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Central Virginia Workforce Development Area VII

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

**Workforce Development Board Meeting**

**October 8, 2024**

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

**The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance**

**Lynchburg, VA 24504**

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| ***Members Present:***  Nat Marshall, BWXT (Chair); Annette Bennett, Appomattox County Public Schools; John Capps, Virginia Community College; Sherie Fulcher, Southern Air, Inc.; Dana Hogan, C.B. Fleet; Bryan Lyttle, Old Dominion Job Corps Center; Kimberly McIvor, Virginia Employment Commission; Leidra McQueen, Lynchburg Beacon of Hope; Tamara Rosser, Lynchburg Community Action Group; David Sage, LU Virginia Technical Institute; Jeff Spaeth, Aerofin, Inc.; Christian Wiscovitch, Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services. Luke Saechao, Adult and Continuing Education of Central VA; Tori Gilmartin, Director of Talent and Workforce Development, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance (Alternate). |
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| ***Members Present/Attending Remotely:*** Gary Campbell, Johnson Health Center; Andrew Crawford, Department of Social Services; Alisha Meador, Lynchburg Office of Economic Development and Tourism; Jason Shockley, Industrial Plating Corp; Sonya Todd, L3 Harris. |
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| ***Members Absent, Excused:*** Lauren Anderson, Lynchburg Regional Society of Human Resource Management; Sterling Wilder, Jubilee Family Development Center; Christine Kennedy, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance; Cheryl Giggets, CTA Consultants, LLC; Carrie White, Centra Health; Karen Walker, Foster Fuels, Inc., Mike Hertzler, Virginia MetalFab.    ***Members Absent:*** Michael Scott Francis, Integrated Technology Group; Sam Penn Sr., District 8, United Steel Workers; Ron Lovelace, Norvelle, Mathews & Crews, PC; Charles Mann, IAM& AW Local Lodge 10; John Redding, Appomattox Resident. |
| ***Staff Present:*** Traci Blido, Executive Director, CVWDB; Tim Saunders, Assistant Director, CVWDB; Clay Stein, Compliance and Monitoring Coordinator, CVWDB; Keith Cook, HumanKind; Sandy Dobyns, Finance Director, CVPDC; Patti Lassiter, Finance Assistant, CVPDC. |
| ***CLEO Members Present:*** John Hinkle, CLEO Chair, Appomattox County Board of Supervisors; Drew Wade, CLEO Vice-Chair, Amherst County Board of Supervisors.  ***Guests Present:*** Shirley Dodson, Virginia Economic Development Partnership; Contessa Broadus, ACE, Carrie Grabowski, ACE. |

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Nat Marshall welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 3:02 p.m. He asked everyone in attendance, both in person and virtually, to introduce themselves and share their title. Traci Blido checked attendance and announced excused absences.

2. **Electronic Meeting Participation Acknowledgement**

Nat Marshall informed the board that a motion was required to allow electronic participation by members attending virtually. David Sage made the motion, which was seconded by Tamara Rosser. The motion was unanimously approved by the board.

**3. Public Comment Period**

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

**4. Approval of July 9, 2024, Minutes**

Nat Marshall entertained a motion for approval of the July 9, 2024, meeting minutes. Dr. John Capps motioned to approve the draft minutes as presented and Dana Hogan seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

**5. Director’s Report**

Traci Blido provided updates on several key initiatives and accomplishments. She highlighted the ongoing collaboration with Tori Gilmartin and the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance to implement initiatives outlined in the Regional Workforce Roadmap, a strategic plan developed jointly by the LRBA and the CVWDB in 2023. She celebrated the success of the first Educator Workforce Academy in July, where education leaders learned about integrating career pathways into their curricula through visits to local companies. Traci also previewed the upcoming Worlds of Opportunity Career Expo, scheduled for October 14-15 at CVCC, where 45 companies were scheduled to host interactive booths to engage 7th and 8th graders with information about regional career opportunities.

Traci reported on the continued high foot traffic at the Virginia Career Works Lynchburg Center on Odd Fellows Road and praised center staff for their work. She shared positive feedback from Bedford County Public Schools and Bedford County Social Services, where Youth Career Navigator Rachel Jensen has been instrumental in helping students create resumes and explore career opportunities. Similar efforts are underway in Campbell County. She also commended the achievements recognized at the DARS 2024 Champions of Disability Employment Awards, including honors for GLTC, Intercon, and a DARS client who made significant progress in learning English with the organization’s support.

In terms of grant activities, Traci noted that two supplemental grants funded 18 career exploration videos and provided occupational skills training and on-the-job training opportunities to multiple individuals. She also mentioned her pursuit of a GO Virginia grant and an AmeriCorps Planning Grant, aimed at improving outreach and services in rural areas. This initiative includes hiring a consultant to develop a framework for connecting rural residents to workforce services and may lead to a future application for operational funding to supplement staffing levels impacted by WIOA funding cuts.

Traci concluded by acknowledging Tori’s role in organizing the Worlds of Opportunity event and invited Leidra McQueen to provide updates on Lynchburg Beacon of Hope initiatives.

**6. Finance Report**

Sandy Dobyns presented the finance report. She provided an overview of the budget and actual expenditures as of August 31, 2024, including carryover funds from Program Year 2023, current Program Year 2024 allocations, and other funding contributions. Sandy detailed the distribution of funds across key operational areas, including salaries and benefits, program operations, outreach, and direct program costs like paid work experiences (WEX) and training. She pointed out the remaining available funds across categories. She also discussed the updated format of the finance report, which should be easier to read. Sandy said this new format was requested by state monitors. She asked if there were any questions about the report and no questions were asked.

**7. One Stop and Title I Reports**

Keith Cook highlighted key activities and achievements of the Title I program and the One-Stop Center. He emphasized the ongoing efforts to serve a diverse clientele in all localities of the workforce region through targeted initiatives. Keith presented data on customer engagement and service delivery, including metrics such as foot traffic, job placements, and WIOA Title I enrollments.

Keith also outlined the accomplishments of the Youth Career Navigators, who have been actively engaging with students to help them explore career pathways and develop resumes. He highlighted collaborative efforts with local schools and businesses to provide meaningful career guidance. Keith discussed how the center is leveraging partnerships and resources to maximize impact, ensuring accessibility and support for both youth and adults in the region.

**8. Committee Reports**

a. **Executive -** Nat Marshall provided an update from the Executive Committee, sharing details from the August 14 meeting. During the meeting, the committee approved two new eligible training providers and discussed Liberty University’s upcoming transition as the new operator of Virginia Technical Institute (VTI).

**b. Youth** - No report was provided due to the committee's involvement in preparations for the Worlds of Opportunity Career Expo, scheduled for the following week.

**c. DEI** - Christian Wiscovitch presented the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee report, highlighting efforts to expand outreach to individuals facing barriers to employment. He also shared details about the DARS Champions of Disability Employment event, noting recognition of local businesses, clients, and customers for their contributions to supporting disability employment initiatives.

**d. Operations & Performance** - Andy Crawford called on Keith Cook to provide updates on performance metrics. Keith referenced the detailed data included in his earlier report to the board, which outlined key performance outcomes and service delivery statistics.

**e. Finance** - There was no committee report. Traci thanked Sandy Dobyns for presenting the quarterly finance report and suggested that the committee schedule its next meeting for January.

9. **S.W.O.T Analysis Exercise**

Traci Blido facilitated a S.W.O.T. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis exercise as part of the board’s efforts to update the 2024-2028 Local Strategic Plan. Traci explained that this interactive activity aimed to reflect on the progress made since the development of the 2023 Regional Workforce Roadmap and the previous Local Plan for 2020-2024. Board members were encouraged to share their insights on the regional workforce system’s strengths, such as effective programs and partnerships, as well as weaknesses, including areas for improvement in outreach and service delivery. Opportunities to expand workforce training, improve skill development, and enhance living wages were discussed, along with potential threats, such as funding challenges and economic uncertainties. Findings from the exercise will be incorporated into an updated Local Plan, which will be presented for discussion and adoption at the January 2024 board meeting. Traci emphasized the importance of continuously improving the region’s workforce services to meet the needs of both job seekers and employers.

10. **Adjournment**

Prior to adjourning the meeting, Nat Marshall asked if anyone on the board had any information to share. Kimberly McIvor mentioned that a multi-employer job fair would be taking place at the Virginia Career Works Lynchburg Center October 29, followed by a statewide virtual job fair on October 30. Nat then entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Christian Wiscovitch made the motion to adjourn and Leidra McQueen seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:04 pm.