



Meeting URL: <https://sowib-org.zoom.us/j/81927714815?pwd=N2JEQTNkcHN1amF0MXA0cE9Kb3J2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 819 2771 4815

Passcode: 499820

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum

	Dr. Gray (B) (TBD)	X	Jason Traylor (B)		Andy Owens
X	Robert Westerman	X	Ben Messner (B)		Mike Hicks
X	Joe Benetti (B)	X	Debbie Sargent		Rod Sprinkle
	Dave Sanders (B)		Ali Mageehon	X	Brian Prawitz
	Rhonda Amer (B)	X	Amy Kincaid	X	Nichole Moody (B)
		X	Marie Simonds		Rachel Pokrandt

Names in red -unable to attend, prior notice given.

The meeting was called to order at 12:01 pm by Joe Benetti. 9 of the 16 members (excluding vacancies) were present, making up 56% of the total members. Of the 56%, 57% represent Businesses.

2. INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS/CURRENT OPENINGS

No new board members currently.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION: Members of the public may now comment on any matter posted on this Agenda, which is before this Board for consideration and action today. Please clearly state and spell your name and state your address for the record. Each public comment will be limited to three (3) minutes.

No public comment was presented.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

4. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: Consent Agenda (Approved with One Motion)

- Meeting Minutes – February 20, 2025

Motion to approve minutes and consent agenda made by Robert Westerman and seconded by Joe Bennetti. No objections. The motion carried unanimously.

STANDING REPORTS

5. **INFORMATION:** *Human Resources Human Resources Update; Sara Stephens*

Sara presented that we revised the SOWIB Employee Handbook adding definitions and additional language around new parents, PTO policy, Paid Leave Oregon for out of State employee, remote work, drug and alcohol tests, AI use in the workplace.

PRESENTATIONS

6. *SOWIB Audit overview & results for Financial Year Ending in June 30, 2024 - Garima Jha*

The audit resulted in an unmodified opinion, indicating the financial statements are fairly presented with no significant deficiencies or compliance issues. Assets and net assets remain strong, liabilities increased moderately, and expenses align well with program goals. The audit process went smoothly, with effective internal controls and no unusual findings. Overall, it was a successful and clean audit with high-quality financial practices observed.

Motion to accept the audit report made by Debbie Sargent and seconded by Robert Westerman. No objections. The motion carried unanimously.

7. *Budget Overview Presentation; Sara Stephens, Yolanda Brumfield*

SOWIB anticipates an 11% decrease in WIOA federal funds for fiscal year 2026, with overall proposed spending of \$7.2M—about 9% lower than last year's \$7.8M budget. Key savings include reduced office and software costs, though staff insurance expenses increased and we are projecting an increase in liability. Strategic priorities focus on staff retention, sustainability, program impact, and workforce innovation, while pending funding from state and private sources will support various initiatives.

8. **Program updates**

WIOA: Rachael Larson and Rena Langston

SOWIB received new funding in July 2024 to support staff and provider services across Coos, Curry, and Douglas counties. Programs have served both adult and youth participants this year, including training and work experience opportunities. Funding for the next program year is expected to be lower due to state and federal reductions, so the organization is planning carefully to carry forward sufficient funds into 2026 to minimize future cuts. A budget review is scheduled for early January, with new procurement anticipated in 2026. shared along with projected spending for the next fiscal year.

Recruit HIPPO; Natasha Garrison

SOWIB is merging Workbox into Recruit HIPPO to unify in-school and out-of-school youth services, expand work-based learning, and strengthen partnerships with schools, employers, and community organizations. These changes, supported by diverse funding sources, aim to improve access, streamline services, and focus advisor support where it's most needed

WRQBOX; Sara Stephens

We are making a major shift by retiring the Workbox name and bringing all youth programs in-house under the Recruit HIPPO brand. This change follows guidance from state partners and will simplify operations.

Provider update; Sara Stephens

In addition, effective July 1, 2026, we will discontinue our contract with Phoenix School of Roseburg.

SCREL; Charlotte Carver

SCREL Hub manages about 15 funding streams totaling \$1.4M for the next fiscal year, mainly from state agencies and private foundations, with an approved budget reflecting some reductions in enrollment and mental health funds. New initiatives like Family Connects Oregon are moving into implementation, while funds continue to support community partners and programs that have trained providers, enrolled families, and engaged caregivers.

Benefits Navigator; Tina Carpenter

Funded by Prosperity 10K ARPA through Future Ready Oregon, this pilot deploys navigators across three counties to connect job seekers with workforce and community resources via nine community booths, mainly in rural locations. Currently staffed by one full-time outreach worker.

Traditional Health Worker; Tina Carpenter

The Traditional Health Worker grant, ending in June with a no-cost extension through December 2025, has engaged nearly 300 community members, with 109 completing training and 63 becoming certified and Medicaid-billable. The program has strengthened access to critical health services and is focusing remaining funds on professional development and sustainability efforts before wrapping up later this year.

Community Investments; Sara Stephens

Formerly known as “Board Funds,” these flexible resources have supported nearly \$1M in innovative workforce projects—especially in the maritime industry—over the past nine months. Going forward, spending will be more evenly distributed across the biennium, and board members are encouraged to propose ideas for impactful community investments.

Recent Investments; Sara Stephens

Key initiatives include maritime and technical training programs such as the SWOC diesel mechanic program and seafood butchery training, youth activities like Bandon Youth Center maritime week and Coos Watershed summer crew, and industry support efforts in travel/tourism, childcare, surgical tech apprenticeships, and manufacturing workforce development.

Apprenticeship; Sara Stephens

We received over \$1M in Prosperity 10K and nearly \$1.5M in ARPA funding, supporting new workforce initiatives, apprenticeships, and grant programs. Last year, 68 apprentices were enrolled across medical assisting, early childhood education, and surgical technology. Next year, medical assistant and surgical tech apprenticeships will expand statewide, while early childhood education remains focused locally.

ARPA/Prosperity 10K; Rena Langston

So far, flexible Prosperity and ARPA funds have supported 342 enrollments, with over 2,200 individuals entering training and 188 verified employed. These funds have been vital for stabilizing participants by providing housing and transportation assistance, enabling greater participation in training and employment programs. A \$35 million bill supporting similar funding is pending in the Oregon Legislature, with hopes for approval despite a challenging statewide forecast.

General and Administration; Yolanda Brumfield

For the coming year, the focus in administration and operations will be on capacity building to maintain compliance and support staff, including expanding finance staff from 1.5 to 2 FTE and implementing new

payroll and accounting systems. Additionally, changes to indirect cost recovery will shift from using the 10% de minimis rate to fully allocating actual costs across programs, ensuring full cost recovery but limiting the ability to build unrestricted funds.

Debbie Sargeant made a Motion to approve the budget as presented. Robert Westerman seconded that motion. No objections and the motion passed.

The public meeting concluded with Joe Benetti facilitating the transition into an executive session. Tina Carpenter organized the transition, requesting that board members remain, and all staff and guests disconnect from the Zoom session to maintain confidentiality.

9. Executive Session: Sara Stephens

- *To consider the employment of a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent. information or records that are exempt from disclosure by law, including written advice from your attorney. ORS 192.660(2)(a).*
- *To consult with your attorney regarding your legal rights and duties in regard to current litigation or litigation that is more likely than not to be filed. ORS 192.660(2)(h).*

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

10. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

Marie Simonds made a motion to make Sara Stephens permanent executive director, and Debbie Sargent seconded the motion. No objections, the motion carried.

Motion to was made to approve the budget by Debbie Sargent and Robert Westerman seconded. No objections, the motion carried.

11. Adjournment

Joe Benetti officially adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:00 PM PST.

Meeting Calendar Available at www.SOWIB.ORG