MINUTES

NORTHWEST OREGON WORKS
ANNUAL JOINT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
CONSORTIUM BOARD
MEETING

October 24, 2025

John Gumm Building and Civic Center

Board:
Present:
Tony Erickson, Oregon AERO, Chair; **Eric Sherman**, IBEW Local 932; **John Hawkins**, Service Employees International Union; **Than Tussing**, Fast Lube and Oil; **Ann Buchele**, Linn-Benton Community College; **Lauren Smith**, DHS, Vocational Rehabilitation; **Linda Dugan**, Linda Dugan Insurance; **Paul Davis**, JBT Lektro; **Chad Fenison**, Local 737; **Terre Cooper,** Tillamook County Economic Development;

Excused:
Angeline Chan-Pepper, Oregon Employment Dept.; **Gabe Gurule**, Corvallis Fire Department; **Greg Morill,** Bergson Construction Inc.; **Todd Simmons**, Tillamook Peoples' Utility District; **Zach Poole**, Pig' n Pancake, Vice Chair/Secretary; **Carrie Norris,** Samaritan Health Service; **Heather Taksdal,** Zwald Transport Inc.; **Lisa Avery,** Linn-Benton Community College; **Whitey Forsman**, Pacific Oyster;

Consortium Present:
Pamela Wev, Clatsop County Commissioner; **Casey Garrett**, Columbia County Commissioner; **Paul Fournier**, Tillamook County Commissioner; **Gabe Shepherd,** Benton County Commissioner; **Casey Miller**; Lincoln County Commissioner;

Staff:
Heather DeSart, Executive Director; **Jason Swain**, NOW CCO; **Katrina Sturgeon**, Workforce Benefit Navigator; **Logan Garner**, Youth Programs Manager; **Brittney Lane**, Office Manager; **Aylee Rhea,** Program Manager; **Kortnie Williams**, Program Coordinator; **Ferdinand Richter,** Youth Program Data Analyst

1. **CALL TO ORDER, CONFIRMATION OF POSTING, and ROLL CALL**
   Chairman Erickson called the Meeting to order at 10:05am.
   Chairman Erickson asked for confirmation of the public posting of the meeting; Ms. Lane confirmed; Roll Call taken, quorum was established.
   Commissioner Wev called the Meeting to order at 10:05am
   Commissioner Wev asked for confirmation of the public posting of the meeting; Ms. Lane confirmed; Roll Call taken, quorum was established.

2. **REVIEW and APPROVE AGENDA**

Agenda required ONE modification. Item 4 states that there are 5 reappointments, however, there are only four. Agenda will be corrected to reflect in minutes.

BOARD MOTION: Than Tussing **SECOND: Eric Sherman** **MOTION CARRIED.**
CONSORTIUM MOTION: Casey Miller **SECOND: Pat Malone** **MOTION CARRIED.**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION**

No public comment was made.

4. **DISCUSSION and POSSIBLE ACTION: CONSORTIUM BOARD**

Accept Staff's recommendation to RE-appoint the following (four) NOW Board Members – The terms of these Board Members will be October 31, 2025 – November 1, 2028.

a. Greg Morrill – Business Representative – Bergerson Construction
b. Heather Taksdal – Business Representative – Zwald Transportation
c. Terre Cooper – Economic Development Representative
d. John Hawkins – Labor Representative

MOTION: Casey Miller **SECOND: Gabe Shepherd** **MOTION CARRIED.**

5. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

• NOW BOARD –

- Accept Staff's recommendation to approve the Minutes of the June 27, 2025 Board meeting.
- Accept Staff's recommendation to approve adjustments made to the following policies:
- A02 Grievance Process
- A03 Incident Reporting
- P01 WIOA Adult-DW Eligibility
- P03 Equal Opportunity Non Discrimination
- P06 Monitoring
- P12 Youth Eligibility Additional Assistance
- P16 Records Retention
- P20 Basic Skills Deficient
- P25 Personal Identifiable Information

MOTION: Eric Sherman **SECOND: John Hawkins** **MOTION CARRIED.**

• CONSORTIUM BOARD –

- Accept Staff's recommendation to approve the Minutes of the June 30, 2025 Consortium Meeting.

MOTION: Paul Fournier **SECOND: Gabe Shepherd** **MOTION CARRIED.**

6. **DISCUSSION and POSSIBLE ACTION: NOW BOARD THEN CONSORTIUM BOARD –** Jason Swain, NOW CFO

Accept the Staff's recommendation to approve the finalized Annual Budget.

Jason reviewed the budget and all changes, no questions were asked, vote was asked for.

NOW Board

MOTION: Ann Buchele **SECOND: Paul Davis** **MOTION CARRIED.**

Consortium Board

MOTION: Casey Garrett **SECOND: Pamela Wev** **MOTION CARRIED.**

7. **INFORMATION** – Vero Reeves, Internship Coordinator, PCC Oregon Manufacturing and Innovation Center
   OMIC Updates
   Ms. Reeves gave a detailed overview of the many internships that are happening over at the OMIC center. She also talked about long term plans and goals that OMIC and the internship/apprenticeship program has.

8. **INFORMATION** – Paul Vogel, Executive Director, Columbia Economic Team
   Mr. Vogel talked about the economic team in Columbia County as well as how the county's economic development is going overall.

9. **INFORMATION** – Shaun Barrick, Economist, OED
   Oregon Employment Department Economic Update
   Mr. Barrick gave an economic and employment update on all of NOW's regions with a focus on Columbia County. At the end of the presentation Mr. Barrick answered a handful of questions from both the board and consortium as well as public.

10. **INFORMATION** – Mike Barter, Talend Development Specialist, Equus
    Mr. Barter gave a presentation about the Youth Development and the program that Equus is working to help the youth of the community to find employment and get on the job training. There was a student participant at the meeting who shared their story and the story of how Equus has helped them.

11. **INFORMATION** – Sandra Huitt, Operations Manager, Equus
    Ms. Huitt spoke about being the new One Stop Operator and what a One Stop Operator does. She also explained how Equus was going to continue to bring each of the centers together and create a cohesive plan to make sure that each center and participant is represented and taken care of appropriately.

12. **BOARD CHAIR REPORT** – Tony Erickson, Chair
    Mr. Erickson thanked the Board and Consortium for all meeting together in Columbia County. He also expressed thanks to everyone being patient and kind about his medical conditions.

13. **CHIEF LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIAL REPORT** – Commissioner Wev
    Commissioner Wev talked about the Working Together Conference and expressed with great enthusiasm that anyone that can make the trip should make the trip to next year's conference. She stated how much impact it has on what the Board does and how it helps bring people together for the greater good of our communities.

14. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT –** Heather DeSart, NOW Executive Director
    Ms. DeSart made a short report about agreeing with Commissioner Wev about the Working Together Conference. She also thanked everyone for coming and expressed that the next board meeting is going to be in January in Benton County, OR.

15. BOARD ROUNDTABLE

No comment was made at this time.

16. PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

No comment was made at this time.

17. ADJOURN

Chairman Erickson adjourned the meeting at 12:01pm.
Commissioner Wev adjourned the meeting at 12:02pm.
The meeting was concluded, and the zoom call was closed and ended.