



Benton Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC)

Executive Committee Minutes

March 25, 2025, 4:00 p.m., WorkSource Columbia Basin | Zoom

Executive Committee Members

Chief Local Elected Officials

Commissioner Clint Didier

Commissioner Will McKay

Board Members

Todd Samuel

Amanda Jones

Andrew Cook

Lynn Ramos-Braswell

Megan McCary

Adolfo de Leon

Staff to the Board (Non-Voting)

Cynthia N. Garcia

Cyndelle Howell

DeAnn Bock

Gabby Torres

Jessie Cardwell

Raul Ochoa

Call to Order & Welcome

Todd Samuel called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Todd welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for taking the time to support the mission and vision of the BFWDC.

Cyndelle conducted a call of local elected officials, board members and staff, and a quorum was present. Todd and Cyndelle welcomed virtual guests, asking them to communicate their names and organization using the Zoom chat feature. Todd reminded those in attendance to have cameras on, to capture who was speaking.

Minutes

February 25, 2025, Executive Committee meeting minutes were presented and reviewed for a motion to approve.

Todd Samuel called for a motion to approve the Executive Committee meeting minutes from the February 25, 2025, committee meeting.

Amanda Jones motioned to amend the meeting minutes to include the names of the Board members and clarify references for Board members and staff commentary. The motion was seconded by Andrew Cook and approved.

Executive Director Updates – Cynthia N. Garcia

2025 Board Retreat Updates – Next Steps

The draft follow-up document for the 2025 Board Retreat was sent out to all board members for review and feedback by April 11th. Cynthia has scheduled meetings with board members who did not attend the retreat to provide an overview and discuss strategies. The goal is to present a refined plan at the next April Executive meeting and then take it to the full board for final approval. She also discussed the need for honest and bold conversations with board members who have not been attending meetings.

The Forum 2025 (NAWB) - BFWDC Staff Role

The Executive Director and Program Director will be attending a conference in Washington, DC, where they will have the opportunity to engage with policymakers and contribute to the discussions that influence the direction of future policy in areas important to our organization or sectors. All WWA Directors will be meeting with Senator Murray, and only our area, South Central, and North Central, will be meeting with Congressman Dan Newhouse-



to share impacts of WIOA programs across the state, Funding and reauthorization and general workforce development issues.

Legislative Update – Budget

Cynthia provided updates on the latest operating budget proposals regarding the EcSA (Economic Security for All) program from the Senate and the House; as a reminder, the EcSA program provides financial assistance to low-income individuals in Washington state, while the CRP (Community Reinvestment Program) supports economic development in underserved communities. Regarding our EcSA Program and Community Reinvestment Program, there are some disagreements between the two chambers on the bill's details. However, we received the latest Operating Budget Proposals released which indicate the following:

Senate indicates EcSA funded at \$12,338,000, this is a reduction of \$8,266,000 from the current funding level of \$20,604,000

- CRP funded at \$30,000,000

In the House- EcSA is funded at \$12,416,000, this is a reduction of \$8,188,000 from the current funding level of \$20,604,000

- CRP funded at \$25,000,000

We still don't know what it will mean to our local area as this funding is allocated based on several factors such as poverty levels, income inequality, community needs, unemployment rates, and demographic data.

When it comes to **WIOA Title 1 Funding** (which includes Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs) – we received our local Mock Allocations for next program year- youth is taking a significant hit with \$164,000 less than last program year, Adult \$156,000 less, and about \$100,000 more in the Dislocated Worker program.

It's important to highlight that one of our key priorities is to continue pursuing non-WIOA funding opportunities to expand and enhance workforce services. In collaboration with ESD, we recently submitted a grant application aimed at providing pre- and post-release services to individuals in Kitsap, Benton, and Franklin counties. These services will support individuals transitioning from county jails and state reentry centers back into their communities.

Additionally, the Washington Workforce Association is launching a Fundraising Workgroup dedicated to developing and executing effective fundraising strategies, strengthening donor relationships, and increasing transparency and accountability. This collective effort will help ensure resources are used efficiently, reinforcing the organization's mission and long-term sustainability.

OSO RFP Committee and Specialized Certification Committee- Next Steps

Cynthia thanked Board members for volunteering their time to be part of OSO and the Specialized Certification Committee- we have the number of board members that we need to move forward with the next steps. We are now in the process of conducting the technical assistance review of the proposal received then the RFP committee will meet the second week of April to review documents and conduct interviews.

Cynthia stressed the importance of the Committee reviewing the proposal thoroughly to ensure it meets the expectations and needs of our communities. The committee will have the opportunity to ask questions and provide input on the proposal before bringing a recommendation to the Board at the end of April.

Board Member Representation | Labor

Cynthia mentioned that Board Member Seth Worley recommended Dan Gwynn from UA Local 598 as a potential board member to replace him. Cynthia plans to meet with Dan to discuss the mission, vision, objectives, and responsibilities of the board to ensure he is fully aware of the commitment required.

Additionally, Robert Legard (Labor Representative) will retire on March 31, 2025, and the Labor Council will be seeking possible candidates for a replacement for his board membership.



BFWDC Fiscal Update – DeAnn Bock

DeAnn Bock provided an overview of the fiscal report, highlighting the financial activities and status of the organization. She mentioned that there was not a lot of activity in the corporate entity, except for the positive outcome of the WA SAC grant, which included \$3,300 and an additional \$100 in supplies. DeAnn also discussed the donation button on the website, noting that there has been no activity, despite efforts to encourage board members to contribute. She discussed the quote for insuring the van and the impact on the total insurance costs.

She stated that everything was in line with the budget and there were no unusual expenses. DeAnn mentioned that the final invoices for the audit have not been received yet, which is why the budget for the audit is under. She also highlighted the new tables and format for presenting financial information, which have made it easier to understand and compare the current year's financials with previous years.

DeAnn addressed the issue of utilities, explaining that the expenses for public computers billed by ESD are behind in sending out invoices. She also mentioned the challenges faced by the state with their new accounting software, which has caused delays in processing invoices and draws.

She mentioned the receipt of the official audit financial statements and the absence of any findings.

DeAnn assured the committee that the organization is in good financial shape and there are no major concerns.

Program Performance – Jessie Cardwell

Jessie Cardwell provided an update on funding allocations, highlighting that the Dislocated Worker Program received an additional \$100,000 compared to the Adult Workforce Program. Federal EcSA funding has been extended to September 2025, and modifications to state contracts are proposed to ensure efficient use of funds. Jessie emphasized the need for subcontractors to be conservative in spending, particularly with support services, due to uncertainties in funding for the next year. Despite previous years' underspending being advantageous given the current funding situation, the focus now is on emergency support services and minimizing out-of-state conferences. The extension of Federal EcSA Funds to September offers additional time for these resources to be utilized effectively, providing more stability in the first quarter of the next financial year. Jessie highlighted the efficient fund use by subcontractors and the importance of continued conservative spending practices to navigate the uncertain funding landscape.

Jessie also discussed that at the next Executive Committee Meeting, she wanted to discuss adding service components to next year's contracts. Items such as Incumbent worker training and potentially allocating some funding to In-School Youth.

Round Table – All

WorkSource Operator highlights included several key activities and developments. A kickoff meeting was held to explore career pathways in the hospitality sector, with focus groups gathering insights from workers. The WSCB Wagner Peyser Self-Assessment received positive feedback, identifying best practices in job seeker support and language assistance services. These suggestions aim to enhance the overall experience and effectiveness of the services provided. Key suggestions include:

1. **Improving Workshop Attendance:** There was a noted decrease in workshop attendance, and it was suggested to explore new topics and formats to attract more participants.
2. **Enhancing Job Seeker Support:** Identifying best practices in job seeker support and language assistance services to better meet the needs of diverse customers.
3. **Increasing Outreach Efforts:** Expanding community and partner connections to reach more potential job seekers and employers.
4. **Boosting Customer Satisfaction:** Continuously gathering and analyzing customer feedback to identify areas for improvement and ensure high satisfaction rates



Customer counts and services provided saw a decrease compared to the previous year, reflecting seasonal trends. The report also includes customer feedback, with high satisfaction rates and suggestions for improvement. Career services saw a decrease in workshop attendance, while the Business Solutions Team continued to support local businesses and job seekers. The report also details various community and partner connections, outreach efforts, and staff training and development activities. Notable success stories include job placements and effective partnerships with local institutions such as OIC and Goodwill. Crystal urged attendees to review the complete report included in the meeting materials and reach out with questions or suggestions for report improvements.

Board Member Andrew Cook provided an update on the Grace Collective Coffee Bar. The project is under development and features a stainless-steel table with unique design elements being incorporated. Andrew has committed to sharing project progress photos.

Adjournment

Todd Samuel adjourned the Executive Committee meeting at 5:11 p.m.

Next Meeting

- Executive Committee Meeting – Tuesday, April 29, 2025, 3:00 p.m. WSCB | Zoom Hybrid
- Quarterly Board Meeting – Tuesday, April 29, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. WSCB | Zoom Hybrid

Attendance

Chief Local Elected Officials	Board Members	Staff to the Board	Guests	Excused
Clint Didier	Adolfo de Leon	Jessie Cardwell	Crystal Bright	Will McKay
	Amanda Jones	Cynthia Garcia		Lynn Ramos-Braswell
	Andrew Cook	Raul Ochoa		
	Megan McCary	Gabby Torres		
	Todd Samuel	Cyndelle Howell		
		DeAnn Bock		

Respectfully Submitted:

Signed by:

Todd Samuel, BFWDC Board Chairman 5/8/2025

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Todd Samuel, Board Chair

Date

Signed by:

Lynn Ramos-Braswell, Board Secretary 5/8/2025

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Lynn Ramos-Braswell, Board Secretary Date