



Benton Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC)

Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

April 29, 2025, 4:00 p.m., WorkSource Columbia Basin | Zoom

Board - Present

Todd Samuel
Megan MaCary
Amanda Jones
Andrew Cook
John Dickson
Lori Mattson
Kate McAteer
Adolfo DeLeon
Amelia Kitson
Lynn Ramos-Braswell
Sheila Erickson

Guests - Present

Aaron Desrochers
Thelma Jernberg
Selma Velagic
Heather Woodruff
Mathew Russell
Marla McMackin
Israel Delamora
Cristal Bright
Laura Williams

Guests - Continued

Maribel Torres
Nancy Parra
Kayci Loftus
Andy Dwonch
Anthony Peterson
Jimena Hernandez

BFWDC Staff - Present

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

Excused Absences

Commissioner Will McKay
Commissioner Clint Didier

Call to Order & Welcome

Todd Samuel, Chair, introduced himself as the Chairman of the Board and a Group Manager at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Todd Samuel initiated the roll call, confirming the presence of board members and staff.

Cyndelle reported excused absences; a quorum was present as defined in the bylaws. In-person guests were asked to introduce themselves, and virtual guests were asked to use the chat feature to reflect those in attendance in the meeting minutes.

Todd Samuel welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for taking the time to support the mission and vision of the BFWDC.

Consent Agenda

- Approval of Board Minutes.
 - To approve January 28, 2025, Quarterly Board Meeting Minutes as presented
- Operations
 - Motion To Approve Board Membership for an Additional Term Ending June 30, 2028
 - a) Adolfo De Leon | Government
 - b) Alicia Perches | Business
 - c) Amanda Jones | Business
 - d) Karl Dye | Business | Economic Development
 - e) Kate McAteer | Education
 - Motion to Approve WorkSource Columbia Basin One-Stop Operator RFP Review Committee Recommendation of BFWDC RFP: 2025-01 to the Benton-Franklin Consortium.
- Fiscal
 - Motion to Approve Draft Form-990
- Program
 - Motion to Approve PY24 WIOA Title IB Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Contracts Extension through June 30, 2026, to continue serving individuals and businesses in PY25.

Todd Samuel asked for board members' comments or opposition; John Dickson and Adolfo De Leon recused themselves from the consent agenda motion. John Dickson and Adolfo De Leon recuse themselves from voting on the One Stop operator contract due to their involvement with the Employment Security Department and DSHS.

Todd Samuel called for a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion moved by Andrew Cook, the second by Kate McAteer, and unanimously carried to approval. The consent agenda is approved unanimously after a motion and a second.

Fiscal Report – DeAnn Bock

DeAnn Bock provided an overview of the financials and asked if there were any questions about the financial documents that had been included in the board packet. Amanda Jones asked about the professional services and contracts being below budget and if there were any concerns about being over budget once all invoices are paid for the year, DeAnn confirmed that the final audit invoice, which makes up the majority of that category, had not yet been received but there are no financial concerns for the current fiscal year, which ends on June 30, 2025.

BFWDC Q3 Reflection – Cynthia N. Garcia

Quarterly Board Meeting Highlights

Board Membership Update:

Seth Worley has formally submitted his resignation and will no longer serve as a board member. He has recommended Dan Glenn, Training Director of Plumbers and Steamfitters Local Union 598, as a potential replacement. Cynthia had the opportunity to meet with Dan to discuss the BFWDC's mission, vision, and strategic objectives. He is currently completing his board application, and once finalized, we will bring this recommendation to the Executive Committee and board for the next steps.

Legislative Advocacy:

BFWDC staff and board member Andrew Cook recently met with legislative representatives to advocate for the Economic Security for All (EcSA) program and community reinvestment funding. During the meetings, they shared local success stories and emphasized the proven return on investment—\$2.34 in economic return for every \$1 the state invests in EcSA, a poverty-reduction initiative.

NAWB Conference:

Cynthia Garcia and Jessie Cardwell had the honor of attending the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) Conference in Washington, D.C. This was a valuable opportunity to engage with policymakers, workforce professionals, and advocates. Our area, North-Central and South-Central regional teams met with Congressman Newhouse and Senator Murray's staff to share how WIOA investments are positively impacting our communities through data and success stories.

Hospitality Sector Grant:

The BFWDC & WSCB held our first focus group at WSCB, inviting employees from quick-service restaurants, full-service restaurants, and lodging. A total of 29 employees participated and received a \$63 gift card. A second focus group was recently held, and outcomes will be shared at the next quarterly board meeting.

Annual CliftonLarsenAllen Audit:

We successfully completed our annual fiscal audit with no findings or areas of concern. This reflects our strong commitment to accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement.

Regional Challenge Grant (Year 2):

Staff are now in the implementation phase of ideas developed during the initial fact-finding phase. Using a two-generational approach, we are supporting both youth and adults in Benton City to increase credential attainment. One highlight of this period includes funding an AmeriCorps member to deliver digital literacy classes in both English and Spanish. Next year's focus will be on scaling successful projects and securing additional funding.

OSY Waiver Approval:

The U.S. Department of Labor approved a waiver reducing the required Out-of-School Youth (OSY) expenditure from 75% to 50%. This provides flexibility to fund In-School Youth (ISY) programs, especially for students facing barriers such as homelessness, foster care involvement, or justice system interaction. Currently, our programs serve 100% OSY. This waiver creates an opportunity to evaluate potential ISY models based on community need.

One-Stop Operator RFP:

BFWDC staff issued a Request for Proposal for the WIOA One-Stop Operator. Special thanks to board members and STEM Foundation partners who contributed to the selection process. Congratulations to the selected bidder- the Benton Franklin Workforce Consortium. We look forward to collaborating as we continue advancing our mission and strategic goals.

Board Health Survey:

The recent Board Health Survey provided meaningful insights into member satisfaction and engagement. Key findings highlight areas for enhanced communication and collaboration. A full report is included in your board packet.

Strategic Plan Feedback:

Thank you to all board members for your thoughtful feedback. We've incorporated your suggestions into the revised strategic plan. While some ideas present challenges in terms of timeline, we're asking for additional time for staff to prioritize initiatives and bring recommendations to the Executive Committee.

Regional Workforce Panel:

BFWDC and WSCB staff participated in the "Understanding the Current Tri-Cities Workforce" panel hosted by TRIDEC in partnership with the Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce. Jessie Cardwell shared updates on workforce initiatives and discussed current labor market trends. They're excited to continue this collaboration and remain active in key regional events.

Community Engagement:

Cynthia provided highlights on their strategy for strengthening community involvement with BFWDC. By sharing success stories and promoting our mission, we aim to increase awareness and support for workforce programs. Engaging business leaders and fostering partnerships is essential to building a workforce that meets regional demands.

WSCB Business Solutions – Selma V./Heather W.

Heather, Aaron, and Selma provide an overview of the Business Solutions team, including their focus on healthcare, hospitality, government, agriculture, and education sectors. Successes include dedicated funding for staff and programs, an expanded team, and increased work experience opportunities.

Presentation included Team Achievement, Challenges, add Key Strategies. (Presentation available upon request)

Member Updates & Business Engagement – All Board and Ex-Officio Members

Key Announcements:

- OIC Funding Availability | Israel De La Mora
 - Funding is still available for community upgrades
 - Focused on the agricultural community
 - Opportunities for warehouse, production, and agricultural credentials
- Downtown Pasco Events | Selma Velagic and Israel Delamora
 - Cinco de Mayo celebration is upcoming
 - Farmers market opening
 - Highlighting local businesses (e.g., Cafe con Arte, which received a micro-grant)
- Family-Friendly Workplaces Program
 - Partnership between TRIDEC and the Chamber (TCRC)
 - Sponsored by the Commerce Department
 - Limited spaces for employers (12-15 total)
 - Seeking interested employers to learn about creating family-friendly work environments

Adjournment

Closing Remarks:

Todd thanked everyone for their participation and contributions to the meeting. Todd concludes the meeting with a reminder of the next quarterly meeting and the importance of the WDC's mission.

- Quarterly Board Meeting – Tuesday, July 29, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

Next Meeting

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:

D7F28D83A93B41F...
Todd Samuel, Board Chair Date

Signed by:

16CB105360F349E...
Lynn Ramos-Braswell, Board Secretary Date