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Executive Committee Minutes

March 4, 2026

Actions Taken:

- Approval of November 19, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
- Approval of NWC Policy WIOA 02-06 Increased Capacity Training
- Approval of One Stop System Operator Request for Proposal Materials
- Recommendation of Full Council Approval of Alegria & Co. Annual Audit
- Agreement to author a letter to ESD Commissioner Feek and Governor Ferguson concerning the DOL Disaster Relief Dislocated Worker Grant (DRDWG) application strategy and funding methodology

I. Call to Order

Mark Vorobik called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes

Members were referred to the November 19, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes available in their meeting materials. **Executive Sidhu moved approval of the minutes as presented, Kevin Corrigan 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

- **Quality Assurance Committee**

Lori Province, Board Secretary, reported on the latest Quality Assurance Committee meeting held on March 4th, 2026. The committee reviewed the Northwest Workforce Council's program year second quarter performance update, noting that youth enrollment and spending trends continue to reflect prior-year carryover and are expected to stabilize as the program year progresses. Lori also summarized updates from the One-Stop System Operator report, which highlighted continued regional coordination, employer engagement, and progress on the certification workplan, as well as preparations for updated partner agreements to strengthen alignment across the WorkSource system. She shared findings from the recent Business Focus Group indicating that employers value workforce services while identifying opportunities to simplify system navigation, clarify partner roles, and strengthen talent pipeline alignment. Customer satisfaction results reflected consistently positive experiences across WorkSource Centers, with feedback informing ongoing service improvements, staff training, and process refinements.

- **Workforce Solutions Committee**

Mark asked Scott Iddings, NWC staff, to share on the committee meeting held on February 18th, 2026. Scott shared updates on recent activities of the Business Engagement Strategies Task Force, noting strong interest in the Council developed YouthWorx essential skills training and broader

discussions around expanding employer-focused services, marketing efforts, and system alignment. Committee members emphasized the importance of measurable outcomes, including completion, placement, retention, and employer feedback, and expressed support for developing structured tools to evaluate program impact. He also shared updates on ongoing Rapid Response activities, including in-person and virtual presentations that connect impacted workers to workforce services, benefits, and training opportunities by outlining program components, outreach strategies, and efforts to strengthen data tracking, language access, and referral systems. The committee also discussed emerging workforce trends and the importance of proactive employer engagement to help prevent or mitigate layoffs. Scott concluded with an update on WIOA Title IB information sessions, noting strong participation and improved enrollment conversion, along with plans to expand access through additional formats and languages.

B. Updated Local Policies for Review

** Per Full Board action, the Executive Committee formally assumed responsibility for reviewing and approving local workforce policies as required under State WIN 0139, Change 1.*

a. Policies Approved by the Board Chair

- a. [WIOA Title I-B 01-02 \(Rev 7\) Adult Eligibility](#)
- b. [WIOA Title I-B 01-15 \(Rev 7\) Youth Eligibility and Application](#)

b. Policies Approved by the Board

a. NWC Policy WIOA 02-06 Increased Capacity Training

Scott introduced the Increased Capacity Training Policy, explaining that it establishes a framework for strategically investing workforce funds to expand training capacity in high-demand occupations across the region. He noted that employers and training providers continue to report capacity constraints, including limited program availability, instructor shortages, and extended waitlists, which can delay credential attainment and limit the supply of job-ready workers. The policy affirms the Council's ability to address these challenges through targeted, time-limited investments that support expanded training opportunities in sectors with demonstrated employer demand. Scott explained that the policy includes clear eligibility criteria, allowable uses of funds, procurement standards, performance milestones, and monitoring requirements to ensure accountability and long-term impact. He emphasized that the approach aligns with regional workforce priorities by helping reduce training bottlenecks, improve access to career pathways, and strengthen the regional talent pipeline.

Lori Province moved to approve the new NWC Increased Capacity Training policy. Satpal Sidhu seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

C. One-Stop System Operator

- a. **PY25 Q2 Report:** Mark reported on the second quarter update on One-Stop system operations supporting workforce services across the region. He noted that employers continue to value training and hiring support programs while also identifying opportunities to simplify system navigation and strengthen employer engagement. He outlined progress on certification workplan actions aimed at enhancing service

delivery, partnerships, and the overall customer experience across centers. He also highlighted preparation for upcoming updates to required partner agreements to maintain coordination and funding alignment. Mark concluded by sharing regional WorkSource Center updates that demonstrated continued collaboration through hiring events, targeted outreach, and expanded services for both employers and job seekers. He emphasized that these efforts reflected ongoing progress toward improving access, responsiveness, and overall system effectiveness.

- c. **One Stop System Operator RFP Material Review:** Mark reminded the board that, under WIOA and federal regulations, the One-Stop System Operator must be competitively procured at least every four years. He noted that a Request for Proposals must be issued in 2026, with release planned for late March. He recapped that the Executive Committee's November review addressed statutory requirements for the One-Stop Operator and how compliance is reflected in the MOU, Regional Strategic Plan, and current OSO contract. He shared that, at the request of the Quality Assurance Committee, staff prepared a draft RFP for board review and approval prior to release. Mark concluded by noting that the Quality Assurance Committee had reviewed and approved the draft RFP and recommended Executive Committee approval for release.

Lori Province motioned to approve the One Stop Operator Request for Procurement material, with a contractual amount of \$35,000 per annum. Satpal Sidhu seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

D. NWC's Request for authority to continue as Direct Service Provider of WIOA IB Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker Programs - Update

Marissa provided an update on the Council's request to extend authority to serve as the Direct Service Provider through June 30, 2028 – through the current Regional Strategic Workforce Plan, reiterating the Council's original request to the State Workforce Board in April 2024. She noted that the State Workforce Board acknowledged the Council's request on February 11th and will consider it for board review during their upcoming April meeting, with final action resting with the Board. The letter indicated that, based on recent performance and review, no additional administrative requirements were anticipated at this time.

She also shared emerging state discussions suggesting the possibility of a broader, longer-term extension of Direct Service Provision authority for high-performing local boards, potentially aligned with a revised local plan cycle. Under this evolving framework, continued authority could be based on demonstrated performance, reducing the need for frequent re-procurement or reapplication while maintaining strong accountability standards.

Marissa explained that, if adopted, this approach could address prior concerns regarding procurement requirements, while reinforcing local control, continuity of services, and performance-based oversight. She noted her intent to attend the upcoming State Workforce Board meeting to better understand the full policy direction and reiterated the Council's readiness to share its performance outcomes and continued commitment to delivering high-quality workforce services directly to the region.

E. 2024-2028 NWC Strategic Plan – Process Update

Marissa reported that the state issued Workforce Information Notice 0160, granting local areas a one-year extension for the current 2024–2028 Regional Strategic Plan update. She explained that the submission deadline, originally set for June 30, 2026, has been extended to June 30, 2027. She noted that the extension was intended to allow state staff additional time to update the state’s TAP plan and to provide further guidance to local areas in advance of their plan updates.

F. Board Membership and Recruitment

Mark and Marissa provided an update on ongoing board recruitment efforts. Marissa reviewed several individuals from Whatcom, San Juan, and Island counties who have expressed interest in contributing to regional workforce discussions. She noted that maintaining an active pipeline of potential candidates helps ensure the Council has strong options available should future board transitions occur.

Lori Province shared that the State Labor Council recently approved a nomination to fill the Workforce/Joint Apprenticeship seat on the board. She noted that this individual’s involvement could help advance local pre-apprenticeship initiatives and anticipated receiving the formal nomination in the coming days.

The discussion also touched on Executive Committee membership and upcoming officer elections. Mark noted that the slate of officers is being prepared for consideration at the March 18 board meeting, with elections occurring annually in accordance with the Council’s bylaws. He suggested maintaining the March election timeline to ensure continuity in board leadership and governance.

G. Alegria & Co. Annual Audit

Marissa reported that Alegria has completed fieldwork and provided draft versions of the audited financial statements and related letters. Members noted the audit results reflected a strong report from Alegria, consistent with prior years, with no significant concerns identified. Members were informed that Alegria Advisors will present the results of the 2025 annual audit to the Full Council at the March 18, 2026 meeting.

Following discussion, the Executive Committee agreed to recommend that the Full Council approve the Alegria Advisors audit report and welcomed Alegria to present the findings directly at the upcoming Full Council meeting.

Lori Province moved to recommend approval of the Alegria Advisors audit report to the Full Council. Satpal Sidhu seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. System Oversight

A. Monitoring Activities

a. Internal PY25 Q2 Program Monitoring to be Conducted virtually March 2-6, 2026

Mark shared that internal program monitoring for Program Year 2025, Quarter Two, was currently underway. He noted that the process was progressing as expected with little to no

areas of concern identified at this time. Mark added that a final monitoring report would be provided at the next scheduled meeting for the board's review.

b. Annual PY24 Equal Opportunity Monitoring Conducted August 19-20, 2024

Liz Vaughn, NWC staff, reported on the State-Level Equal Opportunity Office's annual WIOA compliance review of the Northwest Workforce Council, which included document audits, interviews, and facility walkthroughs at WorkSource Island and the San Juan Career Center. She noted that the review identified only minor updates to contract language and policy links, all of which have been corrected, and highlighted the Council's strong outreach, tribal partnerships, Latine community services, and EcSA engagement as positive examples of ongoing compliance. She added that recommended updates for San Juan are complete, accessibility improvements at the Island facility are being addressed through the lease renewal process, and a final monitoring report will be provided once remaining items are confirmed. Staff are currently in receipt of a draft monitoring report, and are hopeful to receive the final version soon.

c. Annual PY25 Equal Opportunity Monitoring conducted October 14-16, 2025

Liz reported on the State's PY25 Equal Opportunity Monitoring visit conducted October 14–16, 2025. During the visit, the monitoring team commended the Council's commitment to ensuring equal access to WorkSource services. She noted that the review included completion of required EO Officer training, on-site monitoring activities, an ADA accessibility walkthrough, staff and customer interviews, and discussions with program leadership.

Liz also shared that the Council's ongoing internal monitoring across local WorkSource centers continues to support compliance and identify opportunities for improvement. This includes coordination with facility partners to address accessibility considerations at the Island location as part of upcoming lease renewal discussions. She concluded that the monitoring letter reflects the Council's proactive approach to equal opportunity compliance and its strong partnership with the State EO Office.

B. DOL Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant

Marissa shared that the December flooding made the region eligible for Department of Labor Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant (DRDWG) funds. She provided background on the December 2025 flooding in Whatcom and Skagit counties and the subsequent Governor's emergency declaration, which made multiple Workforce Development Areas eligible for this funding. Marissa then invited Scott to share additional details on how the funds would be utilized in the Northwest region.

Scott outlined the proposed local implementation strategy for the grant, emphasizing its two core objectives: providing temporary paid employment opportunities for dislocated workers and supplying surge staffing capacity to support ongoing recovery efforts. He described potential roles supporting coordination, damage assessment follow-up, infrastructure stabilization, rebuilding activities, and business recovery, all tied to documented community needs. He highlighted partnerships with county emergency management, recovery groups, tribes, municipalities, nonprofits, and employers, along with targeted recruitment, formal worksite development, adaptive deployment, and outcomes tracking

to ensure compliance and impact. Together, the approach is designed to support both affected residents and sustained community recovery.

Marissa explained that Northwest coordinated quickly with the Employment Security Department (ESD) and local partners to secure the initial \$1 million emergency award, which was distributed among the Northwest, Snohomish, and Seattle-King workforce areas. Northwest has since remained engaged in planning efforts related to the state's request for additional federal funding.

Marissa noted that the planning process has evolved since the initial emergency application. While the original request focused on emergency funding for the three impacted workforce areas, ESD later expanded the proposed funding request and introduced additional proposed activities into the planning estimates. These included a proposed allocation for mobile WorkSource units and other ESD-administered costs.

Members of the Executive Committee and Chief Local Elected Official expressed significant concern regarding several aspects of the current planning approach. Specifically, members questioned the methodology being used to distribute planning estimates evenly across the affected Workforce Development Areas, noting that the equal distribution model appeared to be applied after ESD removed funds for administrative costs and other proposed activities, rather than being based on documented disaster severity or local recovery needs. Members also expressed concern that the proposed mobile WorkSource units represented a departure from the core intent of the Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant, which is intended to support disaster cleanup, recovery employment, and workforce stabilization activities tied directly to impacted communities.

Marissa shared that the initial planning discussions among partners had focused on pursuing a more modest funding request in order to reduce the likelihood of delays at the federal level. The subsequent expansion of the request and addition of new activities occurred without broader discussion among all planning partners. Given the availability of more detailed damage assessments and recovery data since the initial emergency application, members expressed interest in exploring whether a more equitable allocation approach could be considered that better reflects the relative severity of impacts across affected counties.

Following discussion, the Executive Committee directed Marissa to draft a letter to ESD Commissioner Cami Feek and Governor Bob Ferguson outlining concerns related to the DOL Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant (DRDWG) application strategy and proposed funding allocation methodology. The letter will be shared for review and signature by the Board Chair and affected local elected officials prior to submission by Whatcom County Executive Sidhu.

C. WIOA IB Programs (Operated by NWC)

- WIOA Grant Summary YTD
- Non-WIOA Grant Summary YTD
- Statement of PY25 Q2 Revenue/Expenses (10.1.25 – 12.31.25)

Members were directed to the following documents included in their meeting materials: the WIOA Grant Summary Year-to-Date, Non-WIOA Grant Summary Year-to-Date, and the Statement of PY25 Q2 Revenues and Expenses (October 1 – December 31, 2025).

Elena VanVoorhees, NWC staff, provided an overview of expenditures across both WIOA and non-WIOA grants. She reviewed year-to-date budget activity, noting that administrative expenditures remained low while the majority of spending was directed toward participant services, including internships and supportive services. She explained that a significant portion of youth participant costs consisted of work experience wages.

Elena noted that most internships scheduled for the current quarter had been completed and anticipated that overall out-of-school youth expenditures would level out for the remainder of the program year. She further reported that non-WIOA grants- including Federal and State Economic Security for All (EcSA) and Community Reinvestment Program (CRP) funding- are progressing as planned, with expenditures generally aligned with budget expectations.

Old Business –

a. Lease Renewals

Marissa provided an update on the Island and Skagit lease renewals. She shared that the Island lease renewal was progressing favorably, with proposed increases aligned with typical market adjustments. In contrast, she reported that Skagit had proposed a substantial increase, which she noted was unexpected given prior negotiations and the terms previously agreed upon. She explained that historical lease discussions were mutually negotiated and that the current proposal did not reflect those prior agreements.

Marissa stated that she responded by proposing a one-year bridge extension with a modest increase and expressed willingness to consider a multi-year agreement with slight adjustments if appropriate. She noted that partners at ESD indicated openness to a reasonable increase in the context of a longer-term lease. She also indicated plans to continue discussions, including evaluating potential space reductions, and confirmed that she understood the board's sentiment to move forward thoughtfully, with officer involvement as needed, given concerns about the proposed increase.

New Business –

a. Quality Assurance Committee Chair

Lori proposed that Tammie O'Dell, Labor representative for Skagit County, resume chairmanship of the Quality Assurance Committee while she remains on the board. This would allow them to divide responsibilities more effectively and support onboarding a new labor member. She noted that Tammie is amenable to returning to the role.

Committee discussion confirmed that this arrangement is feasible, with acknowledgment that previous changes were made due to alternate status and board transitions. Mark and others agreed that Marissa could implement the necessary administrative updates to reflect this leadership change, provided Tammie is in agreement.

Public Comment- None

Adjourn: Mark Vorobik adjourned the meeting at 11:30 am.

Attendance

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

Staff: Marissa Cahill, Scott Iddings and Liz Vaughn