Consumer Directed Employer Rate Setting Board

June 8, 2026
9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Online or Onsite	Name	Role	*Voting Member	^Advisory Member	Notes
Onsite	Bledsoe, Ben	CDE	*		
Onsite	Brannan, Pam	RSB Staff			
	Cleveland, Annette	Senator		^	
Onsite	Declet, Sonya	RSB Staff			
Online	Erickson, Eric	Licensed HCA		^	
Online	Gantala, Mike	Int. or Dev. Disabilities Org.			
Onsite	Glickman, Adam	SEIU	*		
Onsite	Goodfellow, Gwen	Home Care Worker			
	Harris, Paul	Senator			
Onsite	Hollimon, Cynthia	OFM	*		
Online	Raske, Martha	State Council on Aging		^	
Onsite	Rector, Bea	DSHS	*		
Onsite	Schlesselman, Diana	RSB Staff			
	Schmick, Joe	Representative			Not available June 8, 2026
Onsite	Strange, Cheryl	Board Chair		^	
Online	Tharinger, Steve	Representative		^	
Online	Williams, Courtney	Phys. Disabilities Org.		^	

Public attendees (Note: not all attendees present for entire meeting.)

Katie Zimmerman
Sterling Harders
Merissa Clyde
Nidhi Mirani
Christina Johansen
Galen Li
Michael Halford
Maddie Foutch
Gloria Bates

AGENDA MINUTES

Topic	Discussion Highlight	Action items/Outcomes
Welcome and Introductions	Chair	Welcome by Board Chair to all attendees.
Approval of Minutes for June 3, 2026	Chair and Facilitator	Vote of yes by the voting board members. 3 Ayes*, 0 Nays. *One voting member was absent
Old Business	Chair and Facilitator	No old business.
Remarks		
OFM/DSHS Remarks	Bea Rector with DSHS presented. Information about the LTC part of the administrations. Shared processes withing the administrations for changes for HCLA and DDA with reference to the contract with the Consumer Directed employer. • Shared the impact of the RSB along with the various rates that are addressed in the process along with the importance of local agencies and partners to represent those in our community with varying needs. • Recognized the importance of the role that family members bring. • Bea shared some personal experience with familial and economic impacts along with the many demands associated with home and work life along with caregiving. • A lot has been accomplished but there are still improvements that can be made. • There are tough budget times to consider with the RSB. Working toward a strong ecosystem and thanked the attendees for their time. Cynthia Hollimon with OFM presented. This is the second time representing the Governor's office on this Board. The work of this Board represents many on a personal level. We are in a challenging budget situation this year. Cuts have been proposed across the board. These will be hard conversations inside and outside the room. State and Federal budgets are impacted. The Governor's priority is to mitigate issues for vulnerable populations.	

SEIU Remarks	Sterling Harders SEIU 775 presented. Shared the partnerships that through working together and with a shared vision can bring guidance to those we work for. • Have built a large home care workforce and referenced insurance and other benefits gained as a part of our similar values of working for people to stay in their own homes in their own communities. • Recognized the needs of the Caregivers and working together to retain the value of their work. • Shared the statutory guidance of the Board with regard to cost of living and inflation. • Shared some of the stats from the recent survey of caregivers and the reality that many are working on the edge of their budgets and the demands on their work. • Recruitment and retention issues were shared along with Rate setting and comparability. • The need to looking at a rate that takes into consideration inflation. A Caregiver shared her experience of the caregiver experience and the hard and demanding level of this work. Shared the pay issues and associated difficulty of paying for daily needs. There is a need to continue to work toward equitable pay. Sterling Harders shared that clients struggle to find caregivers and the real impact of whether the people with obtain the caregiving that is needed. • Affordable insurance is a critical component to caregivers. This year we are looking to maintain costs. • Spoke of various benefits to make sure they are important for sustainability and respect for caregivers. • Shared needs for retention and respect in the work. • Benefits Group is working on a pilot called CareBack Cash. Another program addresses the challenge around testing which has become a major source of turnover. • Proposals are in process for adjustments with a look at cost. • Shared concerns associated with racism and sexism along with the value of this work. • Shared some administration considerations and needs for building of shared values.	
CDWA Remarks	Ben	

Topic	Discussion Highlight	Action items/Outcomes
	Ben Bledsoe with Consumer Direct Care presented on his work as the CDE and his background experience. • Shared the day-to-day needs for caregivers during challenging times and work and the need to provide high quality services and improving quality over the lifetime of the contract while meeting the needs of caregivers and clients. • Spoke to the work and high levels of customer satisfaction rates. Working toward changes to the program for improvements in training and day-to-day administrative and operational work. • Shared improvements to hiring enrollments in generating the workforce. • Spoke to the shift of company ownership to employees to help with the focus on caregivers. • Spoke to the RSB requirements to the pay and administrative rates including the B&O tax rate and what it takes to run the business. • Recognition of cost changes due to tax rate adjustments or other programmatic expenses. • Pandemic considerations for base rate and associated services impacted with mention of a pilot program that was implemented. • Recognition of PPE. • Addressed operating expenses and bad debt considerations along with other costs and risks including the B&O tax and inflation. • Shared about EVV and parity. • Shared wanting to support the program and maintain the quality of the effective model. Board Chair spoke to the cost of running a business. Opened to Board discussion. Mike Gantala shared that there is one thing to acknowledge about speaking for the caregivers--particularly those that are in-home caregivers and don't come off the clock. Some clients require care 24/7 care. Others can receive care during the day and also then require overnight care. There are also mileage considerations for caregivers. Considerations of challenges for clients and caregivers. Board chair spoke to the 24/7 humanitarian responsibilities and thanked for the reminder of the work.	
Break		

Topic	Discussion Highlight	Action items/Outcomes
Benefits Group		
Benefits Group Overview and Discussion	**Presenter: Merissa Clyde** Chief Executive Officer, Benefits Group Merissa Clyde presented a series of topics about the work, impact, and challenges in the work surrounding caregivers. • Shared a video on a caregiver who shared her perspective on how essential the work of a caregiver is. The Benefits Group is the backbone of the work and significant to the caregivers and the care of the client. • Highlighted three areas of impact including training, CareBack Cash financial support, and healthcare coverage grace months. Shared information about partnerships and impacts. • Shared training, health coverage, and retirement information and specifics in delivery. • Shared another video featuring clients that receive care and the positive impacts a caregiver makes. The Board Chair thanked Merissa on the work and more to come. Opened to Board discussion. There was no board discussion.	

Topic	Discussion Highlight	Action items/Outcomes
Carina and Discussion	**Presenter: Nidhi Mirani** Chief Executive Officer, Carina Nidhi Mirani with Carina presented on the job matching benefit and how it bring together clients and IPs to form employment relationships when needed. • Built to help and address challenges along with bridging supply and demand. • Shared the benefits of language access including retaining workers who might otherwise stay isolated. • Shared some results of an independent evaluation on the matches of employment relationships and associated retention. • A look at workers choice in location proximity to consumers. Board Chair thanked Nidhi and opened to board discussion. Bea Rector asked about new people coming in without a client and looking for employment, is there a sense of how long it is from the time a new worker starts in Carina and finds a match? • Nidhi said the average is between 21-28 days from the start to the share they have found employment. • This is a voluntary share so not sure if it's representative. • It's not easy to isolate who is a totally new caregiver. • They will begin tracking this soon and hope to have a better idea next year. • Nidhi shared more details with the process and how long it takes to work through the system. Cynthia asked about the data on the slides about the percentages of success. Nidhi shared more of the details of the percentages on slides.	
Lunch		
Health Care		

Health Benefits and Discussion	Primary Presenter: Christina Johansen Managing Director of Benefit Operations, Benefits Group Christina Johansen presented on the Health Benefits topics. • Shared information about coverage for insuring Washington's Caregivers and associated benefits eligibility. • Addressed the topic of chronic and acute care needs. • Shared a video of a caregiver who shared her story of dealing with a breast cancer diagnosis. • Discussed long term enrollment efforts and results. • Seeing connection between benefits and retention. • Grace Months enable continuity of medically necessary care. Helps deal with gaps in coverage. • Shared Healthcare baseline assumptions around hours, enrollment growth, medical cost trends, and reserves. Included some projection trend and projection charts. Galen Li, Consultant DiMartino, presented on healthcare baseline assumptions. • A look at what medical trend is and some trend benchmarks. Michael Halford, Principal & Consulting Actuary, Milliman, presented on Trust Reserve requirements. • Shares months of reserves: Nationwide and regional benchmarks for multiemployer health and welfare funds. Includes information on months of reserves fund size and distribution. • Every fund has its own unique risk characteristics. Took a look at the funding model and uncertainty as well as the rate setting cycle. • Discussed the topics of various liabilities and risks. Christina Johanson shared baseline benefit which included cost and considerations of rate increase and reserve projections. Discussed funding needed to maintain benefit stability and long-term financial health for the trust. This included a recommendation of cents for fiscal years 28 and 29. Open to questions. Bea Rector ask about assumptions on enrollment growth. Has historical enrollment growth been above 6%? Christina	

Topic	Discussion Highlight	Action items/Outcomes
	replied yes and shared some specifics. Bea asked about caseload forecast numbers and a cut in enrollment. Adam shared some information about enrollment numbers comparatively and with corresponding projections. Bea shared that this will probably need to come back with a revision and asked for verification. SEIU shared that it can be revised with updated numbers. Bea shared that DSHS will also provide an update. Facilitator shared that DSHS indicated that the June forecast should be released in the next couple of weeks. Board Chair opened to discussion. No further discussion.	

Topic	Discussion Highlight	Action items/Outcomes
Health Care and Discussion	SEIU 775 Maddie Foutch SEIU 775 Public Affairs Director Gloria Bates Caregiver Maddie Foutch presented on the work and role of the RSB in protecting home care workers and healthcare benefits. • A look at helping to determine if there is enough to covers the high quality of care. • A look at having quality health care coverage. Included improvements in benefits. • Shared statutory factors that impact the work as well as the long-term stability of the workforce. Reverence to RCS 41.56.530(1). References to turnover, comparing benefits, wages, hours, and working conditions among other factors. Gloria Bates shared her caregiver experience and difficulty covering out of pocket costs. Shared the needs of clients who rely on the health of their caregivers. Maddie Foutch shared information and data on caregivers and their ability afford insurance. • Shared benefits and statutory factors. Also retention issues and impacts. • Comparables and state's interest in reducing reliance on public benefits. • An ask to think about how caregivers can ensure health care along with consideration of recruitment and retention. Board Chair opened to discussion. A board member wanted to thank Christina for the presentation. Board Chair shared a couple of key take aways based on the information shared today. There is new data coming in on the revenue forecast. Be thoughtful of what we carry forward. Considerations on equity. A look at next meeting topics.	

Topic	Discussion Highlight	Action items/Outcomes
Public Comment	Zoom attendee shared her comments on the cost of caregiving and healthcare. Shared the cost of being a single parent with specialty health care needs. Cost of healthcare impacts the care able to provide for her client. By investing in healthcare, it impacts the clients and caregivers. Board Chair shared that this is an example of the need. Zoom attendee who was a consumer of a caregiver's services. Shared her experience of her husband's health care needs and the challenges and limitations--particularly those related to cost of transportation. She shared some specifics of the wages and lack of benefits that their caregivers. There are considerations for clients and caregivers including what is and is not in the contract. Board Chair thanked the participant. No other comments.	
Adjourn	Chair	Meeting adjourned at 2:21pm.