



General Meeting Agenda

ASHLAND GENERAL REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, December 4, 2025

10:30 am Siskiyou Room - 51 Winburn Way

I. Call to Order

1. Confirm quorum present
2. Approval of draft minutes of 11.6.25 meeting (see agenda packet)
3. Suggested additions to today's agenda
4. Brief announcements

II. Public Forum

III. Continuation of Business from Previous Meetings

1. Reports requested from affordable childcare grant recipients.
2. "Mind the Gap" : Strategies for filling gap in childcare slots due to closing of Children's World Montessori
 - a. UU Fellowship
 - b. Ella's Classroom (ABC Montessori)
 - c. Little Sprouts
 - d. Siskiyou School
3. What actually *is* the need for preschool / childcare seats in Ashland?
 - a. What information does the Southern Oregon Early Learning Hub have?
4. Business engagement work plan (see agenda packet)
 - a. Suggestions for final changes in questions.
 - b. Decide on businesses to include in our sample.
 - c. Strategies for conducting the interviews: who will do them and on what schedule?
 - d. Analysis plan.

IV. New Business

V. Adjournment to February 5, 2026 Meeting

1. Committee members' suggestions of topics.
2. Adjournment

If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Kerrick Gooden at citymanageroffice@ashlandoregon.gov or 541.488.6002 (TTY phone number 1.800.735.2900). Notification at least three business days before the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.



**ASHLAND GENERAL
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE AND EARLY LEARNING
MINUTES
November 6, 2025**

Siskiyou Room - 51 Winburn Way - 10:30-11:30AM

These are DRAFT minutes until approved by the committee.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10.34am.

Present were Committee Members Lisa Verner, Anne Sebanc, Nancy Seward, Lynn Ransford, John Love, and Jessica Therkelsen (by Zoom).

Also present: Council Liaison Dylan Bloom and Staff Liaison Kerrick Gooden.

1. Confirm quorum present

Confirmed

2. Approval of draft minutes of 10.2.25 meeting (see agenda packet)

Seward moved to approve the minutes. Ransford seconded the motion. All ayes - motion passed.

3. Suggested additions to today's agenda

Request to add an item to discuss regular reports from grant recipients - will be added to New Business.

4. Brief announcements

none

II. Public Forum

none

III. Continuation of Business from Previous Meetings

1. "Mind the Gap": Strategies for filling gap in childcare slots due to closing of Children's World Montessori
 - a. Status of Presbyterian Church and UU Fellowship
 - b. Siskiyou School

The committee discussed the recent closing of a childcare program at the Presbyterian Church, and that a previously interested provider decided not to rent the space. Seward will reach out to Little Sprouts directly to see if they would be interested, as they previously attended a committee meeting and expressed interest in expanding into Ashland. The committee discussed various educational models, their organizational structures, and what might qualify for future funding under the City's grant program.

The Siskiyou School had expressed interest in expanding with a prekindergarten program, but has not made any decisions.

The committee considered how to reassess local supply and demand. Rene Brandon with SOESD's Early Learning Hub might have this data, and the committee considered reviewing Ashland School District projections regarding enrollment. A recent review of this data for kindergarten enrollment was 136 for 2022, 150 for 2023, 150 for 2024, and 131 for 2025 with low-level future projections for this enrollment number to remain below 140. These numbers may be useful as the number of children at each age in the couple of years before kindergarten is likely to be similar to the kindergarten enrollment.

2. Business Engagement work plan

The committee discussed ideas for reaching out to employers regarding childcare needs, including the committee-developed survey. The committee reviewed its removal of survey items asking for sensitive information from employers (such as number of children in a household), and there was a suggestion to shift the focus to be more anecdotal. The committee discussed whether to explore the possibility of a wide-reaching push with something like Survey Monkey through the City's communications channels or to reach out directly to businesses and/or families after the holidays and decided to reengage this topic at December's meeting.

3. Cultivating future funding

- a. Meeting with Ashland Parks Foundation

Love shared that he and Hyatt met with Gardiner and Jensen to learn from their experience with the Parks Foundation in exploring the idea of establishing an endowment fund managed by something like the Oregon Community Foundation. Such an endowment would need a nonprofit to receive and manage funds and would require between \$3 - 4 Million to continue the committee's current grant program offerings. The committee considered the Ashland Schools Foundation as an established resource that has discussed co-locating employee housing with childcare as another resource to explore this with. Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development

Inc (SORED) was also discussed as potentially having data on employee/employer access to housing and childcare — Councilor Dahle is liaison to SORED and might know or could ask.

IV. New Business

1. What actually *is* the need for preschool/childcare seats in Ashland?

The 1st item was discussed under the 'Mind the Gap' discussion.

The 2nd item added to the agenda was to request reports from grant program recipients. The committee reviewed grant reporting requirements outlined in the grant narrative and reflected that strict quarterly reporting might not be warranted with the school year just then in full swing. Gooden will check with the City Manager's Office and Love as Committee Chair regarding necessary reporting requirements and send the request out to grant recipients. A report deadline of mid-January was suggested so the committee can review responses at its February meeting.

V. Adjournment to December 4, 2025 Meeting

1. Committee members' suggestions of topics in addition to continuation of today's discussions

The committee agreed that one focus of the next meeting would be finalizing and planning implementation of the business interviews.

2. Adjournment

The committee was adjourned at 11.34am

**Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning
BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT WORK PLAN**

Questions to ask Ashland businesses:

1. How many employees do you have?
2. Are you (the business) affected by your employees' needs for childcare?
3. Does childcare issues impact employee absenteeism or your ability to retain employees?
4. Have work schedules been altered and/or rearranged to accommodate an employee's childcare needs?
5. Do you offer help with tuition for childcare for your employees? What other assistance do you offer?
6. Do you have room onsite for a childcare facility? If someone else was willing to operate a childcare program, would you be willing to have it onsite?
7. Would you join a group of employers to provide or to subsidize childcare for your employees?
8. If an endowment were created to support/subsidize childcare slots in Ashland, would you contribute to it? Annually?
9. What else would you like to tell us about how businesses (yours and others you know **business**) are impacted by childcare?

Questions to ask employees:

1. Demographic information Let's spell out what we want/need to know, e.g.,
 - a. Number and ages of children
 - b. That might be all? Other suggestions?
2. Do you use childcare? What type of childcare do you use? (center childcare facility, home-based childcare, babysitter/nanny, family member, other)
3. Is your childcare in Ashland? If not, where do you place your children while you're working?
4. Has your attendance at work or your work performance been affected by childcare issues? What are the biggest challenges?

How do we select the employees to interview?

How do we minimize interference with their work schedules?

Businesses to contact:

Retail

- a. Paddington family of stores (owners: Pam & Kelly Jean Hammond and Joe Collins)
- b. TC Chevy: (owner: Alan DeBoer)
- c. Butler Ford:
- d. ACE Hardware: Tim Ringer (541) 482-3476
- e. Bi-Mart: Eric Chaddock (541) 535-1566
- f. Blue Marble: Jordan Willing, Owner and CEO
- g. Organic Alcohol Co: (541) 201-1050
- h. Rogue Credit Union:
- i. Evergreen Bank: Marsha Billeci, Branch Manager, mbilleci@evergreenfederal.bank
- j.

Education

- a. SOU: VP for Finance & Administration Dr Carson Howell? Human Resources AVP for DEI?
- b. Ashland School District: Dr Joseph Hattrick, Superintendent
- c.

Government

- a. City of Ashland: Resources Director, Molly Taylor
- b. United States Post Office
- c.

Food

- a. Market of Choice: owner & CEO Rick Wright
- b. Ashland Food Coop: Nick Hardy, GM
- c. Albertsons: Don Kennedy Store Director, (541) 482-6320
- d. Safeway: Malcolm (no last name) Store Manager (541) 482-7777
- e.

Health related

- a. Asante Community Hospital: Kristin Roy, SVP and Legal Counsel
- b. CVS Pharmacy
- c. Ashland Drug:
- d. YMCA: Heidi Hill, CEO
- e.

Entertainment

- a. Oregon Shakespeare Festival:
- b. Oregon Cabaret Theatre

Manufacturing

- a. Darex: David Bernard
- b. BioSkin: Scott Shumway, company president
- c. Scharffen Berger Chocolate (part of Harry & David but produces locally): Chris Spirko, General Manager