



Central Virginia Workforce Development Area VII

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

**Workforce Development Board Meeting
October 11, 2022
3:00 p.m. at
The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance
Lynchburg, VA 24504**

Members Present: Nat Marshall – Chair, Lauren Anderson, Nicole Foy, Anthony Cardoza, Marysa Vaughan, Dana Hogan, Andy Crawford, Bryan Lyttle, John Capps, Scott Francis, Sonya Todd, Christian Wiscovitch, Renee Chalmers (virtual), Christine Kennedy (virtual), Sierria Phillips (virtual), Sterling Wilder (virtual), Gary Campbell (virtual), Andrew Tisoskey (virtual)

Members Absent, Excused: Bobby Johnson, Richard Russo, Michael Hertzler, Robbie Morrison, Jason Shockley, Ron Lovelace, Alisha Meador, Luke Saechao, Samuel Pinn

Staff Present: Traci Blido, Alec Brebner, Keith Cook, Lori Cumbo, Tonya Hengeli, Tim Saunders, Kirsten Trautman

Others Present: Jennifer Kohn, Max Lagasse, James M. Davis – (all presenters at meeting)

1. Roll Call

Nat Marshall asked everyone in attendance, both in person and virtually, to introduce themselves and share their title. Traci Blido checked attendance and announced excused absents.

2. Call to Order and Greetings from the Chair

Nat Marshall welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

3. Public Comment

Nat Marshall opened the floor for public comment. No one expressed an interest in providing comments to the board.

4. Approval of April 12, 2022, Minutes

Nat entertained the motion for approval of the July 12, 2022, meeting minutes. Dr. John Capps motioned and Lauren Anderson seconded. The motion was unanimously approved as presented.

5. Director's Report

Traci wanted to make everyone aware of the two main companies that were closing in the upcoming year, KDC/One and MasterBrand. Traci reviewed how KDC/One's planned closure of its Lynchburg facility will be by the end of 2023 with many of the workers scheduled to be laid off in the first quarter of 2023 and others later in the year. She discussed MasterBrand's announcement of closing their Lynchburg facility which took the city by surprise, leaving over 200 employees facing layoffs.

Traci said the Workforce Development team got into action right away. She complimented Tim Saunders on his fantastic work with MasterBrand and connecting with the state Rapid Response coordinator and workforce system partners to coordinate with the companies that are willing to offer interviews to many receiving notices. Traci reflected on the strength of communication between MasterBrand and the Board, and with the third-party firm that is coordinating the employee transitions taking place. Traci said many businesses began reaching out to them personally to help. There are 15 different businesses that will participate in the hiring event on October 20 at MasterBrand, on the last day of many working there. Traci added that on October 18, they will be meeting with employees, together with VEC Rapid Response, to explain Virginia Career Works programs.

Nat Marshall inquired as to why the company would limit the number of businesses at the hiring event. Tim explained that because MasterBrand engaged LHH to organize this event on behalf of the company, they took the lead in setting parameters and Tim funneled requests from different businesses that were reaching out to attend.

Nat Marshall also inquired about what MasterBrand produces. Traci explained that it is a national cabinet company, and they are closing only the Lynchburg facility. Tim explained that MasterBrand did not do their 60-day notice until September 27, and the workers will continue to be paid after the final day of operations.

Traci reminded everyone that Virginia Career Works can help employees with career services such as updating resumes, and more. Christine Kennedy spoke up about people not understanding whom to go to for workforce issues and complimented Tim on his work with employers to make that clear. Tim also emphasized this was not his doing alone, but a collaborative effort from different groups involved.

Traci went on to list some of the businesses that will be involved in the hiring event which includes Total Plastic Solutions, Hermle North America, Southern Air, Innovative Wireless Technologies and others. Traci explained that these companies, contacted them right away to be involved with this process and are to be commended for their community spirit.

Traci brought up the joint Regional Workforce Roadmap between the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance and the Workforce Board and the work to get the groups together in the coming months. She encouraged attendance at the Economic Outlook Breakfast and Workforce Summit on December 8 where Matt DeVeu of Broad Ripple Strategies and CEO and Chief Economist Chris Chmura from Chmura Economics & Analytics will be presenting the latest

workforce data and trends and we will have the chance to explore solutions in preparation for our roadmap work.

Traci explained that she is working with Keith's team and looking into work experiences for youth up to age 24 because 20 percent of the funds they spend on youth have to go toward work experiences, similar to internships. A priority is to get the numbers up so we meet those requirements and provide good experiences. Traci asked the board to help provide Sarah and Keith with their availability or ask businesses to help provide workforce experiences for youth.

Traci then asked Nat Marshall if he had anything he would like to add since he participated in recent state meetings last week with Secretary of Labor Bryan Slater. Nat said for those who have been on the board for a long time, they might remember that 10-15 years ago there was a regular meeting annually where workforce board chairs and vice chairs across the state would come together to share information, but it had been seven years since they had all met like that. He and Sierria attended the event which was a precursor to the State Workforce Board meeting after that. CLEO chairs from around the state were also invited to the meeting. The biggest topic at that event was about apprenticeships and trying to figure out which of the silos apprenticeship should fall under, whether in the Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI), or not. Nat said he was under the impression that it won't belong with DOLI and will fall under another department in a reorganization of the state workforce agencies. He recounted that the biggest take away from those meetings was that all areas in Virginia are struggling with the same workforce issues, but he added that our region is doing great things in regard to workforce and making strides to be even better.

Traci explained to anyone new on the board that the CLEOs refer to the chief local elected officials that meet twice a year. These officials have the responsibility to choose who is on the workforce board, approve the budget, and evaluate the One Stop Center and related programs and services.

Traci introduced Alec Brebner, Executive Director of the Central Virginia Planning District Commission (CVPDC), to talk about a regional workforce issue he is analyzing in the field of Emergency Management. Alec discussed the challenge local governments are having in finding and recruiting qualified medical technicians. Alec said that after meeting with county administrators and emergency managers from three counties in the region, the conclusion is that a workforce pipeline needs to be created for EMT recruits. He said they are currently implementing a brand campaign and developing a recruiting strategy to communicate with people who are already in EMT classes in the region. He said he was pleased they have made progress in bringing the three counties together and making the first steps to make a unified recruiting plan. Traci commended Alec on this work and said she's happy her team is connected and available to assist.

In conclusion, Nat reminded everyone that there is a CVCC career fair on November 2 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

6. Finance Report

Tonya Hengeli said that what they were seeing in the packet provided was a view of where the board was at as of June 30. Tonya directed everyone to the first page of the report and said that the first line labeled as Workforce development board, pertains to Tim, Lori, and, Traci. The total came under budget as of June 30. Regarding the workforce center, this was also under budget as well. Tonya pointed out that the line “program operations” (HumanKind) was significantly under budget. Tonya remarked saying a lot of that had to do with being down several people.

Overall, for FY22, Tonya said they had a carryover total of \$405,622 and this is historically a lot less than what has been carried over. Nat reminded everyone that it is a requirement that they carryover the equivalent of a quarter because sometimes the new money doesn’t come in until months after the first quarter of the program year. Tonya explained that they received all of the youth money for the program year, but not all of the adult money yet.

Tonya gave a brief overview of the budget so far for FY22 and Tonya said that the rest of the information provided was showing the contract balances for HumanKind and their obligations. Tonya showed that they had completed a report showing the funds as of September 30, 2022, which shows the carryover that was spoken about previously, along with the PY21 and PY22, was a total of \$1,321,700. She also pointed out they have seen before transfers from Dislocated Worker to Adult which is a budgeted amount, and if Adult appears that they will be over budget they will then do a transfer from Dislocated to Adult. The last time they did this, she believed it was a \$100,000 transfer. This is an option to use, but they will continue to monitor the budget.

So far for the first quarter, Tonya said that each area was going as they had projected. She pointed out the program costs for the Adult column is \$71,000 and after looking into this, over \$60,000 of that budget went to tuition which is good since we have to spend 40 percent of our WIOA funds on training.

Nat asked Keith to elaborate on this for everyone. Keith said they have been getting creative with the help of CVCC and are putting people in nursing and other fields. They are having difficulty in reaching the 40 percent of the budget that is set for workforce training and experience, but being able to work closely with CVCC, they are getting closer to this goal, he said.

Tonya added a date error on one of the pages. It should say “through 9/30/2022”, not 5/3/2022.

7. Special Appearances from community partners

Traci introduced Jennifer Kohn and her son, Max Lagasse, from the Little Otter Flower Farm. The farm – located in Bedford County – provides work-based opportunities for people who have disabilities and teaches them marketable skills so they can integrate easier into the business community. Jennifer noted that the farm focuses on helping those with autism because the unemployment rate among those with autism is around 80 percent.

Max, an autistic person, presented the opportunities, skills, and abilities he has learned from working on the farm in just the past few years. He is now learning some management skills too. The board commended Max on a great presentation and delivery.

Traci then introduced Bryan Lyttle and James Davis from Old Dominion Job Corps Center. James Davis spoke about the Center and how they are bringing change to the lives of many young people who come to the trade school to learn new skills. James also recognized Tim and Traci for referrals and the work they do as partners to the Center. He presented them with a plaque of appreciation. Old Dominion Job Corps is a Virginia Career Works system partner.

8. Consideration of Program Policy #106 revision

Nat Marshall opened the floor to Lori Cumbo to explain a revision to Program Policy #106. Lori said that recently they had a review from VCCS and the state monitor had some recommendations on the existing worker training policy. Lori explained that the existing policy refers to incumbent worker training and customized training together. The recommendation as to separate the two pieces of training and update the language in the policy. Lori explained the changes. The previous policy had a requirement that an employer would have to retrain a minimum of six employees in order to qualify for the existing worker training funding. Lori said that they had found that this did not specifically meet the needs of the local employers and had eliminated that employee requirement from the funding. She reiterated that this was the only major change that was made other than aligning the current policy of who does what in the procedure for both of the separate programs mentioned. Lori explained that they had taken both of the policies, which everyone should have received, and presented them to the operations and performance committee at the Oct. 3 meeting. It was the committee's recommendation to take those before the full board. She requested a motion to approve the two policies as they were presented to everyone.

Nat Marshall asked if they had a quorum in the committee meeting. Tim Saunders responded that they did. When there was no discussion, Nat Marshall called for the vote and all were in favor of the revision. The motion was approved unanimously.

9. One-Stop Center Operations/ Title I Report

Nat Marshall opened the floor to Keith Cook, Director of Workforce Operations.

Keith referred everyone to the graphs provided in the agenda packets and explained the one thing that he would like to highlight was the enrollment level. Keith said the two reports, Adult and Youth, on the left side, darker color, was the last program year and on the right side, lighter color, was the program year in the first quarter, this included July, August, and September. They have served more during this time of year due to the fact that clients are in longer-term training. The enrollment numbers were a little down compared to where it was last year. Keith explained that internally they have had a shortage of staffing unfortunately. Keith said he hired a youth career navigator for Bedford to start on Monday. In September they had already enrolled three people in the adult program since he had finished the report for the meeting. Keith said that he is

not worried about the enrollment numbers because of the momentum they are seeing, and they are being able to bring on another team member to handle cases as well.

Keith explained that on the report OST means occupational skills training and that is the \$71,000 that was looked at earlier in the Finance report. The OSTs are up from last year, as well as the supportive services. Keith said this was the same on the Youth report and he wanted to focus on the “active” column where they were at 55 this time last year, and are now up to 81 this year, which is double the enrollments.

Keith highlighted that work-based learning requirement of 20% for Youth and by this time last year, they had only done four, but this year, they have done 20. Some significant changes that they have made, include taking away the limit of work experiences to only six months. They also raised the wages of the work experience to current levels. Keith said all those changes that have been made were going to significantly make it an actual work experience for a youth participant and help them reach the 20 percent that they have struggled with spending in the past.

Keith continued by showing the Lynchburg Center stats and total visits from 427 last year to 1,520 this year. The on-line orientations and career interest of clients have increased too. Keith also showed an overview of what Jeff Bennett does to teach free basic career skills to those with employment barriers. Keith showed a list of the adult workshops and services offered. He said they offer something similar for their youth program during school and he will report on this at the next meeting once school is in full swing. Nat thanked Keith for the information provided.

10. Committee Reports

A. Youth- Dr. Bobby Johnson

Traci explained Dr. Bobby Johnson was unable to attend today’s meeting, but recommended that everyone can find the Youth Committee Meeting minutes at vwcentralregion.com.

B. DEI- Renee Chalmers

Renee said the DEI committee has shifted its focus to outreach which was demonstrated by their tour of the Little Otter Flower Farm and the Spanish translation and dubbing of the orientation video with the help of Tim and Christian. Renee said they are planning their next few meetings to meet with the Hispanic community and DEI representative with Lynchburg City.

C. Operation and Performance- Andy Crawford

Andy said that his committee’s items had been talked about and voted on in the meeting already through the different policies presented. He complimented Keith on the data that he was able to show everyone at the meeting.

D. Finance- Ron Lovelace

Traci mentioned that Ron was unable to attend, but he told Traci he was pleased with the Finance report.

11. Adjournment

Nat Marshall reminded everyone of the next meeting that will be on Tuesday, January 10, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. and he entertained a motion to adjourn. Anthony Cardoza made the motion and Scott Francis seconded it.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.