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Benton Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC)

Executive Committee Minutes

June 24, 2025, 4:00 p.m., WorkSource Columbia Basin | Zoom

Local Elected Officials

Commissioner Will McKay
Commissioner Clint Didier

Executive Members

Todd Samuel
Adolfo de Leon
Lynn Ramos-Braswell
Amanda Jones
Andrew Cook
Megan McCary

BFWDC Staff

Cynthia N. Garcia
DeAnn Bock
Gabby Torres
Jessie Cardwell
Raul Ochoa

Guest

Crystal Bright

Excused Absences

Commissioner Will McKay
Adolfo de Leon

BFWDC Staff Excused

Absences

Jessie Cardwell

Call to Order & Welcome

Todd Samuel called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Todd welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for taking the time to support the mission and vision of the BFWDC.

Raul Ochoa conducted a roll call of Board members and staff to the Board – a quorum was present.

Minutes

May 27, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes were presented for a motion to approve.

Andrew Cook motioned to approve the May 27, 2025, meeting minutes as presented; Megan McCary seconded. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved after a motion and a second.

Motion to Approve PY25 WIOA Contracts - Cynthia N. Garcia

Cynthia Garcia discussed the delay in receiving final contract amounts and performance targets, explaining the uncertainty due to budget information.

- The motion to approve the contract with Career Path Services for Program Year 2025 was introduced, but Cynthia requested to postpone the approval until final performance targets are received.

Motion to PY25 State EcSA Services Contract via Sole Source - Cynthia N. Garcia

Todd Samuel and Cynthia Garcia discussed the performance of Career Path Services, noting their excellent track record and the decision to sole-source the contract. There is no concern based off the planned numbers versus the actual numbers with the current service provider.

Lynn Ramos-Braswell motioned to approve; Andrew Cook seconded the motion. The Sole Source \$278,300 contract to Career Path Services was unanimously approved term following the motion and second.

BFWDC Executive Director Report - Cynthia N. Garcia

PY25 One-Stop Operator (OSO) Statement of Work

Cynthia shared that board members involved in the RFP review noted the current OSO contract's statement of work lacks clear performance indicators. It was recommended that the PY25 OSO statement of work be updated to include well-defined expectations and measurable metrics to request from our consortium. Cynthia also mentioned the importance of adding flexibility should we need to amend the

document, based on current situations with budget, functional teams' structures, etc. The Todd Samuel discusses the importance of the One Stop Operator's role in providing impactful services with limited resources.

Todd emphasized that in the next years we need our one stop to perform in a more impactful manner. That we also as a Board need to know what kind of impact we are having. This draft statement of work is the information needed to communicate our expectations for the next four years.

- A draft document has been sent to the RFP committee, to review that information and to make sure that all their observations and recommendations are included in this document.

PY25 WIOA Funding Reductions

Program Year 2025 marks a significant shift in the CPS funding landscape. With reductions in WIOA Title 1-B funding and the scheduled conclusion of key project-based grants—such as QUEST and the Business Solutions contracts—CPS's ability to maintain current staffing and service levels has been drastically affected. In collaboration with CPS, we addressed these funding challenges with the following priorities:

- Preserve capacity for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth case management and training services
- Prioritize positions directly tied to WIOA performance outcomes
- Eliminate roles funded solely through ending or one-time project-based contracts
- Leverage existing vacancies to minimize the need for involuntary reductions

The most significant impact was on Front-End Services, where a total of 2.5 FTEs positions were eliminated 1 of them include the Front-End Manager, 1 WS Employment Specialist position was also eliminated, 2 other vacancies will not be backfilled, and 1 Business Navigator position was a project-based position that ends at the end of this program year. These hard decisions were made with our job seekers and employers at the center, and to prioritize roles directly tied to WIOA performance metrics.

Todd Samuel highlighted that the organization has improved its front desk services over the years and the importance of maintaining high-quality front desk services to ensure a positive customer experience.

Discussion on Meeting Schedule

- Commissioner Didier agreed that the date & time is good and to continue the current meeting schedule.

Funding update

- BFET (Basic Food Employment and Training) application - will be completed in October. This funding is to provide employment readiness opportunities to Basic Food (SNAP) recipients.
- Cynthia is serving on the WWA Fundraising Committee and is currently working on a proposal, in collaboration with WWA, to be submitted to a Spokane-based bank. Further details will be shared as the proposal develops.
- She noted that we continue to actively engage with community partners to support initiatives aimed at addressing capacity challenges.
- A proposal for childcare apprenticeship opportunities is being developed in partnership with ESD123.
- Amanda Jones requested that Cynthia identify and present specific areas where board support is needed.

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- State monitoring is going very well; they are done with the program monitoring and are looking at Data Element Validation now. There will be some minor corrections that will need to be made, but nothing that is alarming or that will become a disallowed cost or a finding.
- One thing that was identified is the need for board involvement with the required policies. Todd Samuel and Cynthia Garcia discuss the board's role in reviewing and approving policy updates, emphasizing the need for clear communication and documentation. The board agrees to continue the current process of reviewing significant policy changes and updating the executive committee as needed.

Fiscal Report – DeAnn Bock

DeAnn Bock provided an overview of the financial reports for the three entities as of June 15, 2025, noting there was no unusual activity.

DeAnn mentioned that the organization is on track to come in under budget for PY24, and the PY25 budget for the upcoming program year will be presented at the next meeting. She noted that the final contract amounts had not yet been received from the state, which was delaying budget planning.

Workforce Program Report – Gabby Torres

Compliance Coordinator/Equal Opportunity Officer Gabby Torres provided a brief update on behalf of Jessie Cardwell on program performance, noting progress in meeting exit goals for adult dislocated workers and the need for final contract amounts from the state.

WIOA Title IB

- Gaps in exits are closing; this remains a priority for case managers.
- Training, exit, and enrollment goals are on track for completion by Q4.
- Awaiting final contracts from the state; final contract amounts were received Monday morning.
- Collaborating with Career Path Services to set PY25 goals.
- Final contracts will be routed for signatures after state grant team approval.

QUEST

- The contract runs through September 2025 and will support remaining customers and business navigator activities in Q1. No funding is expected after September.

EcSA'

- Exits are behind but remain a focus.
- Federal EcSA: Extended through September, easing Q1 budget constraints for the new program year. No additional funding expected for PY25.
- State EcSA: Performance is strong; budget and draft contracts received last Tuesday. Working on local documentation.

Community reinvestment funds (CRF)

- Unclear when funds will be renewed, possibly after July 1 but no later than September, causing a temporary service gap.
- New flexibility: Incentives can be up to \$1,000/month and for varied durations — determined locally.
- Funding levels will guide planning.

- Business services and MISA/IDA funds will now require a 1:1 match (previously 2:1).
- Adjustments are in response to budget reductions.

WSAC (Washington Student Achievement Council) Update

- STEM Foundation is developing the Statement of Work; MOUs is expected soon.
- Currently in the early implementation phase.
- Focusing on proven strategies from prior group initiatives.
- Recent presentations by EWU and Benton-Franklin Trends compared Benton City to Tri-Cities on wages, education, and family size — results were very similar.
- Presentation available upon request.

Adjournment

Todd Samuel adjourned the executive committee meeting at 5:11 p.m.

Items to Address

- [] Finalize the one-stop operator statement of work with clear expectations and metrics.
- [] Provide the updated one-stop operator statement of work to the board members for review.
- [] Follow up on the status of the final WIOA contract amounts from the state.
- [] Provide more information on the CRF funding and the match savings account requirements.

Next Meeting

Executive Committee Meeting – Tuesday, July 29, 2025, 3:00 p.m. Location: WorkSource Columbia Basin, Room 8 | Zoom Hybrid.

Quarterly Board Meeting – Board Meeting – Tuesday, July 29, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. Location: WorkSource Columbia Basin, Room 8 | Zoom Hybrid.

Respectfully Submitted:

Signed by:

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Todd Samuel, Board Chair Date

Signed by:

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Lynn Ramos-Braswell, Board Secretary Date