



Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board Meeting

Via Zoom

Tuesday, January 26, 2021 - 5:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present:

Clarendon – Robert Edwards, Kayla Padgett

Kershaw – Renee Baker, Nicole Gardner, Stewart Kidd, Teresa Oelze

Lee – George General (Chairman), Annette Karlinsky

Sumter – Bobby Anderson, Calvin Hastie, Sr., Gail Lemmon, Janice Poplin, Sharon Teigue, Elizabeth Williams, Debra Young

Members Absent:

Clarendon – Christine Edwards (Excused)

Kershaw – John Hornsby (Excused), Teresa Justice

Lee – Zina Wright (Excused)

Sumter – Ashton Elmore, Sam Lowery, Jerome Robinson

Staff Present:

Christopher McKinney, SLRCOG Executive Director

Areatha Clark, Deputy Executive Director and Chief, Workforce Development

Esmonde Levy, Workforce Development Manager

Freda Amerson, Workforce Development Operations Coordinator

Steve Berger, SC Works Business Services Lead

Becky Minegar, SLRCOG Administrative Assistant II

Timia Shaw, SLRCOG Administrative Assistant

Guests:

Amanda Wagner, Eckerd Connects – Workforce Development

Caroline Rogerson, Eckerd Connects – Workforce Development

Ray Jackson, SC Works Operator, Eckerd Connects - Workforce Development

April Barr-Ragin, Eckerd Connects – Workforce Development

Michell Carr, SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW)

Brenda Gardner, SC Department of Commerce

1. Welcome and Call to Order

The Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board of Directors' (WDB) Meeting was called to order by Chairman George General at 5:03 PM. A quorum was present.

2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Ray Jackson provided the invocation and Chairman General led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Introduction of Guests

Ms. Areatha Clark, Deputy Executive Director and Workforce Development Chief, introduced guests and staff.

4. Adoption of Agenda

Chairman General entertained a motion to approve the Agenda. **A motion was made by Ms. Sharon Teigue and seconded by Mr. Bobby Anderson.** There being no discussion, Chairman General called for the vote. **All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

5. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – December 8, 2020

Chairman General entertained a motion to approve the Workforce Development Board (WDB) Meeting Minutes of December 8, 2020. **A motion was made by Mr. Bobby Anderson and seconded by Ms. Sharon Teigue.** There being no discussion, Chairman General called for the vote. **All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

6. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Christopher McKinney thanked the board for meeting and collaborating to improve our local workforce.

Mr. McKinney gave an update on project funding from South Carolina Department of Commerce (SCDOC). to use for a project that is related to the Corona Virus. Mr. McKinney stated he met with all six school superintendents, county administrators, and city managers in our four-county region to discuss and have agreed to use the funding to put in FAR UVC equipment either on school buses or in common areas of the schools to help get the children back into school. Mr. McKinney explained the UVC light is not harmful to humans but will kill pathogens such as SARS, Flu Virus, and Corona Virus.

7. Reports

Youth Report and WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs Program Update

Ms. Caroline Rogerson Eckerd Connects - Workforce Development, reported on their Performance for PY'20 through December 31, 2020 for all programs.

She reported Enrollments for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth:

- Adult – Total active enrollments - 174 participants with a goal of 325 participants (54% of goal achieved)
- Dislocated Worker – Total active enrollments - 52 participants with a goal of 50 participants (104% of goal achieved)
- Youth – Total active enrollments - 98 participants with a goal of 145 participants (68% of goal achieved)

Ms. Rogerson stated although they are where they need to be in enrollments with the Youth program at the mid-year mark, over the last two months they have seen a dip in enrollments for Adults and Dislocated workers, which is due to COVID-19 and individuals not following through with their enrollment appointments along with a lack of initiative to enter back into the workforce. She further stated they have created a plan to increase enrollments over the next quarter and career coaches have identified several agencies, companies, and groups across the four-county region to target and re-establish those relationships. They are also reaching out to Fatherhood Coalition, Roads of Independence, Central Carolina Technical College, Florence-Darlington Technical College, Alice Drive Baptist Church, other local churches, and home health companies to recruit participants.

She further stated the Youth team has had meetings with local manufacturing companies to setup opportunities for Work Experience as well as creating a pipeline for individuals that are currently employed with that specific company to receive Soft Skills training through the WIOA program, if they are eligible. They have also contacted individuals receiving unemployment benefits through text messages and emails as well as sent out messages to students at Central Carolina Technical College to get referrals. She then stated they are working diligently to identify individuals and agencies that they can partner with and provide services.

She next reported on Performance Outcomes as of December 31, 2020:

Adult and Dislocated Workers:

- 82 participants entered training with 26 of those participants currently active
 - 20% of training has been CDL
 - 68% of training has been in the medical field (Medical Assisting, Administrative Medical Assisting, Certified Nursing Assistant, Phlebotomy and EKG Technician)
 - 7% of training has been Welding
 - 5% of training has been in Masonry and Information Technology
- 92 participants have earned credentials
- 17 participants have engaged in the On-The-Job Training Program, with 3 currently active

Youth:

- 46 participants entered training with 25 of those participants currently active
 - 33% of training has been in Fork Lift
 - 43% of training has been in the medical field (Medical Assisting, Administrative Medical Assisting, Certified Nursing Assistant, Phlebotomy, EKG Technician, and Veterinary Technician)
 - 13% of training has been Welding
 - 11% of training has been Masonry
- 61 participants have earned credentials
- 12 participants have engaged in Work Experience/OJT, with 3 currently active

Ms. Rogerson then shared an adult success story: Ms. Blondell Toney came to the WIOA program September 2019 looking to receive certification as a Medical Assistant. Ms. Toney had difficulties throughout the course, but she completed training and passed the National exam without any issues. Once she received her certification, the job search was stressful. She was very determined to get back into the healthcare field in an area that was beneficial for her life. Ms. Toney contacted Ms. Carter, her Career Coach over the Christmas break and informed that she found employment not with just one but two facilities locally. Ms. Toney is so grateful for the WIOA program and how we have assisted her in her endeavors. Ms. Toney will work full time at Prisma Health as a Patient Care Technician as well as part time with Vital Care Ambulance Company.

Mr. Rogerson shared a youth success story: Ms. Monasia Coleman was referred to Career Coach Bradford at SC Works-Kershaw by Mr. Briggs who is over the Masonry Training Program. Ms. Coleman came to the program needing guidance on her career. She struggled with home life, moving from couch to couch, and doing odd jobs to make ends meet. WIOA and the Historic Camden Foundation work together to assist eligible individuals such as Ms. Coleman, with obtaining their Masonry Certifications. When Career Coach Bradford inquired about Ms. Coleman's attendance in training, she was informed that she was the "leader" of the group. If the group had a concern, she was the one to voice it. Ms. Coleman has strong leadership skills and is very influential. Ms. Coleman has had some personal setbacks, but she did not let it stop her from graduating from the training program. Her positive attitude helped her land a 3-week job with one of the company's that came out to watch and certify them. She is now OSHA Operating and Compliance certified with full time employment in New Orleans.

A discussion ensued concerning how to track/follow up on participants who have completed their training. Ms. Rogerson explained there are two separate portions of the program; the participant is tracked when they are active and going to training and the second, after the participant has completed the program, they go into

the follow up phase and staff are able to track their employment/education and keep in contact for at least one year after they leave the program.

Further discussion ensued relating to a mentoring program. Ms. Rogerson stated they do not have a mentoring program currently; however, the participants are welcome to come back and speak to current participants. Ms. Areatha Clark added the participants can become and have been ambassadors for the program.

SC Works Operator Report

Mr. Ray Jackson provided the SC Works Operator report thru December 31, 2020. Mr. Jackson stated they had 6,815 individuals visit the SC Works Centers with 3,196 as new registrants. They serviced 189 employers. Mr. Jackson stated that 95% of individuals that come into the center is for Unemployment Insurance (UI) assistance. He further stated they are looking for new ways to get UI participants to seek out jobs through the SC Works Center as we are still struggling to get individuals back into the workforce. Mr. Jackson further reported they had 156 Partner Referrals. He stated normally, with over 3,000 new registrants they would have more referrals to the WIOA program and partner agencies within the SC Works Centers. He continued they are at a 98.3% customer service rating. They had 909 total job orders, 1,809 total job openings, and 562 job placements. Seventy five percent (75%) – 80% of individuals have been placed with one employer. Mr. Jackson highlighted Job Fairs that took place in 2020: Parking Lot Job Fair (9/18/20), Multi-State-Job Fair (10/6/20), SC Virtual Healthcare Job Fair (11/17/20) , and Virtual Job Fair of the Carolinas (11/17/20). He stated they are still offering virtual workshops and that staff are still providing services virtually, to include soft skills workshops and virtual hiring events.

Mr. Jackson then highlight in-demand occupations:

- Heavy and Tractor Trailer Training Truck Driving (CDL)
- Retail Salesperson
- First Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
- Registered Nurses
- First Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers
- Stockers and Order Fillers

He next reviewed the Unemployment Rates through December 31, 2020:

- South Carolina – 4.6%
- Santee-Lynches Region – 5.0%
- Sumter County – 5.4%
- Clarendon County – 5.5%
- Kershaw County – 4.2%
- Lee County – 6.0%

The job loss for the month of December is 3,600 and staff are looking for innovative ways to get individuals engaged into looking for jobs.

Mr. Nicole Gardener added, that in addition to the SC DEW staff sending out mass emails regarding services provided by the SC Works Center, they have four staff members that daily log into the IVR system, which is incoming calls regarding Unemployment Insurance Benefits. During the calls, staff are explaining the services offered at the SC Works Center. They have IVR referrals to the SC Works Center and have a Skill Matching project that is through Skilled Market Services, which is where the Workforce Specialists and Consultants are actively conducting a profile search in regard to available occupations. A list of individuals in the Santee-Lynches region are identified and receive email messages through their SC Works account of regarding available job openings. Ms. Gardner stated every Friday she receives a spreadsheet of the Skill Matching activities for the week which includes job order number, region, title of the job, code for the job, number of recipients that

were forwarded the employment advertisement through SC Works, and number of job seekers/potential candidates that have opened their email. Mr. Gardner further stated they are tracking individuals and continually reviewing the emails that were sent to make sure the individuals are opening their emails. They are also making phone calls, email contacts, word of mouth and anything they can think of to get UI participants interested in and taking advantage of services that are available at the SC Works Center.

A discussion ensued regarding finding individuals willing to go to work and how much the COVID relief dollars are affecting employment. Mr. Jackson stated they are seeing individuals who would rather draw unemployment and stay home than go back to work or seek employment. It was added that individuals feel that they are being paid more to stay at home than to seek work. Also, parents, who have school aged children at home, would rather stay home with them to help with their education.

Mr. McKinney added there are still safety concerns in going back to work and there needs to be the right balance for individuals to return to the workplace. Chairman General stated in the healthcare field, he has lost LPNs who have decided to stay home to help their children with virtual learning and some have gone back to school to achieve their RN.

Financial Report

Mr. Esmonde Levy provided the financial update for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Expenditures for PY'20 through December 31, 2020:

Chart 1: Program Year 2020 Eckerd Adult Total including transfers:

Eckerd spent \$268,422 of \$430,000 (contract amount including a transfer of \$130,000) of the Adult budget leaving a balance of \$161,578 (62% expended).

Chart 2: Eckerd Adult Monthly Trends

July 2020 – \$60,777
August 2020 – \$40,678
September 2020 – \$42,180
October 2020 - \$44,640
November 2020 - \$41,360
December 2020 - \$38,787

Mr. Levy stated the trend line started off high but has leveled out during the remaining months which is due to meeting with the Eckerd staff weekly to talk about spending to ensure that adequate funding is available for the remainder of the program year.

Chart 3: Program Year 2020 Eckerd Dislocated Worker Total

Eckerd spent \$141,618 of \$320,000 (contract amount reflecting a transfer of \$130,000) of the Dislocated Worker budget leaving a balance of \$178,381 (44% expended).

Chart 4: Eckerd Dislocated Worker Monthly Trends

July 2020 - \$29,491
August 2020 - \$25,343
September 2020 - \$26,427
October 2020 - \$14,413
November 2020 - \$30,846
December 2020 - \$15,098

Mr. Levy stated the trend lines have had peaks and valleys due to enrollment and tuition adjustments.

Chart 5: Program Year 2020 Eckerd Youth Total

Eckerd spent \$246,215 of \$460,000.00 (contact amount) with a balance of \$213,785 (53% expended).

Chart 6: Eckerd Youth Monthly Trends

July 2020 - \$24,628

August 2020 - \$50,692

September 2020 - \$55,599

October 2020 - \$41,542

November 2020 - \$35,702

December 2020 - \$38,052

Mr. Levy stated they expect the trend lines to continue to be level. He also stated they have a monthly target they are trying not to exceed to ensure that funding is available for the remainder of the program year.

8. Ratification of Email Vote

Transfer of PY'20 Funds – Dislocated Worker to Adult

The following was voted on via email by Workforce Board members: A request has been made and approved to transfer \$90,000 of Dislocated Worker Funds to the Adult Program. This request is based on the fact that we continue to serve more Adults than Dislocated Workers and therefore, require Dislocated funding be transferred to serve the additional Adults and to cover expenses incurred for serving that population.

Ratification of the email vote is required at this time. In response, a motion was made by Mr. Bobby Anderson and seconded by Ms. Debra Young to ratify the email vote to approve the Transfer of PY'20 Funds – Dislocated Worker to Adult. There being no discussion, Chairman General called for the vote. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

9. Local Workforce Development Area Subsequent Designation and Local Workforce development Board Subsequent Certification

Ms. Areatha Clark stated the Governor must designate Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) within the state in order to receive adult, dislocated worker, and youth funding under Title I of WIOA. LWDAs administer workforce development activities and execute adult, dislocated worker, and youth funds allocated by the state. Within LWDAs, Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) oversee local area functions, including strategic planning, operational alignment and service delivery design, and LWDAs serve as jurisdictions where partners align resources at a sub-state level to design and implement overall service delivery strategies. WIOA § 106(b) requires that the Governor designate and redesignate LWDAs within the state through consultation with the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB), Chief Elected Officials (CEOs), and LWDBs, and after consideration of comments received through a public comment process.

The Governor must designate LWDAs by considering the extent to which the proposed LWDAs:

- Are consistent with labor market areas in the state;
- Have common economic development areas; and
- Have available the federal and non-federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities and provisions required by WIOA, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools.

After the period of initial designation and if requested by the CEO(s) and LWDB in a local area, the Governor must approve the request if the following criteria are met for the two most recent program years of initial designation:

- The local area performed successfully;

- The local area sustained fiscal integrity; and
- In the case of a local area in a planning region, the local area met the regional planning requirements described in WIOA § 10G(c)(4).

The LWDA will submit an official petition, along with a Consortium agreement agreed upon by the CEOs in the 4-county region. The CEO(s) in a LWDA is authorized to appoint the members of the LWDB for such area, in accordance with the state criteria established under WIDA § 107(b). Per WIOA §107(c)(2), the Governor shall, once every two years, certify one LWDB for each LWDA in the state. Such certification shall be based on criteria established in WIOA § 107(b).

Subsequent certification shall be based on WIOA §107(b) and the extent to which the LWDB has ensured that the workforce investment activities carried out in the LWDA have enabled the LWDA to meet the corresponding performance accountability measures and achieve sustained fiscal integrity, as defined above.

Ms. Clark briefly reviewed the petition the CEOs will sign and the performance for PY'18, which reflects that all goals have been met or exceeded the requirements for that program year.

10. Chairman's Comments

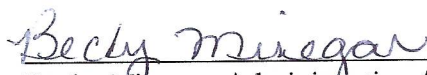
Chairman General thanked everyone for joining and encouraged everyone to be vigilant and mindful of the pandemic and COVID vaccination for the frontline staff at the SC Works Centers. Ms. Clark stated there is currently not a plan to vaccinate frontline staff. Mr. McKinney added a meeting has been scheduled with Mr. Dan Ellzey, Executive Director of the S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce to discuss this issue.

Chairman General stated if you have had COVID you have to wait 90 days before you can be vaccinated.

11. Adjourn

There being no further business, the Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board Meeting was adjourned at 5:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,


 Becky Minegar, Administrative Assistant II
 Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments