ASHLAND GENERAL
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE AND EARLY LEARNING
SISKIYOU ROOM – 51 WINBURN WAY – 10:30 AM
MINUTES
August 7, 2025

I. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 10:35am
Members Present: Paula Hyatt, John Love, Lynn Ransford, Anne Sebanc, Nancy Seward, and Lisa Verner (by zoom)
Council Liaison Present: Dylan Bloom
Staff Liaison Present: Kerrick Gooden

1. Confirm quorum present

confirmed

2. Approval of draft minutes of 7-3-25 meeting (see agenda packet)

Hyatt moved to approve the minutes of the 7.3.2025 meeting. Sebanc seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion passed.

3. Suggested additions to today's agenda

no additions

4. Brief announcements

   A. HB 3560 passed (see agenda packet)

The committee discussed HB 3560, an expansion of approved childcare siting, and the Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care's (DELC) Every Child Belongs Program as support for providers needing behavioral support. Discussion also included existing (and expected) challenges to Head Start that may impact up to 4700 childcare slots, budget cuts to DELC that may result in the loss of Preschool Promise slots, and Business Oregon announced its third round of funding for its Child Care Infrastructure Fund (CCIF) grant program will open on or about September 17, 2025, and that updated guidelines will be available by September 3, 2025.

II. Public Forum

none

III. Continuation of Business from July Meeting

1. Status of the three grants voted to award in July – Kerrick

Gooden updated the committee that that contracts have been completed with the three awardees selected from the last meeting - award checks are scheduled to send.

2. Revisit funding decision about Ella's Classroom/ABC Montessori

A. What we've learned about licensing

Love updated the committee regarding his site visit and conversation with Ella's Classroom LLC. The committee discussed that concerns over licensure have been alleviated and reflected on the scarcity of childcare seats in the community.

B. Vote on granting funds

The committee discussed that fencing has been confirmed to be in place and clarified that, if awarded, grant funds should only be used for playground infrastructure improvements, including shade trees and related expenses, rather than kitchen improvements.

Hyatt moved to award Ellas Classroom LLC $35K in grant funds to support the development of playground infrastructure in the 25/26 funding cycle. Motion was seconded by Ransford. Roll Call Vote: Hyatt, Love, Verner, Sebanc, Ransford, Seward - YES. Motion Passed.

3. Business engagement work plan—finalize questionnaire and plan – Lisa (see agenda packet)

The committee discussed working on this between now and the year's end for reporting to the Council. Further discussion was postponed for other items.
Gooden will send the Ashland Family YMCA's year-end report to committee members for review.

A. Questions asked

B. Businesses to be approached

C. Key information that can be disseminated after analysis of responses

D. Plan for completing interviews

4. Update chart about progress on the committee's goals**.** (see agenda packet)

The committee discussed working on this between now and the year's end for reporting to the Council. Further discussion was postponed for other items.

IV. New Business

1. Strategies for filling gap in childcare slots due to closing of Children’s World Montessori – Paula

The committee discussed the announced closure of Children's World Montessori and how to connect interested providers in the space and/or hard assets that will result.

A. First Presbyterian Church

The committee discussed that the Board of the First Presbyterian Church is interested in maintaining a childcare provider in their space and will meet the following Wednesday for a decision. Love and Hyatt will make connections with a provider that may be interested.

B. Rogue Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

The committee discussed that the Board of Rogue Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship is in the early stages of considering the viability of housing a preschool program.

V. Adjournment to September 4 Meeting

1. Any needed followup on Business Engagement Work Plan
2. Discussion of progress on the committee’s goals
3. Continue discussion of cultivating future funding
4. Committee members’ suggestions of additional topics

Various topics were suggested for future discussion, including:

- Checking in on the Oregon Child Development Center at the Briscoe location
- Changes at the Ashland School District due to declining enrollment
- The potential for co-locating childcare at a proposed senior housing project at Southern Oregon University
- The potential for an Economic Development Advisory Committee to Council and/or making the Affordable Childcare committee permanent rather than ad-hoc, and;
- Drafting a charter for such a committee for Council consideration

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:36am