



General Meeting Agenda

ASHLAND GENERAL

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE AND EARLY LEARNING AGENDA

Thursday, February 5, 2026

Siskiyou Room - 51 Winburn Way - 10:30AM

To attend by Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/99672776665>

Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning

Note: Agenda updated on 2.2.2026 to provide Zoom link as requested

I. Call to Order

1. Confirm quorum present
2. Approval of draft minutes of 12-4-25 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 received from affordability grant recipients (see agenda packet)
 - a. Committee approval of reports - all
 - b. Suggest schedule for next and final reports - all
2. Cultivating future funding, aka the future of our *ad hoc* committee
 - a. Report on chair's meeting with Mayor Graham - John
 - b. Endowment scenarios for moving forward – Paula
 - c. Potential for working within Ashland Schools Foundation – John & Paula
 1. Pipeline from babies to kindergartners
 - d. Using \$100,000 remaining in Affordability Grant funds as seed money?
 - e. Presentation to City Council—April?
3. Business engagement work plan (see agenda packet) - all
 - 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 and report schedule.

IV. New Business

V. Anticipation of March 5, 2026 Meeting and Adjournment

1. Report on business engagement progress
2. Report on discussions with the Ashland Schools Foundation
3. Committee members' suggestions for other topics
4. 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.





General Meeting Agenda



**ASHLAND GENERAL
AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE AND EARLY LEARNING
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
December 4, 2025**

These are DRAFT minutes until approved by the committee.

10:30 am Siskiyou Room - 51 Winburn Way

I. Call to Order

Present were Committee Members John Love, Lynn Ransford, Nancy Seward, Jessica Therkelsen, Anne Seban, Paula Hyatt, Joanie Keller-Hand, and Lisa Verner.

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

1. Confirm quorum present

Confirmed

2. Approval of draft minutes of 11.6.25 meeting (see agenda packet)

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

3. Suggested additions to today's agenda

none

4. Brief announcements

Bloom spoke of the potential sale of surplus City property and proposed an idea to request future funding for the Affordable Childcare Grant Program from revenues received from such sale. The committee could recommend to Council that this revenue be restricted for such use in the next biennium.

II. Public Forum

none

III. Continuation of Business from Previous Meetings

1. Reports requested from affordable childcare grant recipients.

Gooden spoke of having sent out reporting reminders to the four grant recipients requesting a report back by January 15, 2026.

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

Love spoke with leadership of the UU Fellowship. Discussion included clarifying timelines for the Business Oregon CCIF Infrastructure Grants. The committee discussed the suggestion for putting the UU Fellowship back in contact with the previously interested party (Rogue Valley Educational Services) to apply.

Love spoke with ABC Montessori and will assist them in applying for the same Business Oregon CCIF Infrastructure Grants. The committee discussed the suggestion that they include having received City support through its Affordable Childcare Grant Program in their application.

3. What actually *is* the need for preschool / childcare seats in Ashland?
 - a. What information does the Southern Oregon Early Learning Hub have?

The committee discussed the availability of preschool slots. Availability appears to have grown to meet Ashland's need through the work of the committee, as evidenced by unfilled slots, but there remains a need for more

infant/toddler care. The committee discussed business challenges to infant/toddler care programs, including liability concerns and costs associated with operations, and that typically such programs are 'subsidized' through other programs for older children.

The committee took up two questions:

- 1) What role could the committee take in supporting infant/toddler programs? and;
- 2) How can the committee foster connections between programs to help meet this need?

Discussion included that these are typically not municipal functions, and the committee would need clarity from Council regarding what is expected from the committee beyond its charge as an advisory body. Discussion also included the committee's priority of improving affordability and access to quality childcare, and the potential for the City to pivot by leveraging the unused \$100K (slated for Childcare Grants during the next year of the biennium) as seed money for a new fund and/or program to be picked up and carried forward by community partners.

The committee discussed moving forward with the idea of approaching the Ashland Schools Foundation to explore potential collaboration, and reviewed numbers provided by the Oregon Community Foundation for what an endowment fund might provide for sustainable giving. (A minimum of \$2 million of seed funds would yield around \$90K/yr at OCF's current endowment rate of 4.5% interest, or the same seed funds could be used to give out less per year to increase the fund's principle and allow increased sustainable giving in the future.)

The committee also discussed difficulty with communication back from the Southern Oregon Early Learning Hub, and considered exploring resources from Zero to Three, a non-profit that serves the infant/toddler population, as its national conference will be in Portland this year.

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.

The committee discussed that it was not ready for business interviews yet, and considered if it would ask businesses if they would be willing to contribute to an endowment fund if it was established. The committee discussed forming a working group to focus on an endowment fund plan and 'elevator pitch' prior to discussing with businesses.

The committee identified two action items prior its next meeting in February and before business interviews:

- 1) Love will initiate the 'exploratory' conversation with Ashland Schools Foundation. And;
- 2) Therkelsen and Hyatt will develop endowment fund options and/or 'road-map' for recommendation to Council

IV. New Business

V. Adjournment to February 5, 2026 Meeting

1. Committee members' suggestions of topics.

none

2. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40am



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December 4, 2025

Affordable Childcare and Early Learning Committee
City of Ashland
C/O Kerrick Gooden

Dear Committee Members,

This is the 1st quarterly report from the Ashland Family YMCA for the Affordable Childcare Grant. It is in modified format as communicated to us on November 21st by Kerrick Gooden.

The 2025–2026 Preschool year is underway. Our Talent preschool is full with 19 children, but I'll be reporting on the two Ashland located YMCA preschools at Walker Elementary and Helman Elementary where families received scholarships with funding through the Affordable Childcare Grant.

At YMCA Preschool at Walker we have a full classroom of 20 kids with one on the waitlist. Earlier in the year there were 7 on the waitlist. Sixty percent (60%, 12 children) of the children at Walker Preschool receive some type of financial assistance. Of those twelve, 5 are receiving funds through the Affordable Childcare Grant.

At YMCA Preschool at Helman we have 18 children enrolled and 3 open slots. We are working hard to fill these slots and expect to do so in the new year. Thirty nine percent (39%, 7 children) of the children at Helman Preschool receive some type of financial assistance. Of those seven, 5 are receiving funds through the Affordable Childcare Grant.

The school year started off with the normal new-school challenges faced by three- and four-year-olds. Routines have now been established and we are well into the Teaching Strategies Gold curriculum for preschoolers. In addition, parents have appreciated the breakfast and lunch included in the program and the free 6-sessions of swim lessons the preschoolers received at the Y.

Below are some comments specifically from parents receiving support through the Affordable Childcare Grant.

1. A**** B***: *We love this preschool program for A****, it has been great for him and his development. Thank you for the opportunity for our family.*

2. V***** F**: *You all are the best and we love this preschool! V***** is really happy here; it's like a second home. The scholarship has helped make this possible for us, and we depend on it to afford such a great school for V*****.*

ASHLAND FAMILY YMCA

540 YMCA Way, Ashland, OR 97520

P 541 482 9622 info@ashlandymca.org www.ashlandymca.org



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3. L*** D*****: *Thank you for the scholarship for our family that makes preschool possible for us at such a great school! L*** is really thriving here.*

4. F*** H*****: *The YMCA scholarship program has been such a huge help as a working-class family. It has supported and enriched our family routine and given us the ability to build community and help us financially feel supported. Thank you so much, scholarship donors, we are so grateful!*

5. A** N*****: *This school is just perfect for A**, she is learning all of the skills she needs to be successful in kindergarten, and I have no worries because she is doing so well here. Our family is really grateful this program is made available to us through funding assistance.*

The YMCA is also grateful for the funds to support scholarships for working families. Our preschool programs do not breakeven financially. The Y fundraises locally, applies for foundation grant support and subsidizes the program with funds generated through adult memberships to the YMCA.

Thank you for your support.

Submitted by Laurie Schaaf
Administrative Services Manager

ASHLAND FAMILY YMCA
540 YMCA Way, Ashland, OR 97520
P 541 482 9622 info@ashlandymca.org www.ashlandymca.org

Kerrick Gooden

From: Andrea Johnson <averystmontessori@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 30, 2025 12:12 PM
To: Kerrick Gooden
Subject: Re: Affordable Childcare Grant Program reporting request
Attachments: Avery_374_Permit.pdf; Avery_374_Inspection history report.pdf; fiveriversllcccb219124_invoice_325-2.pdf; City of Ashland Infrastructre Grant profit_loss - Sheet1-1.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

2025 Grant Reporting
Avery Street Montessori LLC

In receiving the City of Ashland Infrastructure Grant, Avery Street Montessori was able to complete a bathroom expansion to an existing backyard structure used as an indoor learning space. This expansion made it possible to become a Registered Family Childcare Home(RF), a higher level certification than the previously held Recorded Program status. As an RF, Avery Street Montessori is able to provide care for longer hours during the school week, and it opens limited enrollment to children under three years old, the primary goal for 2025/26. The expansion included: concrete slab, construction for building, plumbing, electric, drywall and finishings. The City of Ashland inspected and signed off all permits along the way electronically, including final inspection upon completion. The Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care also visited the site for an inspection for licensing purposes.

As a requirement to receive the grant, Avery Street Montessori also obtained Liability Insurance for the year, and has posted information regarding the award on the bulletin board at the entrance of the school.

Thank you again for the amazing support!

Below you will find the profit and loss of funds, permit, inspections. Please let me know if you need any further information.

Happy New Year,
Andrea Johnson

From: [Ella Jorgensen](#)
To: [Kerrick Gooden](#)
Subject: Re: Affordable Childcare Grant Program reporting request
Date: Tuesday, January 20, 2026 4:27:10 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Hi Kerrick,

Thank you for your patience.

Here is the information you requested:

ABC Montessori/Ella's Classroom received \$35,000 to help us to create an outdoor space for our school. We used a local contractor who was able to do the work affordably and help find us and get the best deals on the materials and equipment we needed. He was so excited to help us, when we look at everything we received, it's obvious he went above and beyond to help us complete our project. There were many weekends and holidays spent helping him arrange and move materials and installing and we finished right around the 16th of October.

July 19th 2025 we opened up at 518 Washington Street with just the bare minimum to get the license approved in picture phase-0 as you can see below. A fence, a couple things we brought from our home and a covered area with a pop up tent in phase 1.

As you can see in the pictures as things progressed and how it looked when we finished it all up. We stretched the money as far as we could working in the daycare all day with the kids and then taking advantage of the late sunsets in the summer, working with our contractor as laborers from 6pm to 9pm and then the weekends.

Thanks so much for believing in us and giving us the chance to make this park area so special for our school.

Looking forward to supporting more families in our small community thanks to our park that has been vital to our teachers, kiddos and parents.

Kindest regards,
Ella and Chris Jorgensen
ABC Montessori Center/Ella's Classroom

On Fri, Nov 21, 2025 at 9:23 AM Kerrick Gooden <kerrick.gooden@ashland.or.us> wrote:

Hello Affordable Childcare Grant Program Grant Recipient-

This is your friendly reminder of the requirement to submit a quarterly report for the grant funds you received from the City of Ashland.

In recognition of the school year in full swing and holidays approaching, the Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning is reducing this quarter's reporting requirement to only a **brief report on what you've been able to accomplish since receiving the grant. This report is due January 15, 2026.** This report allows the committee to understand some of the qualitative impacts these grant dollars have had.

Future reports will be required to have all the report components, which are included below. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Thank you for improving the quality of preschool and childcare offerings in Ashland!

Sincerely,

Kerrick

Reporting requirements for infrastructure project grants:

- a. Provide a summary narrative of infrastructure work completed, including:
 - i. Copies of permits required for installation, if required (example, fencing for a play area)
 - ii. Provide a revenue and expenditure statement, or profit and loss statement, demonstrating the cashflow of grant dollars.
- b. Upon completion, provide an inspection report if appropriate, or photo of the completed installation.

Reporting requirements for staffing grants:

- a. Provide a summary narrative of what work was completed, including information about your program capacity and/or service impact of additional staff on programming offered.
- b. Provide a revenue and expenditure statement, or profit and loss statement, demonstrating the cashflow of grant dollars.

Reporting requirements for scholarship grants:

Provide a summary narrative of scholarship work completed, including:

- a. Total number of scholarships awarded, and number of families served.
- b. Attendance of scholarship recipients (number attending 90% of the time, 75% of the time, less than 50% of program time).
- c. Average scholarship award value, and scholarship award value range (smallest vs. largest scholarship).
- d. Total enrollment without the Early Childhood Affordability Grant dollars versus total enrollment with the grant dollars.
- e. Current waitlist count, if any.
- f. Provide a revenue and expenditure statement, or profit and loss statement, demonstrating the cashflow of grant dollars.
- g. If applicable, indicate if the Early Childhood Affordability Grant dollars supporting scholarships enabled your program to use other monies for investment in quality of service, curriculum, educators, and/or infrastructure.

With Respect,

Kerrick Gooden

He / Him / His

Administrative Coordinator



City of Ashland

City Manager's Office

20 East Main Street, Ashland, OR 97520

541.552.2100|TTY 800.735.2900|541.488.5311 fax

Kerrick.Gooden@ashlandoregon.gov

This email transmission is official business of the City of Ashland, and it is subject to Oregon Public Records Law for disclosure and retention. If you have received this message in error, please contact me at (541) 552-2100

Kerrick Gooden

From: Mountain Star <mntstarpreschool@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 09, 2026 10:43 AM
To: Kerrick Gooden
Subject: grant funding reporting from Mountain Star Preschool
Attachments: P&L by class.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Hi Kerrick,

Firstly, we want to thank you and the City of Ashland for offering this scholarship, and supporting our program and families by allowing us to offer scholarships.

CITY OF ASHLAND GRANT REPORTING JANUARY 2026

Mountain Star Preschool

We have 14 children enrolled in Mountain Star Preschool. 4 of those children are currently receiving half off their tuition through the scholarship program. 7 children are enrolled in our aftercare program, 3 of which are receiving the scholarship money so their parents can afford the aftercare, allowing the parents to work full time. The other child receiving the scholarship was able to move from 2 days a week to 4 days a week, also allowing the mother to return to work. We have also been able to support an ERDC family who owed money for tuition not fully covered by ERDC's hourly payment, so that family has been able to send 2 children to our program, at no personal cost. In total, 5 families are currently being served by the grant money.

Most scholarships are paying \$485, half of \$970 which is the monthly tuition cost to be enrolled full time with after care. One scholarship is paying \$350 for a child enrolled full time, half of the \$650 tuition cost.

We have 2 children currently on our waitlist.

Please let us know if this information is adequate, or if you'd like it in a different format.

Could you please let us know if this grant will be available for the 2026-2027 school year and if so, when will the application information be available for licensed programs to apply? The sooner we have that information, the more helpful it is for us to plan our next school year and receive applications from families who would potentially be served through the Ashland Childcare Affordability Grant. .

Thank you,

Rebecca Wujek and Jihan Nicholas

Mountain Star Preschool Co-directors

mountainstarpreschool.com

**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. Do 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?

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

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 _____, 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. Maple Ridge Senior Living Community

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

To decide:

- How to sample businesses, owner/manager to interview
- How to select the employees to interview
- How to minimize interference with their work schedules
- Who interviews whom? And on what schedule?
- Who tabulates responses? Writes report?