



March 26, 2025 Advisory Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

7:40am - 9:00am

Economic Development Collaborative

141 Stony Circle Suite #110

Santa Rosa, CA, 95401

For special accommodations please contact: juanita.fong@sonoma-county.org

EDC Meeting Agenda

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

II. CONSENT ITEMS

A. December 2024 Minutes - 3

B. January 2025 Minutes - 7

C. February 2025 Minutes - 10

III. POLICY/PROGRAM UPDATES

A. Board Feedback/Questions on Information Items

i. Executive Director Updates - 12

ii. Business Services Research - 13

iii. Broadband - 18

iv. Creative Sonoma - 20

v. Marketing And Communications - 21

IV. BOARD BUSINESS

A. Guest Speaker: Leslie Simmons, Vice President
Impact & Investments Career Technical Education
(CTE) Foundation

B. Board Reports on district updates and challenges
(15 mins)

C. Action Items for next meeting (5 mins)

V. NEW BUSINESS

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS NOT LISTED ON THE AGENDA BUT WITHIN THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE BOARD

Comments are restricted to matters within the Board's jurisdiction. Each person is usually granted time to speak at the discretion of the Chair. Any additional public comments will be heard at the conclusion of the meeting. While members of the public are welcome to address the Board, under the brown Act, Board members may not deliberate or take action on items not on the agenda.

VII. ADJORN - NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING - Wednesday, April 23, 2025

Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 11, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLLCALL

Kathryn Phillips, Chair called to order the Economic Development Collaborative (EDC) at 7:57 am on December 11, 2024

The following EDB Board members were present: Kathryn Philips, Wayne Leach, Nick Schwanz, Linda Kachiu, Meilin Tsao, Skip Brand

The following EDB staff members were present: Ethan Brown, Aleena Decker, Lauren Cartwright, Bernadette Marko, Tara Thompson, Christine Palmer, Lauren Cartwright, Jack Kampmann, Juanita Fong

II. CONSENT ITEMS

A. The meeting minutes from October 23, 2024, were approved.

Motion: Nick Schwanz Second: Wayne Leach

Yay: 6 Ney: 0 Abstained: 0

III. POLICY PROGRAM UPDATES

A. Executive Director Update

- Ethan and Kathryn introduced Meilin Tsao, our newest EDC Board Member.
- Draft Charter is on track for a May 2025.
 - New Board member term limits will be a maximum of 2 four-year terms.
 - Will go from a Board appointed body to a Department Head appointed body.
 - Proposing to keep the Board Member stipends to allow access and representation from a wide array of people.
 - Flexibility of time and location of meetings
 - Proposes to shrink town the district representation to 5 of the members but potentially expand beyond the 10 we have now.

Board of Directors

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B. Creative Sonoma

Arts Education Framework Revision

The team met in mid-November for a final day of work to revise the current countywide arts education plan with needed updates and strategies. Meeting slide deck. The team is comprised of several SCOE coordinators, CTEF, Windsor USD, Luther Burbank Center for the Arts, Creative Bridges, and Creative Sonoma. Creative Sonoma will meet with the team's facilitator in December and January to move the ideas into a draft. The plan is due to be completed by February.

Workforce Campaign

The #TEACHtheARTS campaign has been launched through Creative Sonoma and partner communication channels. Here is a press release. High school, community college, and university students are invited to learn more about careers in the arts and arts education on February 1, 2025, at College and Career Pathways in the Arts Day at SSU. Creative Sonoma will share our strategies and materials at a statewide meeting of arts education leaders on Dec. 6.

C. Broadband

Digital Needs Assessment:

In September 2024, EDC retained Los Cien to conduct a Digital Needs Assessment throughout Sonoma County to determine what barriers communities are facing to fully access and participate in the digital world. The Digital Needs Assessment focused on communities who scored low on the Human Development Index (HDI), which is a measure for a community's health, wealth, and wellbeing, as described in the Portrait of Sonoma and Health Action Together reports, along with other low-income areas. To ensure adequate representation of the populations most in need of these services, Los Cien partnered with several community organizations and attended in-person events to distribute the surveys.

In total, 579 responses were received. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of the respondents identified as Hispanic or Latino and 30% white. The average reported household income was \$36,000 and average size of household was 3.2 people. Interestingly, 80% of respondents reported having access to internet in their homes, either through home computers or cell phones. However, when

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asked about internet speeds, costs, and devices used, there is a clear divide in the respondents' ability to fully access the internet. The full Digital Needs Assessment report is attached. Data highlights include:

- 80% of Low-Income HH are paying more than \$30/month on internet, despite being eligible for low- income internet plans.
- 60% are receiving service speeds below State/Federal standards (100/20 MBPS) and yet majority (66%) are paying at least \$50/month.
- 44% reported having no devices or only a smartphone. That figure increases to 53% when isolating for households with school-aged children.

D. SMEDD

On Friday 11/15/2024, the SMEDD Board of Directors approved the next three-year partnership and planning grant for submission to the EDA. Leveraging this funding, the SMEDD conducts its baseline work of facilitating an annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) update, and monitoring progress on regional projects that are aligned with the CEDs. Below is a complete three-year workplan for the proposed application.

Management and Maintenance of the Comprehensive Economic Development

- Annual CEDs Update
 - Project Repository Expansion
 - 2027 CEDs Five-Year Revision
- Stakeholder Engagement and Alignment
 - Industry and Sector Convening
 - Feedback Collection for CEDs Update
- Development and Dissemination of District Newsletter
 - Monthly Resource Newsletter
- Capacity Building and Support for Project Development
 - Identification and Support of Regional Projects
 - Tracking and Reporting on Project Impacts

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IV. BOARD BUSINESS

- A. Guest Speaker: Margaret Flores McCabe, Executive Director of Secure Families Collaborative

The Sonoma County Secure Families Collaborative is a trustee-advised fund of the Community Foundation of Sonoma County. Core partners provide critical services to our immigrant neighbors and protect our entire community's economic and cultural vitality. They have partnered with the USF School of Law Immigration and Deportation Defense Clinic, Immigration of the Institute of the Bay Area (IIBA), Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa, Legal Aid of Sonoma County, North Bay Organizing Project, and the Queer Asylum Accompaniment. Their mission is to achieve collective impact to foster equity, belonging, and justice by working with their partners to provide high-quality immigration legal services and facilitating connections to culturally responsive social services.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Kathryn Phillips, Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:00 am.

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Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLLCALL

Kathryn Phillips, Chair called to order the Economic Development Collaborative (EDC) at 7:57 am on January 22, 2025

The following EDB Board members were present: Kathryn Philips, Nick Schwanz, Meilin Tsao, Ricardo Marzo

The following EDB staff members were present: Ethan Brown, Aleena Decker, Lauren Cartwright, Bernadette Marko, Tara Thompson, Christine Palmer, Lauren Cartwright, Jack Kampmann, Juanita Fong

II. CONSENT ITEMS

- A. The meeting minutes from December 11, 2024, were not approved due to lack of quorum

III. POLICY PROGRAM UPDATES

- A. Business Services and Research

An email was sent out regarding workforce documentation along with resources and preparation suggestions. Aleena and Lauren are working on a follow up email to ensure employers are in compliance, prepared to protect and have proper documentation in place for their workforce.

- B. Creative Sonoma

Arts Education Framework Revision- Creative Sonoma is working with facilitator Peggy Burt throughout January to draft a revision of the 5-year countywide arts education plan with a goal of having the draft complete by early February. This

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2025-2030 plan will use a shared leadership model and build on the accomplishments of the previous strategic arts plan.

Workforce Campaign - Recent focus has been on distribution of printed materials for the #TEACHtheARTS campaign in the community and to high school, community college, and university arts departments. Social media advertising has led to much more engagement with the marketing pieces. Creative Sonoma is responding to inquiries from interested individuals as a result of the campaign.

College & Career Pathways in the Arts – a next step in the campaign
Creative Sonoma continues to coordinate and promote a first ever College and Career Pathways in the Arts event at SSU in partnership with SSU and SRJC. High school, community college, and university students are invited to learn more about careers in the arts and arts education on Feb. 1. In addition to planning and coordinating, Creative Sonoma will present about the Creative Economy and Prop 28.

C. Broadband

CPUC has proposed to award \$17,010,997 to WiConduit and GigabitNow for two broadband expansion projects in West County.

Sonoma County, as a subgrantee, partnered with the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) on a \$12 Million statewide grant to fund training of digital navigators, conducting digital skills training courses, and outreach regarding affordable internet service offers.

IV. BOARD BUSINESS

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learning about the nonprofit ecosystem in Sonoma County and how to become an effective board member.

The objectives of this program are to:

- Equip participants with governance skills and mentorship connections.
- Reflect Sonoma County's demographics in nonprofit board representation.
- Foster a sense of belonging and recognition within nonprofit governance.

The program structure consists of:

- 4 in-person Saturday sessions (*8:30am – 2pm).
- 2 evening networking mixers on weeknights.
- Small cohort sizes (16-26) for meaningful connections.
- Interviews will be conducted in February and March
- Kicks off April 10 and ends June 12.

Board members discussed the nonprofits involved and importance of this program and what a great opportunity it is for the community

B. Draft Charter

- Draft Charter is on track for a May 2025.
- New Board member term limits will be a maximum of 2 four-year terms.
- Will go from a Board appointed body to a Department Head appointed body.
- Proposing to keep the Board Member stipends to allow access and representation from a wide array of people.
- Flexibility of time and location of meetings
- Proposes to shrink town the district representation to 5 of the members but potentially expand beyond the 10 we have now.

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Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLLCALL

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The following EDB Board members were present: Kathryn Philips, Wayne Leach, Jordan Kivelstadt, Linda Kachiu, Skip Brand

The following EDB staff members were present: Ethan Brown, Aleena Decker, Lauren Cartwright, Bernadette Marko, Tara Thompson, Christine Palmer, Jack Kampmann, Juanita Fong, Patricia Andrews, Katherine DiPasqua, Kate Fosburgh, Brad Johnson, Debbie Yarrow, Marcos Suarez, Lindsey Collins

II. CONSENT ITEMS

- A. The meeting minutes from December 2024 and January 2025 were not approved due to lack of quorum

III. POLICY PROGRAM UPDATES

- A. Executive Director Updates

Ethan reviewed, clarified, discussed and received suggestions regarding proposed Charter.

Suggestions and comments from board members were as follows:

- Will be great to have flexibility when we move towards a committee versus a board and will allow for flexibility in meetings
- Will create ease of engagement because the charter can be amended based on needs
- Looking forward to merging Creative Sonoma and EDC into one meeting.

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- New member = New ideas
- Consensus is to move forward with Charter.

B. Staff Announcements

Ethan announced that Lauren Cartwright will be leaving the EDC and moving on to work as the new Area Director for Marin, Sonoma, and Napa Counties for University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR).

C. Creative Sonoma

Debbie Yarrow asked for a call to action from the board with the following: to help support their local schools with Prop 28.

Take the workforce campaign survey

Attend and spread the word about the college and career pathways event

IV. BOARD BUSINESS

A. Guest Speaker: Karen Moranski, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Sonoma State University

Karen gave an overview of Sonoma's state current budget cuts and enrollment status as well as forecasted projects and plans moving forward.

B. Board Reports on district updates and challenges

True West Films has hired John Cooper as their artistic director.

V. ADJOURNMENT

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