

Central Virginia Workforce Development Area VII

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

**Workforce Development Board Meeting**

**April 9, 2024**

**3:00 p.m.**

**Draft – until the board approves.**

***Members Present:*** Nat Marshall – Chair, Sierria Phillips – Vice Chair, John Capps, Sharon Dunham (Alternate for Kimberly McGivor), Scott Francis, Laura Hamilton, Mike Hertzler, Bryan Lyttle, John Redding, David Sage, Jason Shockley, Karen Walker, Christian Wiscovitch.

***Members Attending Remotely:*** Carrie White, Dana Hogan, Sterling Wilder, Alicia Meador, Lauren Anderson, Gary Campbell.

***Members Absent, Excused:*** Christine Kennedy, Ron Lovelace.

***CLEO Members Present:*** Jon Hardie, Drew Wade, John Hinkle.

***Staff Present:*** Traci Blido, Tim Saunders, Keith Cook, Shantel Crews, Alec Brebner, Sandy Dobyns, Clay Stein.

***Guests Present:*** Angela Kelly-Wiecek, Sherie Fulcher, Tori Gilmartin, Leidra McQueen, Jeff Spaeth.

1. **Call to Order & Roll Call of CVWDB**

Nat Marshall called the meeting to order at 3:00 and thanked everyone for being able to attend. Individuals in the room and participating virtually introduced themselves.

1. **Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments that were made.

1. **Approval of January 9, 2024 Minutes**

John Capps made a motion to approve the previous meeting, January 9, 2024 minutes. David Sage seconded the motion of approval. The motion was approved by the full board.

1. **Special Guest Appearances**

**Angela Kelly-Wiecek, Chief Deputy Director of Virginia Works:** Angela discussed the establishment and goals of Virginia Works, a new state agency for workforce development and advancement. She emphasized the agency's focus on aligning various workforce programs to better meet the needs of businesses and job seekers across the state. Angela highlighted key personnel involved, such as Carrie Roth and former delegate Kathy Byron, who bring valuable experience to the agency. Angela also touched on the agency's efforts to streamline processes, improve efficiency, and enhance communication with stakeholders. Additionally, she mentioned initiatives like the Youth Registered Apprenticeship program and partnerships with the Virginia Department of Education to support workforce development and education initiatives. Overall, Angela conveyed a vision of creating a thriving workforce ecosystem in Virginia through coordination, enhancement, and future readiness of workforce programs.

**Sherie Fulcher, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant, Virginia Works:** Sherie delivered a presentation on the benefits of registered apprenticeship programs for both businesses and individuals. She emphasized that registered apprenticeship is a structured training program that combines on-the-job training with classroom instruction, helping individuals develop a career pathway, gain industry-standard skills, and earn a nationally recognized credential. Sherie highlighted the importance of youth registered apprenticeship, which allows high school students to participate in career and technical education courses aligned with their chosen occupation, providing them with a head start on a career pathway and potential licensure. She discussed the success of various apprenticeship programs in the area, including a youth program at Southern Air, and emphasized the benefits for businesses, such as enhanced recruitment, increased employee retention, and a skilled workforce. Sherie also touched on the variety of occupations that are apprenticeable and the importance of apprenticeships in providing a pathway to high-wage, in-demand careers. She concluded by thanking partners for their support and encouraging further collaboration in expanding apprenticeship programs.

1. **Director’s Report – Traci Blido:** Traci invited everyone to attend Governor Youngkin's workforce bill signing ceremony at the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance the next day, noting the need to arrive early and be seated by 12:45 PM. Companies interested in having their logo displayed behind the governor during the signing were encouraged to attend and bring marketing materials. Traci mentioned she would bring the Virginia Career Works poster from Keith's office.

Traci acknowledged Clay Stein for his help with the annual monitoring. Beverly Southers, the monitor from Virginia, spent a day with Keith's team, interviewing career navigators and others. Clay was tasked with updating some policies, which were on the agenda for the meeting. Traci thanked several individuals for their help with the audit including Sharon Dunham, Nat Marshall, Alicia Meador, Carrie White, and Michael Hertzler.

Traci highlighted two upcoming events. The first is the Worlds of Opportunity Career Expo on October 14th and 15th, targeting 8th graders with activities showcasing in-demand job opportunities. The second event is the Educator's Workforce Academy, bringing together guidance counselors and superintendents to connect educators with businesses and tour their facilities.

Traci mentioned efforts to strengthen partnerships with Social Services and Virginia Career Works, including discussions with local Social Services agencies on how to align services and ensure comprehensive coverage.

1. **Finance Report – Sandy Dobyns, Finance Director:** Sandy provided a brief finance report mainly focusing on the budget to actual comparison, highlighting cost savings due to staff shortages and lower-than-expected expenses, indicating a potential carryover of around $150,000, which is higher than initially projected. She mentioned being on track to meet goals for percentages for youth and discussed adjustments made, such as hiring Clay to handle monitoring responsibilities previously done by Lori, who transitioned to a new role. Sandy expressed confidence in meeting financial goals and thanked the team for their efforts. The report was well-received, with a comment about the department's consistent pattern of financial management and appreciation for not having to return funds.
2. **One-Stop/Title I Report – Keith Cook and Shantel Crews:** Keith Cook compared the current number of participants in the adult and dislocated worker program to numbers from the previous year, noting a decrease in active enrollments and new enrollments due to unfilled navigator positions. He highlighted the challenge of meeting the 40% training expenditure requirement, especially with the availability of free training programs like G3, which limits their ability to spend on other training needs. Keith emphasized the need for flexibility in meeting these requirements and expressed appreciation for the board's support in navigating these challenges.

He also mentioned that the youth program numbers showed only a slight difference in enrollments compared to the previous year, with a focus on work-based learning, work readiness training, leadership development, and supportive services. Keith discussed how federal guidelines dictate the 40% training expenditure requirement, and while there were times in the past when waivers and exceptions could be submitted, they are not at that point yet. He highlighted that they will still enroll people and support them in programs like CVCC, even as they navigate these challenges.

Shantel Crews provided an overview of the One-Stop Center's performance, noting an increase in total visits. She highlighted the importance of online orientations as an entry point into the Virginia Career Works network, indicating interest in training and wrap-around services. Shantel also discussed Jeff Bennett's workshop participation numbers, emphasizing his work with participants facing significant barriers to employment and the financial challenges the program faces in maintaining his services. She mentioned efforts to secure funding from localities to support Jeff's work, noting his valuable contributions to the community.

1. **Approval of CVWDB New/Updated Policies:** Clay Stein presented several new administrative and program policies to the workforce board, including an assessment policy, measurable skill gains policy, 5% low-income exception policy under the WIOA Act, and individual employment plan/individual service strategy policy. These policies were developed in response to audit requirements and aim to formalize existing practices. Each policy was discussed, and votes were taken to accept them. Clay also briefly mentioned a revision to the electronic meeting participation policy to comply with state regulations. All policies were approved by the board.

**a. Policy PP-110 - Assessment Policy –** Motion to approve made by Mike Hertzler and seconded by Laura Hamilton. Approved by full board.

**b. Policy PP-111 – Measurable Skill Gains** – Motion to approve made by John Capps and seconded by Scott Francis. Approved by full board.

**c. Policy PP-112 – 5% Youth Low Income Exception** – Motion to approve made by David Sage and seconded by Jason Shockley. Approved by full board.

**d. Policy PP-113 – Individual Employment Plan / Individual Service Strategy Policy** – Motion to approve made by Mike Hertzler and seconded by Gary Campbell. Approved by full board.

**e. Policy AP-211 – Member Participation by Electronic Means -** – Motion to approve made by John Capps and seconded by John Redding. Approved by full board.

1. **Committee Reports**
   1. **Youth -** Sierra Phillips provided an overview of upcoming job fairs and events. She also highlighted other events such as Lynchburg City Schools' CTE fundraiser on May 18th, Campbell County's CTE signing day on May 23rd, and the Department of Labor's first-ever nationwide Youth Apprenticeship week from May 5th to the 11th. Sierra emphasized the importance of these events for bringing awareness to various career opportunities and apprenticeship programs, encouraging participation and support from the board.
   2. **DEI -** Christian Wiscovitch discussed activities of the DEI Committee, including a recent meeting where a representative from the Latinos in Virginia Empowerment Center shared information about victim services and employment partnerships. He also announced upcoming events such as the Lynchburg International Festival on May 4th, the Latinx Health Summit on April 20th, and the Black Health Summit on April 27th. The committee continues to work on strategies for outreach and collaboration with community organizations, with their next meeting scheduled for May 15th featuring a speaker from Lynchburg Peacemakers.
   3. **Operations & Performance -** Keith Cook provided an overview of the second-quarter performance, which was shared during the Operations and Performance committee meeting on April 2. He emphasized that blue and green indicators denote positive outcomes, while red signifies areas of concern. Cook highlighted the importance of measurable skill gains, noting that it's the only metric measured in real-time. He explained that low values early in the year are expected due to ongoing training and credentialing processes. Regarding dislocated worker metrics, Cook clarified that the data reflects outcomes for individuals exiting the program between July and December 2022. He acknowledged challenges in meeting targets, especially with low numbers of dislocated workers, but commended staff efforts in surpassing expectations in many instances. Tim Saunders discussed business services data, focusing on existing worker training. He explained that training provided by employers to their existing workers also contributes to the 40% training requirement. Saunders presented a list of businesses served in Program Year 23 (PY 23), highlighting GLAD Manufacturing's request for Microsoft Excel training for 16 employees. He outlined the reimbursement process for such training, mentioning that GLAD would receive 50% reimbursement due to its large workforce. Saunders noted that CloudFit and GLAD were pending paperwork submission for reimbursement. He highlighted that Fostek, BMS Direct, Altavista Instruments and Controls, and AMTI had already received reimbursement for their training costs from the board.
   4. **Finance –** Finance Committee Chair Ron Lovelace was absent. He relayed a comment about the fact that carryover funds present in the budget are less than before. Traci assured the board that less carryover would be needed due to updated accounting practices.
   5. **Executive –** Nat Marshall indicated the Executive Committee had not met this quarter and there was no report at this time.
2. **Adjournment:** Nat Marshall entertained a motion for adjournment. Jason Shockley made a motion to adjourn, and Christian Wiscovitch seconded the motion for adjournment. All were in favor. The next meeting will be held July 9, 2024. The meeting ended at 4:30 p.m.