

Executive Committee Minutes

March 5, 2025

Actions Taken:

- Approval of January 15, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
- Approval and Recommendation of Full Council approval of NWC's 2024-2028 Regional Strategic Plan Rev 1

I. Call to Order

Chair Mark Vorobik called the meeting to order at 12:33 PM.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes

Members referred to the January 15, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes available in their meeting materials. Kevin Corrigan moved approval of the minutes as presented, Executive Sidhu seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Mark reminded members that once approved, meeting minutes are posted to the board website. www.nwboard.org

III. Board Business

A. Committee Report Outs / Actionable Items carried forward

Quality Assurance Committee – Committee Chair Lori Province highlighted the committee's review of performance reports, which demonstrated service delivery improvements following previous staffing shortages. She noted that executive staff have successfully addressed workforce capacity challenges, leading to improved performance metrics relative to local and state benchmarks.

Additionally, she highlighted the One-Stop System Operator (OSSO), in collaboration with Marissa Cahill, has strengthened partnerships within the system, resulting in positive performance outcomes.

The first post-transition certification process is now underway, with Tammie O'Dell leading efforts. Lori emphasized the importance of board and community leader participation, particularly from key industries, to support certification and long-term workforce strategies. Members were encouraged to connect with Marissa to identify additional industry stakeholders for engagement and participation on the Board's Certification Taskforce.

B. Workforce Solutions Committee -

Scott Iddings, NWC staff provided a brief overview of the meeting. Members reviewed the progress of the Strategic and Operational Functions of a Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) and discussed updates to the WSC Populated Tracker.

Iddings shared the PY 2024 Q2 Community Success Stories, showcasing the impact of workforce programs. The Business Engagement Strategies Taskforce update included insights from the January 30

meeting, a review of the Regional Business Services Plan, and planning for the next meeting on March 13. Members identified the need for additional business representation from Island and San Juan counties to ensure a more comprehensive regional approach.

The committee reaffirmed its 2025 priorities, focusing on business engagement, assessing service gaps, and identifying best practices to enhance workforce strategies.

Business Engagement Strategies Taskforce - Scott Iddings reported that the task force has been established to strengthen business engagement strategies, initially meeting bi-monthly and transitioning to quarterly for up to two years. The task force includes representatives from key industries and is actively seeking additional members from San Juan and Island Counties.

Current priorities include addressing workforce challenges such as soft skills development, workplace safety, career pathways, pre-apprenticeship opportunities, and business engagement strategies. Additionally, the task force will oversee the review and update of the Regional Business Services Plan, assess workforce training needs, and conduct business surveys.

Bylaws Taskforce - Mark asked Marissa to speak to the changes and updates to the bylaws. Marissa summarized key bylaw revisions, including technical governance updates. The committee discussed ensuring that alternate designations align with official board appointments, preserving the integrity of board representation.

A significant update was the enhanced conflict-of-interest clause, which now requires members with conflicts to not only abstain from voting but also disclose their conflicts and refrain from related discussions. Additionally, bylaws were updated to recognize virtual attendance and voting as valid, counting toward quorum requirements. These updates align governance practices with modern standards and legal compliance.

C. New Committee Implementation

Mark 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.

D. Annual Audit Firm [RFQ](#) – Update

Mark provided an update on the audit solicitation process, highlighting key milestones:

- February 3, 2025: RFQ Released
- February 3-28, 2025: Q&A Period (one inquiry received regarding remote audits)
- March 7, 2025: Responses Due
- March 17-21, 2025: Evaluation Team Reviews Quotes
- April 21, 2025: Executive Committee Reviews Recommendations
- June 25, 2025: Full Board Action on Final Selection

Only one question was received during the Q&A period, regarding the option of a fully remote audit. Staff recommend that any newly selected auditor conduct an entrance interview and an initial on-site

review before transitioning to a remote audit model. Final recommendations will be presented to the Executive Committee in mid-April, with Full Board action in June.

E. NWC as WIOA IB Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker Program services provider – Update

Marissa provided an update on NWC's application to continue as a WIOA IB program services provider, noting that:

- The State Workforce Board required a minor revision to the local strategic plan under the Title I Procurement Process section (Page 89) to align with NWC's intent to provide direct services.
- The revision was posted for a 30-day public comment period, concluding on March 8, 2025.
- The State Workforce Board plans to review and recommend approval of both the local plan update and NWC's continued direct service delivery during a special meeting in April.

Approval was initially expected to extend service provisions through June 2025, but due to delays in finalizing State Policy 1015, an extension through June 30, 2026, is now being recommended by the State Workforce Board.

Motion to approve the revised local strategic plan and recommend Full Council approval was made by Lori Province, seconded by Hart Hodges, and passed unanimously.

IV. System Oversight

A. Upcoming Monitoring Activities:

1. WIOA IB Internal PY24 Q2 Program Monitoring 01/13 - 17/2025

Malinda informed the committee that WIOA IB Internal PY24 Q2 Program Monitoring was postponed to mid-February to align with monitor availability. The review is nearly complete, with only minor follow-up remaining.

2. Annual WIOA IB PY24 State Monitoring April 7-11, 2025; Advance items due March 14th

Annual WIOA IB PY24 State Monitoring is scheduled for April 7-11, 2025, with advance documentation due by March 14, 2025. Due to state budget constraints, only one state monitor will conduct an on-site visit, with the remaining review completed remotely. While minor findings may be expected due to new staff, no major compliance issues or disallowed costs are anticipated. The process is seen as an opportunity to refine practices and ensure program effectiveness.

B. Preliminary Budget – Scheduling a Special Executive Committee Meeting in May

To allow sufficient time for budget review, Mark requested the committee schedule a special Executive Committee meeting in advance of their June meeting. The meeting is expected to take place late May (TBD). This will ensure alignment with strategic priorities before presenting the proposed PY25 operating budget for approval by the Board and Elected Officials.

Old Business

Whatcom Staff Area Remodel Update: Marissa provided an update on the remodel of the Whatcom staff area, initiated in December 2023. Initial vendor estimates were unfeasible (\$250K–\$400K), but a more cost-effective bid from Trico allowed the project to move forward under NWC's Small Purchase

Procurement Policy. The remodel includes new cubicles, private offices, ergonomic furniture, and a collaborative workspace.

The remodel replaces outdated 1990s-era cubicles and furniture with a modern, open layout designed to foster collaboration, efficiency, and employee well-being. The improvements are expected to significantly enhance staff productivity and workplace satisfaction. Completion of the project is anticipated by Friday, with staff scheduled to return to the updated workspace shortly thereafter.

Marissa expressed appreciation for the committee's support and commitment to creating a more dynamic, inclusive, and efficient work environment.

New Business - None

Public Comment - None

Adjourn: Mark Vorobik adjourned the meeting at 1:09 pm.

Attendance

Board Members: Hart Hodges, Kevin Corrigan, Mark Vorobik, Satpal Sidhu, Lori Province

Guests:

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