



Council Business Meeting

June 20, 2023

Agenda Item	Ad Hoc Committee for Affordable childcare and Early Learning Appointments	
From	Melissa Huhtala	City Recorder
Contact	recorder@ashland.or.us , 541-488-5307	
Item Type	Requested by Council <input type="checkbox"/> Update <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/>	

SUMMARY

Confirm Mayor Graham’s recommendations for the appointments of committee members to the Ad Hoc Committee for Affordable childcare and Early Learning:

- John Love
- Helga Motley
- Kristen Roy
- Jessica Therkelsen
- Lisa Verner
- Sarah Wardwell

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

N/A

ACTIONS, OPTIONS & POTENTIAL MOTIONS

I move to approve the Mayor’s recommendations for the appointments to the Ad Hoc Committee for Affordable Childcare and Early Learning.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Committee Charge and Scope
- Attachment 2: Committee Roster
- Attachment 3: Welcome Letter
- Attachment 4: Application – Love
- Attachment 5: Application – Motley
- Attachment 6: Application – Roy
- Attachment 7: Application – Therkelsen
- Attachment 8: Application – Verner
- Attachment 9: Application – Wardwell



Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee

Mission:

Create a tangible network of early learning care options within our community, supportive of working families, the Ashland economy, and most importantly our children.

Goal:

Support Ashland working families with affordable early learning childcare solutions that focus on attracting and retaining Ashland's workforce, strengthening Ashland School District enrollment, and preparing our youngest citizens for kindergarten, independent of economic status.

City of Ashland Value Statements Supported by this Ad Hoc Committee

- Community affordability, including in available housing and childcare
- Belonging through mutual respect and openness, inclusion, and equity
- Quality of life that underpins the City's economic vibrancy

Committee Charge:

Define the existing early learning environment in Ashland including total number of early learning seats, both private and non-profit, composition of programs (in home, centers, other) and economics of existing programs (Head Start, Preschool Promise, Private Tuition, annual costs to family and caregivers).

Assess and define Ashland's unaddressed early learning requirements.

Identify resources capable of contributing to an early learning solution including, but not limited to:

- Physical Assets (Brick and Mortar, tangible supplies to provide service, etc)
- Business Partners
- Non-Profit Partners
- Coordination of Service Expertise
- Options to support families with special needs

Consider and plan for the needs of the care providers, specifically:

- Living wage positions,
- Appropriate benefits,
- Training opportunities, and
- Recruitment of educators and staff.

Recommend a communication plan, including:

- Where residents and families can find information about early learning opportunities
- How to keep such resources up to date
- Contact information for existing programs

Develop a strategic plan capable of tangibly providing for Ashland's unaddressed early learning needs.

Scope of Authority: The Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee will provide strategy recommendations to the Ashland City Council and its' community partners.

Membership: The Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee will be comprised of representatives from the following:

- Ashland School District
 - *Representatives from the District will provide subject matter expertise on where they are seeing deficiencies in preschool education in preparing children for kindergarten and provide insight, support, and suggestions for how to overcome.*
- City of Ashland
 - *The representative from the City of Ashland will aid in convening partners, monitor relevant state legislation/funding opportunities, and advise on possible local policy that will further support the creation of sustainable and affordable early learning programs for Ashland families.*
- Chamber of Commerce
 - *Subject matter experts from the Chamber will provide members feedback regarding early learning needs pertaining to workforce recruitment. Additionally the Chamber can help connect community partners as we seek a viable solution for early learning and childcare, supportive of an economically vibrant Ashland.*
- Hospital System
 - *Representatives from our hospital systems will provide insight into childcare efforts affecting their workforce and service delivery, at a time when attracting and retaining hospital/ healthcare employees is challenging.*
- Key Local Business Leaders
 - *Subject matter experts from local business will provide specific feedback into childcare efforts affecting their workforce and provide insight and suggestions on what supporting early childhood education would mean for working individuals and the success of their businesses.*
- Community Members
 - *Representatives from the community will provide a mix of perspectives including but not limited to: feedback on lived experience, early learning education expertise, and non-profit expertise, specific to development and continued operation of early learning programming.*

Why Solving for Early Learning Matters for All Ashlanders:

(Information supplied by Rene Brandon, Southern Oregon Early Learning Hub)

Continued workforce shortages across all sectors. The overall workforce is comprised of families who need childcare to work. 53% of families with children 0-5 are in poverty and could be staffing local businesses except they cannot afford childcare due to the gap between entry level wages and the cost of providing childcare. Businesses will continue to struggle to recruit and retain staff without financial support for childcare.

Continued Decline and Destabilization of Child Care workforce. We have 18% fewer childcare programs than we had pre-Covid. Many of those programs have empty classrooms because they cannot find qualified teachers willing to work for low wages and also due to families being unable to pay for child care without assistance.

Childcare is called out as a key stabilizer for education, health and economic prosperity of our state:

- Oregon Business Council Strategic Plan includes “make child care and early learning more accessible”.
- Our workforce board and ODHS self-sufficiency partners have identified that soft skills – those directly tied to early social-emotional development - as the key ingredients needed for a successful employee. Employees can be trained to do the function of a job, but an employer cannot teach self-regulation and pro-social skills on the job.
- Southern Oregon’s Community Health Assessment has identified families having access to childcare as a Community Health Improvement Plan Goal. Investment in the next generation. Our K-12 research/science has identified high quality early learning prior to kindergarten as an indicator of SE regulation and subsequent academic success. Cost SAVINGS over time. 7-10% return on investment over the lifetime of children who experience high quality preschool.

PARTNERSHIP 3. Ad Hoc Committee for Affordable Childcare and Early Learning

Partner Organization		
Partner Organization	Name	Note
CoA	City Managers Office Designee TBD	
CoA	Councilor Dylan Bloom	
CoA	Councilor Paula Hyatt	
ASD	Samuel Bogdonove (Thru Fall '23)	
ASD	Christine McCollom (in Fall '23)	
Asante General Council /Communittee Member	Kristen Roy	Mayor to appoint 6/20
Communittee Member	John Love	Mayor to appoint 6/20
Communittee Member	Lisa Verner	Mayor to appoint 6/20
Communittee Member	Sarah Wardwell	Mayor to appoint 6/20
Communittee Member	Jessica Therkelsen	Mayor to appoint 6/20
Communittee Member	Helga Motley	Mayor to appoint 6/20
Subject Matter Experts		
Partner Organization	Name	Note
YMCA	Heidi Hill	Potential Contractor - Cannot sit on the committee
Ivy School	Sunny Spicer	Potential Contractor - Cannot sit on the committee
Science Works	Cynthia Salbato	Potential Contractor - Cannot sit on the committee
Building Developer	Allan Sandler	Potential Contractor - Cannot sit on the committee

June 21, 2023

Welcome, and thank you for volunteering to serve on the Early Learning Ad Hoc Committee. We look forward to working together to assess our current early learning environment, engage with current subject matter experts, identify gaps, and solve for affordable access to quality programming for all Ashland families.

Informed by the community, and local partner feedback at the March 6, 2023 Economic Round Table, your Ashland City Council identified affordability and economic development as two key priorities for the 23/25 biennium budget period. Early learning access, and affordable options for working families, support both priorities, and more specifically, support Ashland families and businesses. Our youngest citizens remain at the heart of this committee's work. Research has found a correlation between early learning and long-term academic success. Concurrently, the social and emotional learning at this stage is of immense value for children over the course of their academic career and beyond.

Our next step includes determining a time for our initial meeting and establishing a future meeting schedule. Included with this welcome is a doodle poll. Please provide your availability and we will do our best to accommodate. Additionally, attached you will find the committee charge. We will review and discuss this document as part of our kick-off meeting agenda.

Again, thank you for your willingness to volunteer and help solve for this critical community service need.

With Gratitude,

Tonya Graham
City of Ashland, Mayor

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
CITY COMMITTEE/COMMISSION**

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Legal Department at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email dana.smith@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Legal Department at 541.488.5350.

Attach additional sheets if necessary. *Rather than attach additional sheets, I thought my application would be easier to read if I expanded each section so the text of each response appears together and readers don't have to skip to attached pages to read it.*

Name: John M. Love

Requesting to serve on: Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare & Early Childhood Development

Mailing Address:

Physical Address:

Occupation: Retired

Phone (Home and Mobile)

Work None

Email

Fax None

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? UC Davis, San Jose State, University of Iowa

What degrees do you hold? BA and MA in Psychology; PhD in Child Behavior & Development

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

I have not had specific additional training, but have extensive on-the-job training (see also 2. Related Experience). I think that three experiences, however, count as training relevant to the purposes of the ad hoc committee:

- 1) In 1970-1971, when I was teaching psychology and child development classes at a small college in Denver, I was on the board of a new neighborhood childcare center; I was responsible for curriculum design and helped interview potential teachers.
- 2) From 2003 to 2005, I served on the Commission on Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC); I learned a lot about how NAEYC defines quality and developmentally appropriate early childhood curricula and practice.
- 3) In 2014-2015, I served on the Oregon Department of Education's Kindergarten Content and Assessment Advisory Committee. This committee was charged with reviewing the assessment that had recently been administered to entering kindergartners and recommending improvements. In other words, we focused on what is most appropriate to measure as the outcomes or benefits of a

good prekindergarten program. Although my primary contributions were in the area of child development assessments, I knew that any assessment tools needed to be relevant to the nature and content of the early education program content.

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

I spent 45 years planning, designing, and implementing dozens of research studies with early childhood education programs that were serving families with children who ranged in age from birth through the early elementary school grades. For many years, the studies I was involved with were designed for preschool-aged children in the year or two before kindergarten entry (for example, Head Start, childcare programs, and state prekindergarten programs). From 1995 through 2002, I directed the national evaluation of the Early Head Start (EHS) program (designed for pregnant women and families with children up to the age of 3). This was for the Administration on Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This national study included 17 EHS programs in diverse communities around the country. In addition to what we learned about the impact program participation had on the children and families, we learned about the important role of childcare in the lives of both the children and their families.

After I retired, I spent six years working with Arizona's First Things First (FTF) program, the state early childhood initiative funded by their tobacco tax. The national research advisory panel I chaired advised FTF on what the important studies would be, given the varied focus of FTF programs. Our first and most important recommendation was that FTF conduct studies to learn about issues of access, affordability, and quality of their highest priority programs. These are the same issues the ad hoc committee needs to grapple with.

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why?

I think it will be important for committee members to attend events that will enable us to learn more about the availability of funding sources that would support implementation of programs that will help make childcare more available and more affordable in Ashland. These sources may include local, state, and federal government agencies as well as private foundations. I have had experience obtaining funding from all such sources, but I need to learn more about what is available right here in Southern Oregon, in 2023-2024 and beyond. I will make it a priority to be available to attend conferences and seminars in Jackson County and the State of Oregon that would provide me, and the committee, with knowledge directly related to the

committee's planning for ways to address our community's needs for accessible and affordable childcare and early learning.

3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position?

I care about the community my wife and I chose to live in twenty years ago. I have been involved in the community in a variety of ways (AIFF board for six years; volunteering at the Ashland Emergency Food Bank; leadership positions in our church), but I haven't yet become involved in local early education work, which I have done in other parts of the country. Although we no longer need childcare for ourselves, we know young parents who do. We know, for example, the challenges young families in our church have in finding good programs that (1) parents can afford; (2) are open the hours they need childcare; (3) are really accessible, that is, located at least somewhat convenient to their homes or places of work; and (4) have well-qualified staff with low turnover.

I am interested in contributing to bring life into Ashland's childcare "desert" that we clearly have, as documented by Barbara Cervone in a recent article in the online <https://ashland.news>. I understand the issues of access and affordability, and I understand how difficult it is to find solutions. When SOU was considering closing the Schneider Children's Center for financial reasons, I presented President Roy Saigo with arguments for the value of the center, and he agreed. SOU met the accessibility criterion but could not make childcare affordable within their budget. That was in 2015, and the situation today is even worse. I learned from this experience that the challenge is not so much convincing people of the importance of childcare and early education, it's finding ways to make it accessible and affordable given current issues and circumstances in Ashland and the Rogue Valley.

Part of the challenge is recognizing the extent to which childcare is a community economic issue. A survey conducted last fall by the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center found that 42 percent of Oregon employers report that access to childcare impacts their "ability to hire and/or retain employees" either "somewhat" or "a lot." The experience of Indra Nooyi, former CEO of PepsiCo, reinforces this view. She found that establishing on-site childcare in their headquarters building enhanced employee loyalty, gave staff peace of mind knowing their child or children were nearby, saved commuting time, and helped in recruiting new employees. With much smaller companies in Jackson County, the committee could explore the potential for consortia of businesses, the school district, various organizations, SOU and RCC, and the City of Ashland, or find ways agencies and organizations could partner with existing childcare providers. How can we fit into, become part of, the Southern Oregon Early Childhood Support Network that Peter Buckley and Pam Marsh are working on? The planned composition of this committee seems ideal as the forum for dialog around how to create the best solutions.

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings? Do you prefer day or evening meetings?

Yes, I am definitely available to attend special meetings, and I am very interested in doing so. I prefer evening meetings, but will do my best to be flexible as I know you have many individuals' schedules to accommodate.

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community? Almost 20 years.


Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position:

I have been fortunate to have been involved in research that others felt was important, and useful. The Early Head Start evaluation I mentioned in Section 2 has been widely cited for the useful findings about why and how an early education program can be effective. In 2002, after we published the final report of the EHS national evaluation, The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded Mathematica (the company where I worked) one of six awards for excellence in "Program Improvement 2002" for the evaluation's final technical report because the report's "soundness of design, methodology, appropriateness of conclusions, and *significance and usefulness of findings*" created "*outstanding potential for use by the larger health and human services community.*" In 2013, the Society for Research in Child Development honored me with its Distinguished Contributions to Public Policy for Children award, "in recognition of an SRCD member's continuous lifetime contributions to *research that informs policy and practice for the benefit of children.*"

These two awards demonstrate something critically important to me and indicate what I believe I have to offer the City of Ashland, so I italicized those phrases: For me, research and early childhood program evaluation studies have never been simply exercises in trying to find out what "works." These studies are valuable only if they demonstrate how programs can really benefit the children and families being served, and can point the way to making programs even better and more effective. But, of course, the programs also need to be affordable and accessible for working parents.

Thank you for considering my application. I will be happy to respond to any questions you have or provide any additional information you may need.

May 1, 2023
Date


Signature

*** FORM FIELD DATA***

Name: **Helga Motley**

Committee or Commission interested in: **Ad Hoc comm on childcare**

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Occupation : **self employed after school & summer camps (at various locations, including my home)**

Educational background: **University of Connecticut Masters in German, SOU educ (1 year) preparation for elem education I have 47 years of experience as an events & news photographer. I have been a craftsman most of my life, and started a crafts store in Cambridge, Mass in 1968. I am self taught in photography and various crafts.**

Related Experience: **Im not sure about further training being needed. I have initiated and run programs for kids since 1983, when I had my first playgroup with 4 families. The kids were 2-3 years old at the time, and I went to the family's homes to do the playgroup. Eventually I set up a site in downtown Ashland, where I had after school and summer programs. I set up a vast miniature play area with the Playmobil toy system, and did crafts using plastilina clay, taught sewing on sewing machines during summer camps, did various handcrafts with kids of ages 5 to 11. I initiated a monthly Lego building at several libraries - and brought my own collection of organized legos to build with. I still do a Lego class every 2 weeks at an Ashland classroom (Catalyst Ashland). I have volunteered with the Talent Boys and Girls club by bringing my Legos during summer camps. I have worked with elementary age kids since 1983, with my own programs. You can see examples of what I have done on my website www.helgasplayhouse.com**

Interests: **I love teaching kids to make things with their hands. These skills are especially important to start when kids are young. Although K-12 schools expose kids to art with paper and pens, the other art skills are not taught till they are in middle school. I want to contribute my years of experience to the planning process for childcare.**

Availability: **Since I am self employed, I am flexible with attending meetings at most times.**

Additional Information : **I moved to Ashland in 1980, and the rising rents forced me to move to Talent in 2015. I still am involved with issues and events in Ashland, and many people recognize and know me. If language is an issue, I understand lots of Spanish and am bilingual in German. I have a long history of knowing what the issues are in Ashland. Pam Marsh knows me, and through my years of doing events photography, many other people are familiar with me.**

Signature: **Helga Motley-Tschinkel**

*** USER INFORMATION ***

SubscriberID: **-1**

SubscriberUserName:

SubscriberEmail:

RemoteAddress: **66.241.70.76**

RemoteHost: **66.241.70.76**

RemoteUser:

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO CITY COMMITTEE/COMMISSION

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Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Name Kristen Roy

Requesting to serve on: Affordable Childcare (Committee/Commission)

Mailing Address _____

Physical Address _____

Occupation Attorney

Phone: Home _____

Work _____

Email _____

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? Dartmouth College (B.A.), Univ. of NH (Law School)

What degrees do you hold? Juris Doctor

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

see attached

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

see attached

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? Yes, because I think any Committee could benefit

from ongoing training and education.

Application for Appointment to Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Childhood Development (Supplemental Information)

Name: Kristen Roy

1. Education Background

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

In addition to my current role, I also served as an adjunct professor for Health Law. In that role, I was able to see how lack of affordable childcare impacted fellow professors and students enrolled in law school with children.

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

I currently serve as the General Counsel (in house attorney) for Asante, which is the largest employer in the Rogue Valley. One of the issues that we face with recruitment and retention of our employees is – affordable childcare. I am looking to establish community connections to assist our employees and other community members to solve for the childcare crisis.

3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position?

I am applying for this position because Ashland lacks options for affordable childcare. I have personally been impacted by this with a now 3.5 year old. I also see Asante's employees struggle to find childcare options. I want to help create solutions.

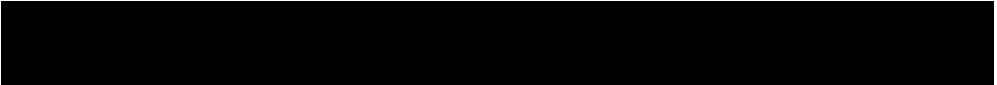
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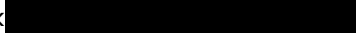
Name Jessica Therkelsen

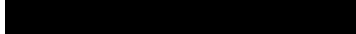
Requesting to see Ad Hoc Childcare Committee

Mailing Address 

Physical Address 

Occupation Nonprofit leadership Phone: Home 

Work 

Email 

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? University of San Francisco, School of Law, UC Irvine

What degrees do you hold? JD, BA

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

I have experience drafting and proposing policy

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

Experience in policy drafting; experience in program design; lived experience as a working parent in three cities

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? Yes, in order to better understand the options for

government supported programs related to childcare



3. Interests

It is incredibly difficult to balance work and family life in the US.

Why are you applying for this position?

Specifically, Ashland has very limited childcare - no centers that offer care before 3 years of age

and only 1 preschool that operates past 1:30pm. Many do not cover Fridays.

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings?

Do you prefer day or evening meetings? Yes. I prefer day meetings but can make either work.

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community?

3 years

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position:

I am a parent of two children who has tried to balance work and family life in

the San Francisco, Bay Area, Portland, and Ashland. I have worked full time, part time,

and not at all (outside the home). COVID was extremely stressful for everyone

but on a personal level, the lack of childcare for children under 3, and lack of

care after 1:30pm for my preschooler contributed to my burn out and significant

health decline. I left my career in late 2022 to recover and spend more time focused

on family. My choices are my own, but many people cannot afford to stop working

to prioritize personal and family health.

5/17/22

Date

Signature



APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO CITY COMMITTEE/COMMISSION

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Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Name _____

Requesting to serve on: _____ (Committee/Commission)

Mailing Address _____

Physical Address _____

Occupation _____

Phone: Home _____

Work _____

Email _____

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? _____

What degrees do you hold? _____

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? _____



3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position? _____

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings?
Do you prefer day or evening meetings? _____

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community? _____

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position:

Date

Signature



APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO CITY COMMITTEE/COMMISSION





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Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Name Sarah Wardwell

Requesting to serve on: Early Childhood Adhoc Committee (Committee/Commission)

Mailing Address_ 
Physical Address 

Occupation Diplomat Phone: Home_ 
Work_ 
Email_ 
Fax_ 

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? University of Oregon, Portland State University

What degrees do you hold? B.S.Biology, M.S. International Relations

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?
Early on in my career, I served in the Peace Corps as a middle school science teacher.

When I returned, I managed before and after school programs for two years.

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? I'm always interested in learning more, but

I am not able to represent the City government due to my commission as a Foreign Service Officer. (Hatch Act)



3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position? _____

As a working mother with two children I have a keen interest in making it easier for other working mothers to live and work here.

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings?
Do you prefer day or evening meetings? Yes, afternoons, evenings or weekends might be best .

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community? _____

3 years

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position:

As a Foreign Service Officer, I bring a wealth of experience dealing with different cultures.

I work in communications and am knowledgeable about different ways to message.

4/13/2023

Date

Signature

