Oregon & SW Washington Chapter

August 12, 2026, 11:30am - 1:00pm PT, via Zoom

**MINUTES**

GPA CHAPTER MEETING - 24 attendees

**Welcome from Chapter Co-Chairs** Sharlene Vance (Sarah Holloway absent).

**Chapter Business**

Sharlene gave a shout out and thank you to new volunteers: Laura Cundiff, social media chair; Kathy Chennault, tech monitor; Amy Nash-Kille, DEIB sub-committee chair.

Equity Statement & Community Agreement – Amy read both documents; available on https://www.gpanorthwest.org/chapter-documents.html.

Volunteer Opportunities – Sharlene shared a link to current volunteer openings and invited any interested members to reach out for more information and become involved, including DEIB subcommittee member, back-up notetaker, Program committee member.

Reminders – Sharlene shared:

- o ORSWWA Community GrantZone
- o Google group email
- o GrantSummit conference:
  - ▪ Scholarships
  - ▪ Early Bird - register by Friday 8/14
  - ▪ In-person and virtual options
  - ▪ There's often an in-person chapter gathering during the conference, TBA on details.

Annual Survey Update – Sharlene. Goal is to send survey out in the fall.

Sharlene announced she will be on maternity leave December 2026 – March. She will stay involved with Chapter business, but may have to miss a meeting or two.

Kathy Chennault - Tech moderator shared information on using Zoom and noted that she is available for tech questions during the meeting.

**Program:**

Sharlene introduced the program and panelists. The program is being recorded for those who were unable to attend today. Building a Sustainable Grant Career: Consultant and Employee Perspectives. With panelists: Arthur Davis, April Christiansen, Tori Meyers. Each panelist introduced themselves. Arthur Davis – went from employee to consultant; April Christiansen – has gone back and forth between employee and consultant; Tori Meyers – went from consultant to employee.

Panelists answered moderator questions describing their experiences. Highlights:

- the importance of considering health insurance when launching a new business, which can take 3-5 years to develop fully
- started with Assumed Business Name, finally grew enough to qualify to be an LLC, S Corp
- possible need for liability insurance; may not be necessary for everyone
- set up project management system in Asana from the beginning; that has been helpful
- recommends going to a CPA to set up business initially
- possible need for errors & omissions insurance; talking to an insurance provider is helpful
- decision to change from consultant to employee or vice versa: when want to dig deeper into a specific area, rather than working more broadly; when want to feel part of a team with colleagues and have a back-up for when gone
- attracting clients: word of mouth, volunteering with GPA, some leads from NAO listing, website, teaching grants classes, using own networks
- comparing consultant versus employee: consultants have more autonomy, choice of who to work with and what projects to work on; because clients pay for consulting, they seem more receptive to counsel not apply; ability to work remotely is a benefit of consulting, consultants have to attend fewer non-essential meetings, clients are more careful of consultant time; consultants must always bring their A game, always auditioning for future work; employees can dig deeper and be more involved, are part of a team; employer-provided insurance is a benefit; trade-offs both ways
- can hire subcontractors to be able to accept more work, if desired
- estimating timing for how long a project will take can be challenging initially, can use hourly rate; Clockify is one way to track time for clients
- AirTable is one grant management system
- if considering becoming employee, get to know the organization very well first; think about what you are running towards, not away from
- not all nonprofits are grant ready, or sustainable, learn to vet clients carefully
- follow your intuition on accepting new client, or not (if things seem weird from the beginning, likely will continue to be weird)
- contracts can be useful, not all consultants use them regularly.

Q&A:
How to begin grant teaching?
Arthur – Has taught both for-credit and continuing ed, at PCC. For-credit teaching requires a Masters degree; not required for continuing ed. He learned about these teaching opps through his networks.

How/if consultants dealt with imposter syndrome early on?
Create a team environment with clients, support client leadership to succeed, learn how to draw out strengths of each client. Working in specific sectors and same geography builds confidence. Being clear with clients about your level of experience in a specific area.

Sharlene thanked panelists and noted that the Chapter website has a listing for consultants, https://www.gpanorthwest.org/find-a-consultant.html.

Adjourned 1:00p.m.

**Next meeting** – December 2, 2026