



Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board Meeting
Via Zoom
Tuesday, May 18, 2021 - 5:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present:

Clarendon – Robert Edwards, Kayla Padgett
Kershaw – Renee Baker, John Hornsby, Stewart Kidd, Teresa Oelze
Lee – George General (Chairman), Annette Karlinsky, Zina Wright
Sumter – Bobby Anderson, Gail Lemmon, Sharon Teigue, Elizabeth Williams, Debra Young

Members Absent:

Clarendon – Christine Edwards (excused)
Kershaw – Nicole Gardner (excused), Teresa Justice
Sumter – Calvin Hastie, Sr. (excused), Sam Lowery, Janice Poplin (excused), 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
Dennis Cyphers, Chief, Government Services
Jeff Parkey, Regional Planning Director, Government Services
Becky Minegar, SLRCOG Administrative Assistant II
Kourtney Page, SLRCOG Administrative Assistant I

Guests:

Ray Jackson, SC Works Operator, Eckerd Connects - Workforce Development
Amanda Wagner, Eckerd Connects – Workforce Development
Caroline Rogerson, Eckerd Connects – Workforce Development
Raiford Hinton, SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) – Santee-Lynches
Michell Carr, SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW)

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 5:05 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 Revised Agenda

Chairman General entertained a motion to approve the Agenda. **A motion was made by Ms. Teresa Oelze 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 – April 20, 2021

Chairman General entertained a motion to approve the Workforce Development Board (WDB) Meeting Minutes of April 20, 2021. **A motion was made by Mr. Bobby Anderson and seconded by Mr. John Hornsby.** 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 deferred his comments following the Industry Sector Study update.

7. Special Presentation – Industry Sector Study Update

Mr. Dennis Cyphers provided an update on the Industry Sector Study. Mr. Cyphers stated the study was originally created to identify gaps that we have in industry, to identify where the gaps are at, and what type of path we can take to fill these gaps. Mr. Cyphers provided data for the Santee-Lynches region as well as the state and national level. The report shows the top industries listed by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), which is used by economic developers and the Bureau of Labor Statistics when they are classifying industries. The breakdown includes current employment in these industries and expected growth. He also provided a nationwide snapshot of the fastest growing sectors to give us a general idea of what others throughout the nation are moving toward which in turn will help us target what we need to do locally. This study shows ten-year projections of jobs available nationwide and lists a Location Quotient (LQ) for each job. Mr. Cyphers explained LQ is our relative competitiveness in a particular sector. For example, LQ of 1 means we are on par nationwide, LQ of 2 means we are highly competitive, if its below 1 that means we are not competitive. Mr. Cyphers stated in the Santee-Lynches region we have gaps in cyber security, robotics and automation, chemical manufacturing, and the Airforce Center of Excellence.

Mr. Cyphers further stated this document is a formal rough draft and staff will be taking it to different stakeholder groups and economic developers for their review and input. He indicated they will not be able to forecast changes in technology, changes in administration or policy that might affect where funding comes from.

Mr. Bobby Anderson asked if this report ties in the school system and the availability of students qualified to graduate from high school to go into the workforce. Mr. Cyphers stated this was not the idea behind this study. This study was designed to look at the industries in the area. Mr. Anderson stated he would like to see it tied together with the State Department of Education. Chairman General inquired about robotics in the Santee-Lynches region. Mr. Cyphers explained robotics and automation currently is not heavy in this area.

Mr. Christopher McKinney emphasized this study is a daft and we have to take the information and put it into context. Mr. Dennis Cyphers and Mr. Jeff Parkey will be working with economists and local experts to figure out exactly what this data means, we do not want to misinterpret the data. The original intent for this study was to evaluate where we are currently and where we need to go. He stated currently the top industry is not manufacturing, it's the service industry which is not necessarily good in Santee-Lynches due to lower wages that are typically paid; which is not a positive if we want to attract more companies to our four-county region.

8. Reports

Youth Report Update:

Ms. Caroline Rogerson, Eckerd Connects - Workforce Development, reported on the Youth Performance for PY'20 through April 30, 2021.

She reported enrollments for the youth:

- Total active youth enrollments: 133 participants with a goal of 145 participants (92% of goal achieved)

She next reported on Performance Outcomes as of April 30, 2021 for youth:

- 19 contracts have been written for Youth Work Experience and On-the-Job Training

Ms. Rogerson added the grant that was received specifically for On-the-Job Training has been exhausted as the last contract was completed in April. Currently, there are 4 participants in Work Experience and 1 On-the-Job Training. She continued Career Smart is the Youth Program's Soft Skills Training required for new enrollments. At this time, they have had 85 participants complete Career Smart and 129 resumes completed. They also have had 11 participants enrolled in Adult Education.

Performance Outcomes for training:

- 65 participants entered training with 20 of those participants currently active
 - 46% of training are medical
 - 32% of training are logistics
 - 18% of training are welding/construction
 - 4% of training are veterinary technician

She continued reporting on Placement Outcomes as of April 30, 2021 for youth. Ms. Rogerson explained once an individual completes training and exits out of WIOA, they are tracked within the system for one year and their employment or further educational status is recorded.

- 24% of placements are medical
- 22% of placements are welding/construction
- 29% of placements are logistics which include forklift, manufacturing or logistics technician, and truck driving
- 1% of placements are veterinary technician
- 25% miscellaneous jobs which could be IT or customer service
- 97 participants have earned credentials
- 287 Measurable Skills Gains

These include credentials that are exams that certify the participants to work specifically in their field.

- 7 participants have obtained their high school diploma/GED
- 126 Placements

Ms. Rogerson shared a story of how dedicated the youth participants are at becoming successful. She stated a recent graduate in Clarendon County was attending Adult Education to pursue his high school diploma. He was allowed to continue welding classes at FE Dubose, that he was originally enrolled in while he was in high school while he worked on his diploma. He was also on a Work Study through FE Dubose at Avanta in Manning. Avanta requested him specifically to complete an On-the-Job Training (OJT) through WIOA. He received special permission from Adult Education, his career coach, and FE Dubose to simultaneously complete his diploma, welding training, and OJT contract. He completed his OJT with Avanta in April and two days later he finished his course work to obtain his diploma. He is now a graduate and employed full time in his desired career field all as an 18-year-old.

Ms. Rogerson shared a Youth Success Story: Ms. Donnisha Bates completed a work experience at the Bicycle Corporation of America (BCA) and was hired on full time at the completion of her contract. Shae came to the Career Coaches' office to inform her Career Coach of her new employment while explaining to a current WEX participant the hard work it took to earn an employment position. Donnisha finished sharing her experiences and encouraged her peer to take it seriously and try to learn as much as possible. She explained that she went into the WEX with a generic badge like everyone else, but once she proved herself, she got her own face on the badge. The encouragement they gave one another to succeed and move from one position to another was encouraging and refreshing from a staff standpoint. We are excited and proud of these individuals for growing and learning from the experiences offered by the WIOA program.

WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker Programs Program Update:

Ms. Rogerson next reported on the Adult/Dislocated Performance for PY'20 through April 30, 2021.

She reported enrollments for the Adults:

- Total active adult enrollments: 239 participants with a goal of 325 participants (74% of goal achieved)

She then reported enrollments for the Dislocated Workers:

- Total active dislocated worker enrollments: 66 participants with a goal of 50 participants (goal exceeded with 132% achieved)

She next reported on Performance Outcomes as of April 30, 2021 for Adult and Dislocated participants:

- 104 participants entered training with 30 of those participants currently active
 - 64% of training have been medical
 - 7% of training have been construction/welding
 - 27% of training have been in logistics
 - 2% of training have been in Information Technology

She continued reporting on Placement Outcomes as of April 30, 2021 for Adult and Dislocated Worker. Ms. Rogerson explained once an individual completes training and exits out of WIOA, they are tracked within the system for one year and their employment is recorded. Ms. Rogerson explained placements has a higher number than enrolled and this is due to the individual attending training and immediately obtaining employment as well as those obtaining employment during the follow-up period after leaving WIOA.

- 24% of placements are medical
- 4% of placements are in IT
- 40% of placements are welding/construction
- 22% of placements are logistics
- 10% of placements are individuals that are in a field not related to training or are in post-secondary education or further training
- 133 participants have earned credentials
- 400 Measurable Skills Gains
- 17 On-The-Job Training Contracts (Additional contracts are being written and will be reported on at the next meeting)
- 340 Placements

Ms. Rogerson shared an Adult/Dislocated Workers Success Story: Tyron Muldrow entered the WIOA program seeking training as a Commercial Truck Driver. He attended training at Palmetto Training Inc. in Sumter and successfully completed training in December 2020. Tyron gained full time employment with Jordan Carriers. He stated that he is grateful for his time in WIOA for preparing him for a career that he enjoys. His

employment affords him the opportunity to work during the week to provide for his family and be home on the weekends.

A discussion followed regarding how individuals are placed in training programs. Ms. Rogerson explained the career coaches work with the participants one-on-one to do assessments to better judge for placement. A discussion continued on how often the training programs are looked at? Ms. Areatha Clark explained programs are looked at yearly on a local level as well as the state level. Data is used that tells where the openings are in the region and if there training available in the region. Ms. Clark stated they have had to go outside the region to look for training at schools such as Florence-Darlington Technical College and Midlands Technical College. We are always following the data to determine which training is needed. Ms. Clark added they are open to new providers to provide training services in the region. Ms. Clark added Florence-Darlington Technical College and Midlands Technical College have been issuing scholarships to WIOA participants, which has been a significant help with training costs.

It was next asked what the placement rate of participants attending training versus those being placed directly into a job. Ms. Rogerson explained there is an 85-90% success rate of participants attending training and then finding employment in their field. Mr. McKinney stated this is a huge accomplishment and something the board needs to be proud of. Ms. Amanda Wagner added the team is doing a phenomenal job in placing participants in training and then transitioning them to employment.

SC Works Operator Report:

Mr. Ray Jackson provided the SC Works Operator report thru April 30, 2021.

He provided a comparison of the VOSGreeter (the number of customers visiting the center).

- July 1, 2019 – April 30, 2020 – 19,335 total number of customers served.
- July 1, 2020 – April 30, 2021 – 10,924 total number of customers served.

He next provided a summary comparison for July 1, 2019 – April 30, 2020 and July 1, 2020 – April 30, 2021:

Master Summary Report -Region/LWIA: Santee-Lynches	7/1/2019 - 4/30/2020	7/1/2020- 4/30/2021
Total number of Individuals that Registered	6,995	4,599
Total number of Individuals that Logged In	9,041	10,984
Total number of Distinct Individuals Receiving Services	13,046	23,536
Total number of Services Provided to Individuals	699,008	1,167,976
Total number of Internal Job Orders Created	1,698	1,475
Total number of Internal Job Referrals Created	17,740	36,879
Total number of Services Provided Employers	3,798	3,564

Mr. Jackson reported healthcare, manufacturing, retail, and education are the top employers in the Santee-Lynches region. He next reported CDL, retail, frontline retail, and healthcare occupations are the top jobs opening being advertised in the Santee-Lynches region over the last 60 days. He continued with CDL, manufacturing, and food service having the most Job Orders created in the Santee-Lynches region. There are currently 188 positions posted between four employers. Mr. Jackson stated CDL drivers are still in great demand.

Mr. Jackson reported they had three different hiring events, SC Department of Corrections, PSSI, and The Budd Group, for the month of April with very little interest from customers. For the month of May they have 4 -5 events planned.

- May 19th – Resource Fair in Summerton
- May 20th – Statewide Virtual Job Fair with Tourism and Hospitality Industry
- May 20th - Pilgrims Pride at SC Works
- May 20th – Rural Outreach in Wedgefield

He stated the employers are becoming more engaged and are asking for the support of the SC Works Centers.

Mr. Jackson next provided a comparison on Job Placements from 2018 - 2021:

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021
January	66	93	74	100
February	87	91	75	94
March	97	103	56	108
April	103	92	14	92
May	92	108	0	
June	100	97	1	
July	81	113	71	
August	87	96	103	
September	108	101	94	
October	97	98	101	
November	93	101	93	
December	98	78	100	
Total	1,109	1,166	782	394

He next reviewed Unemployment Rates as of March 2021:

- South Carolina 5.1%
- Santee-Lynches Region – 5.3%
- Sumter County – 5.5%
- Clarendon County – 5.9%
- Kershaw County – 4.5%
- Lee County – 6.4%

Mr. Jackson provided the Area Profile for the Santee-Lynches Region thru March 2021. The table shows how the formula for the unemployment rate with the monthly adjusted Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment data.

Area	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
South Carolina	2,392,993	2,277,937	115,056	5.1%
Santee-Lynches	92,734	87,845	4,889	5.3%
Sumter	43,844	41,445	2,399	5.5%

Kershaw	29,458	28,146	1,312	4.5%
Clarendon	12,633	11,893	740	5.9%
Lee	6,799	6,361	438	6.4%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, SC Department of Employment & Workforce

Mr. Jackson stated they are offering virtual and in person workshops and continue to promote the services at SC Works Center.

A discussion followed regarding construction and why it is so low as a sector in demand. Mr. Jackson stated it's due to the decline in the home market and now that material costs are higher it most likely will decline further. Ms. Clark added many of those in the industry have stated it is difficult in getting the materials they need due to the shortage of truck drivers. Ms. Clark added the trucking shortage is affecting all industries.

Financial Report:

Mr. Esmonde Levy provided the SC Works Financial Report for PY'20 through April 30, 2021. Mr. Levy stated staff are watching, on a weekly basis, spending and obligations and requirements from the State.

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

Eckerd spent \$360,628 of \$535,500 of the Adult budget leaving a balance of \$174,872 (67% 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
January 2021- \$20,312
February 2021- \$15,868
March 2021- \$22,326
April 2021 - \$33,701

Mr. Levy stated the months where costs were higher was due to paying training tuition.

Chart 3: Program Year 2020 Eckerd Dislocated Worker Total (including transfers)

Eckerd spent \$176,476 of \$214,500 of the Dislocated Worker budget leaving a balance of \$38,027 (82% expended). Mr. Levy stated we will be doing transfers from Dislocated Worker to Adult in the very near future.

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
January 2021- \$9,642
February 2021- \$9,597
March 2021- \$8,780
April 2021 - \$6,835

Mr. Levy stated they will be having a meeting with Eckerd to make sure they meet their expenditure rates.

Chart 5: Rapid Response Eckerd Dislocated Worker Total

Eckerd spent \$24,973 of \$100,000 of the Rapid Response Dislocated Worker budget leaving a balance of \$75,027 (33% expended). [Grant ends December 31, 2021]

Chart 6: Program Year 2020 Eckerd Youth Total

Eckerd spent \$367,771 of \$460,000.00 (contact amount) with a balance of \$92,229 (80% expended).

Chart 7: 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
January 2021- \$32,457
February 2021-\$26,105
March 2021- \$ 28,984
April 2021 - \$34,011

Mr. Levy stated they will be having a meeting with Eckerd to determine projections for the remainder of year.

Chart 8: Eckerd Youth Restoration Total

Eckerd spent \$3,669 of \$4,414 budget with a balance of \$745 (83% expended).

Chart 9: Obligation and Expenditure Rates

Ms. Levy next provided an overview of the overall funding from the State and where we need to be with our obligations and expenditure rates by June 30th. He reminded the board that the State's obligation rate requirement is 80% and the State's expenditure rate requirement is 70%.

As of April 20, 2021 the Obligation and Expenditure Rates (excluding projections):

	Expenditures	Obligations
Adult	87.92%	100%
DW	51.87%	54.87%
Adult/DW	65.24%	71.99%
Youth	85.75%	100%

Ms. Areatha Clark added we want to spend 70% of the funds for the year which would enable us to carry over funds for the new fiscal year. She added we will be doing transfers between Dislocated Worker and Adult funding streams. Ms. Clark stated she has been contacted by several other areas, who haven't been able to expend all of their funding and are hopeful to get extra funding that will assist with this year's expenditures and provide funding for the next fiscal year. This would also enable us to train additional clients if needed.

Mr. McKinney commented on the good work that is being done is because of the teamwork between Ms. Clark and her team, Ms. Nicole Gardner with SCDEW and her staff, the Eckerd staff, and the SC Works Operator.

9. Committee Reports

SC Works Committee

SC Works Operator Contract for PY'21

Mr. John Hornsby stated the Rating and Ranking Committee met on May 13, 2021 to rate and rank the Request for Proposals. He stated there was only one proposal received from Eckerd Youth Alternative dba Eckerd Connects. The proposal was rated, and the average score was 98.6, which exceeds the minimum requirement. The SC Works Rating and Ranking Committee **brought forth a motion to the Workforce Development Board for Eckerd Youth Alternative dba Eckerd Connects to continue as the SC Works Operator for PY'21 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022).** Ms. Sharon Teigue seconded the motion. There being no discussion, Chairman General called for the vote. **All were in favor and the motion was passed unanimously.**

WIOA Adult/DW Services Contract Extension for PY'21

Mr. Bobby Anderson, SC Works Committee Chairman, stated the **SC Works Committee brings forth a motion to extend Eckerd Youth Alternative dba Eckerd Connects WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker Services Contract for an additional year for PY'21 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022).** Ms. Sharon Teigue seconded the motion. There being no discussion, Chairman General called for the vote. **All were in favor and the motion was passed unanimously.**

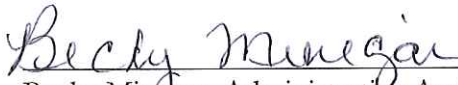
10. **Chairman's Comments**

Chairman General stated the meeting was very informative and everyone is doing an outstanding job. He reported that vaccines have slowed to a crawl. He encouraged everyone to get the vaccine and spread the word.

11. **Adjourn**

There being no further business, the Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board Meeting was adjourned at 6:01 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,


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