

Coastal Operators Group (COG) Meeting

Minutes

April 22, 2026

2:00 – 3:00 PM

Agenda Item	Notes	Next Steps
1. Welcome & review of the agenda	<p>In attendance:</p> <p>Jeff Martinelli (Workforce Solutions) Sheila Muldoon (Workforce Solutions) Samantha Funk (Workforce Solutions) Allen Lambert (Adult Ed Hub 7) Linda Greer (Adult Ed Hub 9) Kim Desso (MDOL Vocational Rehabilitation) David Grima (MDOL Bureau of Employment Services) Rene Smith (MDOL Bureau of Employment Services) Amy Geren (OSO / Catherine Cutler Institute, USM) Clare Murray (Catherine Cutler Institute, USM) Dave Lorenzatti (MDOL Bureau of Employment Services)</p>	Amy will post last meeting's minutes on CCWI website
2. Support cross-training between agencies	<p>One-Stop Delivery System training review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy explained that SCSEP program was moved/changed but is still available • Re: list of partners: Suggestion to spell out the acronyms • Presentation is in the abstract – what is the role of the new staff? How does the concept work in a practical way? How does the system work together? • This is not meant to be a day one training – this would be down the road. WI grant does require one-stop center. (One physical space in our workforce region). Part of this is to check boxes to be eligible for the funding. • Might be easy enough to put in a couple case studies about a person coming into the center – maybe someone who is being helped by certain entities and can now be helped by additional entities 	Amy will rework the presentation.
3. Updates from the group	Amy: MDOL has requested feedback/information on the virtual career center. Amy would like to distribute a form for missing details that can be reported to MDOL. Thoughts?	

- Does anyone use site? Sheila: we incorporated into trainings, and now they have been showing it to clients (new participants) – especially the workbook.
- Anything that is missing? Sheila: still working through it, and in future meetings will get some feedback from managers.
- Amy and Clare will put together a form for everyone to use to flag what is missing, in particular the AI assistant (Dee).

David Grima: Would like to know what Title IB services remain available to adult customers now that WIOA funds administered by CCWI have all been expended.

- Sheila: it is training funding that is limited (won't see more until August) but there are plenty of other things (e.g. for youth, work experience, OJT) job search, career exploration, and team have found other resources (for those with career pathways) that provide training that counselors will be distributing
- Additionally, support services are not available.
- Dislocated worker funds, green type jobs are still fully funded.
- Samantha: Do still have life navigators (for those job seeking or part-time to full-time – this is not a stand-alone program).

Amy: old ELO coord (Portland Schools) got a grant from MEMIC for CNA training (for in-school youth) and she was hoping Adult Ed could take it over – they are not able to. Grant covers teachers, supplies, etc. They are just looking for someone to coordinate the program (Jeff: facilitate enrollments, make sure there are supplies, and make sure everyone is where they should be) Could workforce solutions take this on? Sheila/Jeff: This would require a heavy lift, requiring a new hire, and does not fall under our purview, so no. Amy: will check with Learning Works.

Amy: Any new career fairs planned by Kyle from Green Jobs for ME? Sam: It was not mentioned at the meeting today.

Sam Funk: They are trying to find clients for free union construction academy (especially women – only 1 enrolled right now). It is a registered pre-apprenticeship through AFL-CIO that starts next week.

Jeff Martinelli: Dealing with new normal without training funding. We have been taking a lot of enrollments for supports on training. Trying to pivot to work experience.

Kim Desso: 7 staff members down (very tough – finding good, qualified candidates who can afford to live on the salary) Sam: please share job postings:

- [Rehabilitation Counselor 2 \(opens in another page\)](#)

	<p>Rene Smith: Dave Lorenzatti started just yesterday. Closing for Portland Career Center Manager job is today.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 5th Hiring event: 10-12 at Brunswick. • 48 Employers (4/23) at Ptld Expo 10-1 co-hosted by Ptld Adult Ed and Maine DOL. <p>Allen: New budget year coming up (7/1/26). Will be a challenging year. AFLA grant is problematic. Last we heard it will be renewed but do not know dollar amounts, so not included in next year's budget. A lot of CNA programs have been struggling. Possibly due to Maine Health model (remote training). Hard to find instructors/staff, especially in rural areas. Graduation coming up, trying to get everyone ready to graduate.</p> <p>Linda: We got some clarity around graduates having access to community college. Those who complete HiSet within two years are eligible for free college.</p> <p>Allen: One positive thing: due to prior deadline of free college ending in 2025, a lot of people were motivated to get HiSet by Nov/Dec last year.</p> <p>Amy: There is less funding overall, and the requirements are a little different – have to be at min 75%, some of the fees are now their responsibility where they were not before. (Remind people to look at the details).</p> <p>David Grima: no one has come in today – very unusual</p>	
<p>4. Wrap-up and next steps</p>	<p>Amy/Clare to send out Feedback form re: virtual career center</p> <p>Amy to send out revised OS training</p>	

Next meeting
May 27, 2026 @ 2:00PM