are the actual barriers to student engagement, and where do we already have good relationships in place to build on? We shouldn't be starting from scratch — let's map what's already working. Job Fairs & Internships: Where are job fairs happening, and what internship programs can we leverage? Are there gaps we could fill, or partnerships we could strengthen? Local Grant Dollars: Where are there local grant dollars we could tap into to double down on building a local workforce pipeline? I'd love to see us get more intentional here. Economic Development Alignment: Are we working with our economic development districts and their CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies) around workforce goals and issues? If not, is there an opportunity to start? Philanthropic Partners: Which philanthropy partners are already investing in workforce strategies, and how do we plug into or align with that funding?	Private
More training and workforce development related to tech industry jobs!	Private

Feedback for EC Works Staff	
Staff is doing a great job. I like the effort to involve the board more and the board member spotlight is a great idea.	Public
I appreciate the structure and organization as well as the commitment to community. I want to be brought in on more conversations and better serve the board and my community.	Private
Support Board Members with priority talking points as they are in the community and communicating about the work happening with ECW.	Private
I am regularly impressed by the work that the staff accomplishes and their connections with the communities and existing and developing industries.	Public
Great work!	Private
Keep the success stories coming — WITH photos! And keep elevating the team members who are out in the field doing the work. How can we support those team members who are in the field? What engagement opportunities are there for the board to help support a culture of community building within EC Works?	Private
It's nice to share space in the Bend WorkSource office!	Public
You're doing great!	Private

One change to strengthen the EC Works Board or improve its effectiveness over the next year	
An event that brings board members together other than a board meeting. I'd like to learn more about our members. Perhaps each board member has a few minutes to share their personal and professional history at the event?	Public

One thing I always hear is "Make sure [*rural county*] Is heard." I will always strive to make sure our amazing [*subregional*] community is heard, but I know that I can do a better job of representing and advocating for [*rural counties*].	Private
Continue the newsletter format as I find this very helpful to stay up to date with ECW happenings and people.	Private
I love seeing representatives from large employers on the meetings.	Private
I appreciate the THREE asks at the end of the meeting — it engages us in ways where we know we can actually be supportive. Sharing on social media, engagement, and serving on the board really comes down to the team telling us how we can best support them. We need direct, clear communication — that helps EVERYONE. I love being part of the EC Works Board. I serve on several tables across the state, and this one feels the strongest — most aligned with state priorities and most effective for creating long-term solutions to better the lives of communities.	Private
The board is effective in my opinion.	Private

Anything else to share

Thankful to be a part of this, I know I can do more!	Private
Continue to reinforce the action items you would like Board Members to do after each meeting. While I can't remember what they are specifically at this moment, I think they had to do with read the newsletter, connect with x people, share something. Having this written at the bottom of the agenda will help establish and reinforce this request with your Board Members. I hold onto my one-page agenda and notes from the meetings!	Private
This is important work that is resource heavy and often focussed on the bottom percentile of the work force. The benefits of keeping people employed, keeping them out of the correctional system, and keeping them off other government services is such a great mission, even if / when it feels like a struggle.	Private
I worry about the declining funding environment for workforce development, and encourage EC Works to work to get ahead of this, potentially by finding ways to merge with other organizations.	Private

Overall Analysis

EC Works has a strong and effective Board foundation; the biggest opportunity is to help members better understand their role and give them clearer, more meaningful ways to contribute beyond the boardroom.

Strongest themes and takeaways:

1. The Board experience is strong overall.
Members are highly positive about EC Works staff, meeting organization, preparation, use of time, and opportunities to contribute. There is no major indication that the Board is ineffective or disengaged.

2. Members want to do more—but aren't always sure how
This is probably the strongest qualitative theme. Several members explicitly said they want to be more involved, contribute more, advocate for EC Works, and support staff/community work.
The opportunity isn't simply "increase engagement." It's making it easier for members to know *how* to engage.

3. Role clarity and organizational understanding are the biggest gaps
Members are generally informed, but fewer feel highly confident explaining EC Works, their role as a Board member, or regional workforce priorities. Newer members in particular want help understanding programs, acronyms, partners, and how the regional workforce system fits together.

4. Private-sector members appear somewhat more confident
Private-sector members were more likely to give the strongest ratings for preparation, contribution, and understanding regional workforce needs. The qualitative responses also contain more requests from private-sector members to become more involved and better understand the work.
However, both sectors are overwhelmingly positive overall, so this looks more like a difference in degree than a serious public/private divide.

5. Members want more strategic and "real-world" exposure
They'd like more discussion of policy, funding, workforce trends, youth pipelines, industry needs, and regional partnerships—and some specifically want to see programs and staff in action.

Suggested action Items:

1. Clarify the Board role
Provide a brief annual Board orientation/refresher.
Clearly explain what Board members can/should contribute.

2. Make Board-member asks more explicit
Keep the successful "three asks" approach.
Add a standing **"Board Member Action Items"** section to agendas so requests don't get lost after meetings.

3. Create better tools for Board ambassadors
Develop a simple Board-member talking-points sheet with EC Works' mission, current priorities, key accomplishments, and ways to describe/support the work.

4. Increase connection to the work
Offer occasional site visits, program tours, or other "Board in the field" opportunities. Doesn't need to be limited to Board.
Continue success stories, ideally with photos and staff/community highlights.

5. Strengthen Board-to-Board connections
Consider an informal Board gathering where members can get to know each other and learn about each other's expertise, connections, and communities.

Holiday party/open house - January? Summer board appreciation bbq?

Continue/expand Board member spotlights.

6. Keep meetings largely as they are—but make them even more strategic
Don't overhaul the meeting structure; feedback is already strong.
Use meeting time for more strategic discussion, policy implications, and questions where Board input is genuinely needed.

Multiple Choice Analysis

Takeaways:
1. The overall board experience is quite positive.
2. Private-sector members appear somewhat more confident and engaged than public-sector members.
3. The biggest organizational opportunity is not logistics—it's helping members feel more knowledgeable, prepared, and clear about their role.

4. Meetings are working, but there's room to make them more valuable and strategically focused.

Recommendations:
1. Strengthen board member orientation and role clarity, including a short (10-15 min) annual refresher covering:

What the Board is responsible for
What individual board members are expected to do
What the Board vs. ECW staff are responsible for
How board decisions affect EC Works' work
What board members should be prepared to speak to publicly

2. Give members more "so what" context:
Rather than simply providing information about programs and initiatives, periodically connect the dots: Here's what's happening → Here's why it matters → Here's what it means for our region → Here's what we need from the Board.

3. Make meetings slightly more strategic. Small incremental improvements could include:
More discussion of strategic questions
Fewer purely informational updates where possible
Explicitly identify where board input is needed
Give members a little more context before asking for a decision
Occasionally ask, "What are we missing?"

4. Look for ways to build cross-sector connection

5. Keep doing what's already working:
Receiving materials on time
Feeling prepared
Meeting time being well used
Discussions focusing on important issues
Meaningful opportunities to contribute

Open Ended Response Analysis

1. The strongest theme: "I want to do more." Not because we're not engaging them, but because they like being involved, believe in the work, and want us to tell them how to be useful.

2. Members want to understand the big picture; not necessarily more information, but how it connects:
EC Works → programs → partners → funding → communities served → outcomes
or
Board member → what you can influence → where you can advocate → how you can help

3. Strong desire for board member connection/building a stronger network among the Board itself. Possibly through a board networking/social event.

4. "Tell us what to do" is a recurring operational lesson. Consider adding a standing section to every agenda - ideally with 1 sentence of context explaining why it matters:
Board Member Action Items:
☐ Read/share [newsletter]
☐ Connect EC Works staff with [X]
☐ Share [resource/opportunity]
☐ Follow up with [person/organization]

5. Members want to be equipped to represent EC Works externally. Consider creating a simple Board Member Talking Points one-pager that includes:
What EC Works does
Who we serve
Current priorities
2–3 current success stories
Current funding/policy issue
"If you want to learn more, contact…"

6. Members want to see the work—not just hear about it. Keep sharing success stories with photos. Field exposure could be a powerful tool, including site/employer/workforce partner visits, program tours, graduation/completion events, occasional "Board in the Field" opportunities.

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EC Works Board Meeting Agenda

Date: October 28, 2026
Time: 11:30 am-1:30 pm
Location: Hybrid

- **Central:** WorkSource Bend – Training Room
- **North:** Columbia Gorge Community College – TBD
- **South:** Sky Lakes Medical Center – Seven Lakes Conference Room

Time	Topic	Presenter
11:30 am	**Call to Order**	**Dave Baiocchi, Chair**

- Consent Agenda:
  - Minutes from July 2026 EC Works Board Meeting – *vote required*
  - Appreciation of Service: K'Lynn Lane, Dave Burger, Greg Davis, Chad Young
  - Welcome New Members

11:40 am **Annual WIOA Performance & Discussion** **Heather Ficht, Staff**

- Annual Performance Report – Teresa Cummings-Weir, Staff
- Program Presentations – Kristyn Fix, Ashely Thunell, & Jo Dancen, Staff
- Community Colleges/Adult Basic Skills
  - COCC – Cindy Lenhart
  - CGCC – Susan Lewis
  - KCC – Hallie Williams
- Oregon Employment Department – Soledad Haines
- Vocational Rehabilitation – Cortney Gibson
- Oregon Commission for the Blind – Morgan Rincon
- Youth Build – TBD
- Oregon Department of Human Services/Self Sufficiency – TBD

1:20 pm **Updates & Announcements** **All**

- January Board Meeting Preview – Nickelle Haffey, Staff
  - Impact Report
  - Strategic Plan Scorecard
  - Board Member Survey Results
- Asks – Heather Ficht, Staff
  - Watch and share Incumbent Worker video

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- TBD (get ex com input)

1:30 pm **Adjourn** **Dave Baiocchi, Chair**

Attachments:

- Minutes from July 30, 2025
- Performance Report Slide Deck