



## Central Virginia Workforce Development Area VII

*Serving the City of Lynchburg, and Counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell*

### **Workforce Development Board Meeting**

**January 10, 2023**

**3:00 p.m. at**

**Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance**

**Draft – until the board approves.**

**Members Present:** Nat Marshall – Chair, Kimberly McIvor, Cheryl Giggetts, Robert Johnson, Ron Lovelace, Michael Hertzler, Scott Francis, John Capps, Andy Crawford, Sterling Wilder, Gary Campbell, Christine Kennedy, Alicia Meador, John Redding, Christian Wiscovitch, Sonya Todd, Jason Shockley (virtual), Cheryl Tolder (virtual), Dana Hogan (virtual), Dorothy White (virtual), Contessa Broadus (virtual), Andrew Tisoskey (virtual), Lauren Anderson, Sierria Phillips – Vice Chair (virtual)

**Members Absent, Excused:** Richard Russo, Bryan Lyttle, Travis Griffin, Robbie Morrison, Luke Saechao, Samuel Pinn (Tribe), Sam Penn, Sr. (USW)

**Chief Elected Officials Present:** Drew Wade, John Hinkle, Jon Hardie

**Staff Present:** Traci Blido, Alec Brebner, Keith Cook, Lori Cumbo (virtual), Tonya Hengeli, Tim Saunders, Sarah Singer, Kirsten Trautman.

**Others Present:** Shirley Dodson, VEDP

#### **1. Call to order and Greetings from the Chair**

Chair Nat Marshall welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 3 p.m. He introduced the three Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) who were attending and explained that the meeting was a joint meeting with the workforce board and the Council of CLEOs.

#### **2. Elections of 2023 CLEO's and CVWDB Chair & Vice Chair**

Nat Marshall called on the CLEOs to elect a regular or interim chair and vice chair for the new election term for the Council, given the vacancy of the chair position following Ms. Treney Tweedy's departure from the Council. Traci Blido added that Bedford County Supervisor John Sharp indicated to her that he was ready for a new local official to take on the Vice Chair position too. A motion was made and unanimously approved to

elect Appomattox County Supervisor John Hinkle as Council Chair and Amherst County Supervisor Drew Wade as Council Vice Chair.

Nat Marshall then opened the floor to nominations of the 2023 Central Virginia Workforce Development Board Chair and Vice Chair positions. Dr. John Capps made a motion to re-elect Nat Marshall as Chair and Sierria Phillips as Vice Chair and moved for the nominations to be closed. Dr. Robert Johnson seconded the motion followed by a full board vote of all in favor.

Chair Marshall then called on the CLEOs for their vote to approve their June 16, 2022 meeting minutes. Jon Hardie made the motion to approve, and John Hinkle seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

**3. Approval of Oct. 11, 2022 CVWDB Minutes**

Cheryl Giggetts made the motion and Scott Francis seconded it to approve minutes from the board's last meeting. All were in favor of approval.

**4. Approval of Modification of Local Plan**

Nat Marshall called on Traci Blido to speak about the state modification requirement to the workforce board's Local Plan. Traci explained that Title I, Chapter 2, Section 108 of the WIOA establishes the requirement that "each Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) shall develop and submit to the Governor a comprehensive four-year local plan, in partnership with the CLEOs." She said since the plan was adopted in 2020, it made sense to review it to see what has changed since the pandemic and how the plan needed to be modified. She detailed that both the Workforce Board and CLEO chair would need to sign off on the modification of the Local Plan to be submitted to the state for final approvals. Traci also detailed that the WIOA further requires local plans to be consistent with the Combined State Plan. In 2022, the Commonwealth of Virginia Combined State Plan for July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2024 was modified to reflect updates in the labor market and economic conditions, and workforce development activities. The changes to the Local Plan are consistent with the State Plan. Nat Marshall asked for any public comments and having none, he entertained a motion to approve the authorization. Ron Lovelace made the motion to approve the modification and Gary Campbell seconded. All were in favor.

**5. Director's Report**

Traci informed that Virginia Secretary of Labor Brian Slater is currently streamlining workforce state agencies and some aspects of the workforce system. She believes the streamlining will have little immediate affects at the local level, but we can expect some changes down the road. She said the changes will mostly be in the form of who we submit our performance reports to and who we get audited by, for example.

Traci then brought up the matter of security at the Lynchburg Center. She stated that we had armed security at the building for some time, however, the grant that was paying for

the security had run out in December. She said the state found some leftover youth funds to make available for security purposes, but it will be at a much smaller scale, going from \$30,000 to \$15,000. We will apply for these funds for an unarmed guard to be on-site for roughly three months at the Center, but there no guarantee we will have any more grant funds for security after that time. Gary Campbell asked if there had always been security at the center. Traci responded by saying no, security was especially needed once the center re-opened to walk-ins at a time when large amounts of people were coming in for pandemic-related unemployment claims. Ron Lovelace asked if there is security at the center now. Traci said she is working on getting an officer ASAP now that the state has identified these limited funds to help us cover the cost. VEC District Manager Kimberly McIvor said for unemployment insurance claims, it is peak time because of seasonal layoffs and cold weather. She anticipates the heavy traffic at the Center continuing at least in this first quarter 2023 and the presence of a security guard will be beneficial. Nat Marshall entertained a motion for authorization to sign the Notice of Obligation for the state security grant. Ron Lovelace made the motion and Mike Hertzler seconded. All were in favor.

Traci continued with her report touching on the recent workforce summit at the Alliance and thanked those board members who attended. She quoted Economist Chris Chmura from the event who said “the economy is slowing, the labor market is tighter, and job ads are down 16.7% that quarter”. Traci said that our region’s labor participation rate is slightly lower than what it was in 2020, at 62.4%, and pre-Covid, the rate was 63.4%. Our region has a slightly higher employment growth increase than the state’s overall, and Traci added that they are adding for the first time, Liberty University employment data, in that count as well. She stated that what they found was when they added the thousands of jobs that have grown through universities, since 2020, our region’s numbers were up by 836 jobs. Christine Kennedy spoke up saying that the ODU economic report was published again without the LU data and she is making everyone aware of this so they could encourage leaders to speak up when they hear negativity about the ODU numbers for Lynchburg. Christine said they have made ODU aware that they need to start including Liberty University data in their reports going forward. Gary Campbell asked if ODU was not aware of the LU data when they did the report and Christine answered saying they didn’t have access to it at that time.

Traci concluded her report saying the Board has received a grant for \$300,000 together with the Roanoke region to expand work-based learning opportunities for youth across both regions. The *Workforce Services Investments in Innovative Activities* grant will expand our region’s capacity to deliver and support Registered Apprenticeship, Youth Registered Apprenticeship, On-the-Job Training, and Internship activities for in school and out of school youth up to age 24. Additionally, Traci signed a document to join with Roanoke and a list of healthcare providers to apply for a U.S. Dept. of Labor Employment and Training Administration Nursing Expansion Grant Program. If awarded, the funding will assist in increasing the capacity of nursing education and instruction in the region.

## 6. Response to Business Closures

Tim Saunders presented a report showing the four major businesses that have announced closures in our region. He said that he wanted to show everyone how the workforce system is responding to these closures. These responses are in the form of collaborations to address the dislocated workers. Tim gave credit to the Virginia Employment Commission, saying that they had really stepped up to be a key partner in the efforts, along with others like workforce staff, HumanKind staff, DARS, and CVCC.

### a. MasterBrand

Tim stated that this business had already closed. In September of 2022, they announced they were closing off of Graves Mill Rd. They employed about 250 people there. Tim said they wanted a larger facility and this was the issue they faced. As a collective group, Tim said Virginia Career Works went in to meet with the impacted workers about the services that could be provided as a team. Employees were told of the basic services that were available and the longer-term services that are provided under the Title One program. The on-site hiring event that was held at the MasterBrand facilities on October 20, 2022 included 18 local businesses and served about 149 of the 250 people affected by the closure.

### b. Gunnoe's Sausage

This business closed on November 4, 2022 and affected 33 people. Tim said the Rapid Response briefings started on October 31, 2022. While no hiring event occurred, they were able to connect the people affected with local employers such as Sam Moore Furniture, Fostek, and 7-Hills Foods.

### c. Newell Brands

This employer is closing on January 31, 2023, impacting 187 people. The Rapid Response briefings were able to start on December 6, 2022 and the hiring event was on December 8, 2022. They had 20 employers participate in the hiring event.

### d. KDC/One

This employer will be closing on December 31, 2023, and will affect 670 people total. The first wave of layoffs will start at the end of March 2023. Tim said that there are no hiring events as of yet; however, the people affected have been connected with CVCC for training during sessions in August and job fairs are being planned.

Tim said he wanted to touch on something good that was happening in the area. He mentioned Virginia Metal Fab was expanding in Appomattox and creating 130 jobs over three years. The Central Virginia Workforce Development Board has contracted to provide \$3,394.55 in federal Incumbent Worker Training funds to support upskilling of existing workers in PY22. He said that in the last two years, since January 1, 2021, we have provided \$38,932.73 to seven different local employers, helping about 40 employees in the region to be upskilled. According to the state monitors, the board has one of the highest expenditure rates of Incumbent Worker Training Funds.

Mike Hertzler asked what KDC/One produces. Tim replied by saying that KDC/One works with chemicals that create lotions, soaps, and things of that nature. Cheryl Giggetts asked Tim if he knew why they were closing. Tim said he was told because of a facility issue; it was no longer meeting their needs. Nat Marshall thanked Tim for all of the information.

## **7. Financial Report**

Nat opened the floor to Tonya Hengeli of the CVPDC for the Finance report.

Tonya showed financials as of December 30, 2022. She started with the Workforce Development Board team, and referenced that since this is through December 30, it should be about 50% through the budget for the year. Overall, the total is around \$207,000 that has been spent to date, Tonya said that they should be at around \$216,000 which means they are under budget. Everything is tracking how it should be for that group. Continuing to the Lynchburg Center, everything was tracking as it should as well. Tonya explained that they have spent \$19,000, and they are about over the halfway mark for the year, they should be at about \$24,000. She said that the program operations line is Humankind, where they should have been at about \$350,000, their total was at around \$276,000. Tonya did mention that they had not received the December invoice from Humankind yet, which is usually around \$46,000-\$49,000. She referenced the Incumbent Worker Training that Tim had discussed, and said that as of December 30, she had invoiced around \$1,800. The number that he had given was going to be worked through in the upcoming weeks. She said considering everything, they were around \$50,000 under budget for half of the year so far. Tonya brought up the line “unallocated”, to clear any confusion, she explained that this line is the difference between the total funding and what they had budgeted for.

Tonya presented a summary of the WIOA funding and asked if there were any questions. Nat Marshall asked if the lower spending numbers from the career center is due to less staff. Keith Cook answered yes.

Tonya went on to explain that in the past we have asked the board for a transfer between dislocated and adult funds. She explained that they have two years to spend the formula funds so they have until June 30, 2023 to spend all of PY21 funds. Currently, we have around \$28,000 in Dislocated Worker funds due to low enrollment. Tonya is concerned that we would not spend it all by June. She made a request to transfer \$25,000 to Adult for PY21 because of this and also requested a transfer of \$100,000 from Dislocated to Adult funds for PY22. She said that would still leave \$148,000 in dislocated funds should we need that to assist unemployed workers.

Traci spoke up saying that they are finding that many of the workers getting these notices of layoffs have been successful at finding other employment without the need for Title 1 dislocated services. However, there are still some adults that have barriers to employment and need help to get skilled for a different job.

Tonya said the board had already estimated a \$50,000 transfer when the budget was approved, however given the current needs, she felt that a \$100,000 transfer would be better suited.

Nat said that everything Tonya had spoken about with the transfer made sense and they did not want to lose out on the funding for the Dislocated Workers. He entertained a motion to transfer \$25,000 of the PY21 funds from Dislocated Worker to Adult funds and \$100,000 transfer from PY22 Dislocated Worker to Adult funds.

Ron Lovelace made the motion and Mike Hertzler seconded it. All were in agreement to approve the transfers.

### **All-Virtual Public Meetings Provision option**

Lori Cumbo explained that currently the board has an electronic policy in place for meetings where some can be online, as long as the majority are attending in person. The state has now come out with an addition to that policy that says we can also have “all virtual” meetings up to two times a year, or 25 percent of meetings in the calendar year, whichever is greater. With the board meeting quarterly, that means we could do one meeting per year as “all virtual” if needed. She explained that she will update the local policy to reflect the update. She did say that in order to have an “all virtual” meeting, the executive committee would need to make the decision to call an all-virtual meeting and the reason would need to be in the committee’s meeting minutes.

Lori also reminded the board that per the standard electronic meeting policy, board members need to notify the executive director Traci Blido in writing/email prior to a meeting if needing to attend virtually for a regular “in person” meeting. Nat Marshall said that the standard policy does allow for someone to attend virtually if there is sickness or other circumstances. Nat entertained a motion to approve the changes in policy. Cheryl Giggetts made the motion and Christine Kennedy seconded the motion. All were in favor.

### **8. One-Stop Center/ Title I Adult Report**

Nat opened the floor to Keith Cook. Keith explained that this was a comparison quarter by quarter (Adult/DLW PY21 & 22 and Youth PY21 & 22). Keith noted that on the youth side they had seen an increase in active participants from last year along with enrollments almost doubling. In work experiences, they were excited to see an increase. In the work experience and leadership development activities, he said numbers are around the same from PY21 to PY22. Nat commended Keith for all the work that is happening at the center. Keith showed a breakdown of workforce center visits. Last year there were 773 visits and this year 2932 visits were counted. Keith explained this increase was due to people coming in needing to verify their ID for VEC unemployment fraud reasons. He also stated that these were not duplicated, such as someone coming in several different times, but actual, unique visits. Keith said they provide basic career services

through the youth program at the different schools, but they also have Jeff Bennett in the community providing basic career services. He does workshops, one-on-one career counseling services, and other services. Jeff had served 178 participants in career workshops in the last six months to help them prepare for employment. Nat asked what the cost of these services was. Keith explained that if someone went through Parkview Mission, the services would be free, and if they are enrolled in Jeff's programs, they are free; however, other venues and events are funded by sponsors.

## **9. Title 1 Youth Report**

Nat introduced Sarah Singer and she shared various success stories of different youth that have gone through the Title 1 youth program.

## **10. Committee Reports**

- a. Youth – Dr. Bobby Johnson said he was pleased with the youth participant numbers and success stories.
- b. DEI – Nat said the DEI chair position is currently vacant.
- c. Operations and Performance – Andy Crawford mentioned the next meeting was rescheduled for March 28.
- d. Finance – Ron Lovelace said Tonya had covered everything earlier in the meeting and he was pleased with the numbers.
- e. Executive – Nat Marshall thanked the CLEOs for being at the meeting and appreciated everyone who attended.

## **11. Adjournment**

Nat asked if anyone had any questions or comments. When hearing none, he entertained a motion to adjourn. John Redding made the motion and Robert Johnson seconded it. All were in favor to adjourn.