

Coastal Operators Group (COG) Meeting

Minutes

February 25, 2026

2:00 – 3:00 PM

Agenda Item	Notes	Next Steps
<p>Welcome and Review 12/17/25 and 1/28/26 Meeting Minutes</p>	<p>In attendance: Joy Rodrigue (Workforce Solutions) Jeff Martinelli (Workforce Solutions) Sheila Muldoon (Workforce Solutions) Samantha Funk (Workforce Solutions) Allen Lambert (Adult Ed Hub 7) Barb Stoddard (Adult Ed Hub 8/New Mainers Resource Center) Linda Greer (Adult Ed Hub 9) Kim Desso (MDOL Vocational Rehabilitation) David Grima (MDOL Bureau of Employment Services) Robert Ducharme (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)</p>	<p>Post approved minutes to CCWI's website (Amy will share with Jen): https://www.coastalcounties.org/board-operations/ → One-Stop Operator → Coastal Operator Group</p>
<p>1. Updates from the group</p>	<p>Amy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing colleague– Clare Murray, to help with meeting minutes and other things in the future. <p>Rene, MDOL Career Center Mgr (Brunswick, covering Portland and Springvale)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A couple hiring events: Brunswick (last week); Portland Wed 3/4 9-12; Springvale 3/10 at Church of LDS: in combination with that community, and with Sanford Adult Ed. • Employment and Training Specialist 4 position available (Asst Mgr for Portland and Springvale) – folks can apply online. • Maine JobLink training offered internally. There is Maine JobLink workshop twice a month the worksourcemaine website to help customers navigate Maine JobLink. • Also – twice a month workshops on resumes, and interviewing. <p>Kim, Voc Rehab (Portland office)</p>	<p>https://www.myworksourcemaine.gov/</p>

- Multiple RC2 vacancies; work with Goodwill as their community rehabilitation provider, and have a lot of RC2s that do their own job development.
- Training tomorrow 2/26 around Maine JobLink. Will have access to the whole employer engagement section to see who's done outreach when and which employers have been working with Voc Rehab regularly (which will be a good resource). This is for rehab counselors and CRP staff.
- Retail program with multi-lingual learners in Kittery office (6 participants) tied to national retail curriculum for de-escalation in customer service with Marcy (and Mary comes in for the testing).

Linda, Adult Ed director Kittery, Marshwood, Eliot and S. Berwick (York County).

- Coming into grant writing season for Maine college and career grant, need to identify projects that are needed for that. There are workforce programs out there, trying to stay tied into new platforms.

Sam, Program Mgr for Workforce Solutions team covering adult and dislocated worker grants in Cumberland and York Counties

- Have a lot of cohorts going on – trying to catch up with that. Hired a new career advisory (1 leaving, 1 going on maternity leave). Navigating caseload juggling
- CNA1 in partnership with David Watts (Adult Education) and MaineHealth
- Portland Adult Ed programs have started
- AGC with women out of Windham correctional facility are graduating today

Sheila, Sr Program Mgr overseeing grants for six coastal counties located in Belfast

- Working on getting everyone into spring trainings/classes.
- Updated priority of services makes adult program looks different: Because of downsizing (staff, funding), programming went from 5 to 3 priorities – 1st Veterans and spouses, 2nd – Lower income (receiving public assistance), 3rd – all others.
- Where affected most: If someone has been working for last 26 weeks, they may no longer be eligible (unless they have a dislocation or have been laid off, etc.). Sarah (intake) may be turning down clients.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michelle is working on the business side of things including anyone working on job fairs, green jobs (including incumbent worker training). Also working in the background on pilot programs for Biddeford Adult Ed (looking to do some OJTs with them), working with Sam Boss on waste management diversion; off and on with Portland Adult Ed green jobs training. She will go to ClimateWork Maine Summit. <p>Joy, Program Manager – Knox, Lincoln, Waldo, Sagadahoc Counties</p> <p>Jeff, Program Manager, WIOA, Youth Services Workforce Solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One cohort launching in late March with Merry Meeting Food Council (farm skills program), summer cohort with AGC (pre-apprenticeship prog). Potential new opportunities: Conservation Core; AGC; Aquaculture program with Educate Maine. Conservation core and Educate Maine – in dialog with them – hopefully to become a fruitful partnership to align services and programs with community partners. Services for youth: 16-24 – addressing barriers to education and/or employment – disability, pregnancy, justice-involved, etc., provide various career counseling and various services including financial literacy, entrepreneurial development, etc. Oversee York, Cumberland, Sagadahoc counties a team of 3-4 career advisors. One of embedded career advisors is in YouthBuild at LearningWork.s Every student that goes through their program is also supported through WIOA (3 years of this in July). <p>Amy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OneStop Partner meeting next month, Kim More (MDOL) will present where we are with the Worksource Maine Virtual CareerCenter (1 year out). New director position at Portland Adult Ed? Barb can let us know about this next month. If anyone is interested in Kim’s presentation, Amy can send that link out (3/17). 	
<p>2. Feedback on https://www.myworksourcemaine.gov</p>	<p>In pre-meeting survey to attendees of OneStop Partner meeting – feedback received that they hadn’t really used it because they don’t work directly with clients.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (To the group:) have you accessed virtual career center? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sheila – Yes – this is a great tool for career advisors working with new referrals. I’m going to create training around it. The <i>Let’s Get Started</i> tool is great guidance for them to give to clients. ○ Other feedback on the site? A few have accessed it • For those who haven’t accessed it – why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Joy: we plan to look at this during our one-on-ones this week Missing from homepage – Let’s Get Started Tool – you need to type in Job Seeker Guide and it should pop up. • Under publications: have career center info, quick-tips guides, in multiple languages. Also an employer guide just like job seeker guide with resources. • Any Qs for Kim at the meeting this month? – Sheila: we can get some feedback from new-referral clients using the site. • They have held a couple of virtual job fairs on the site – would like to learn about this. • Will have updated site traffic data from MDOL. • People are using the translated pages. 	
3. Business Engagement	<p>Amy reminded attendees that the ClimateWork Maine Summit on Maine's Economy will be held on 3/19/26 and that she will attend. Michelle is planning to attend as well.</p> <p>Inclusion Maine conference will be earlier this year – April 1-3</p> <p>Sheila: Overlap on April 2nd: Adult Ed will be at the Hall of Flags, Inclusion Maine conference will be happening then, and a FAME training day</p>	
4. Next meeting	We will plan to reschedule the next meeting – Workforce solutions has a conflict for the day, and Kim cannot attend.	Amy will send some suggestions for a new date and time

Next meeting:
TBD