

Workforce Solutions Committee Meeting Minutes

March 5, 2025

Actions Taken:

- Approval of November 6, 2024 Workforce Solutions Committee meeting minutes

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was brought to order at 10:00 am by Robin Plume.

II. Minutes

Review and Approval of November 6, 2024 Workforce Solutions Committee Meeting Minutes.

Mark Vorobik moved to approve, and Adele Skinner seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Approved NWC committee and board minutes are available on the Council's website

www.nwboard.org.

III. Board Business

A. Workforce Solutions Committee Implementation:

September 11 / October 9 / November 9

January 15 / March 5: Continue work as defined with staff reports on status and challenges, if any, for implementation.

Robin noted that this meeting marked the conclusion of the interim committee rehabilitation phase. Moving forward, the board will resume a quarterly meeting schedule, with a two-week gap reinstated between committee activities and Executive Committee meetings.

B. PY 2024 Q1 Community Success Stories

Robin requested that Scott share the success stories from the second quarter of PY 2024. In response, Scott directed members to the one-page success story report included in their packets, noting that it offers a concise overview of key highlights from the past quarter. He also reminded members that the full stories are accessible on the Council's website for further details www.nwboard.org.

C. Business Engagement Strategies Taskforce

Review of the 01/30/2025 meeting of the Business Engagement Strategies Taskforce meeting. Robin opened the discussion and shared the first meeting took place on January 30th, and asked Scott Iddings, NWC staff, to share the highlight and insights gained during that meeting. Scott discussed the importance of meeting once a month and noted that representatives from a wide array of workforce system partners, including: K-12, marine, construction, and healthcare were present. He shared the taskforce could still benefit from representation from Island and San Juan Counties, and asked that any good leads for these areas be shared with he and Robin.

Scott emphasized the growing concern among employers regarding a gap in soft skills and underscored the importance of developing career pathways that support both employers and job seekers, with a particular focus on enhancing soft skill attainment. Robin expressed the shared interest of the taskforce in developing a certification program focused on soft skills. There was also discussion around the evaluation of businesses' experiences with ESD's services to local businesses as a means to improving engagement. Robin conveyed her excitement and appreciation for the high level of engagement within the taskforce, and looked forward to addressing key challenges identified.

D. Committee Priorities

Robin outlined the Workforce Solutions Committee's agreed-upon priorities for 2025 and opened a discussion on specific projects to support these initiatives.

- a. **Business Engagement:** As discussed previously in the meeting, Robin recapped current taskforce activities and expressed enthusiasm for continuing engagement with this group. She emphasized the importance of completing this ongoing work in the coming years.
- b. **Assessment of Service Gaps:** Robin highlighted the need to identify gaps in services and training opportunities by surveying businesses to understand which skills are in demand and which are lacking job seekers. She stated that by mapping business feedback, determining the optimal timing for the survey to yield the best results, and then outlining this with staff we could create a change that supports the local businesses and job seekers. She explained that being able to create a training awareness around the results will also help job seekers with their internal career pathways.
- c. **Proven and Promising Practices:** Robin informed the committee that staff members are committed to attending state and national conferences (e.g., NAWB, NAWDP, WWA) to bring new ideas back to the Northwest. Robin proposed discussing proven system services and areas for improvement at the Partnership level.

IV. 2025 Meeting Calendar

Robin directed the committee to their packets and explained the enclosed calendar includes key dates and times for upcoming meetings. She encouraged members to review the schedule in advance to ensure availability and preparedness for discussions.

Old Business – None

New Business – None

Public Comment – None

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned by Robin Plume at 11:14 am.

Attendance

Board Members: Robin Plume, John Sternlicht, Mark Vorobik, Adele Skinner, Michael Reese, Kyle Jones

Staff: Marissa Cahill, Malinda Bjaaland, Scott Iddings, Liz Vaughn