



**Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board Meeting**  
**Via Zoom**  
**Tuesday, March 22, 2022 - 5:00 PM**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:**

Clarendon- Kayla Padgett, Mike Morrow  
Kershaw –Berri Outlaw, Jeff Burgess, Renee Baker, Celeste Taylor  
Lee –Annette Karlinsky  
Sumter – Bobby Anderson (Vice-Chairman), Calvin Hastie, Sr., Janice Poplin, Dr. Vanessa Canty

**Members Absent:**

Lee- George General (Chairman)  
Kershaw - Teresa Justice, John Hornsby  
Sumter – Gail Lemmon, Sam Lowery, Debra Young, Brian Reilly

**Staff Present:**

Areatha Clark, Interim Executive Director and Chief, Workforce Development  
Esmonde Levy, Workforce Development Manager  
Freda Amerson, Workforce Development Operations Coordinator  
Steve Berger, Business Services Lead  
Kourtney Page, SLRCOG Administrative Assistant I-PR

**Guests:**

Zach Nickerson, South Carolina Department of Employment & Workforce  
Brenda Gardner, South Carolina Department of Commerce  
Ray Jackson, Eckerd Connects - Workforce Development  
Kal Kunkel, Eckerd Connects – Workforce Development  
Renee Alexander, Eckerd Connects, Workforce Development

**1. Welcome and Call to Order**

Vice-Chairman Bobby Anderson called the Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board of Directors' (WDB) Meeting to order at 5:04 PM. A quorum was present.

**2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance**

Vice- Chairman Anderson provided the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Introduction of Guests**

Ms. Areatha Clark, Interim Executive Director, and Workforce Development Chief introduced new Workforce Board Members: Ms. Celeste Taylor (Hengst of North America), Mr. Brian Reilly (SKF, USA), Mr. Mike Morrow (Bicycle Corporation of America) (excused absent); Mr. Jeff Burgess (Kershaw County Economic Developer) guests and staff.

#### 4. Adoption of Agenda

Vice-Chairman Anderson entertained a motion to approve the agenda. **A motion was made by Mr. Calvin Hastie, Sr. and seconded by Ms. Anette Karlinsky.** There being no discussion, Vice-Chairman Anderson called for the vote. **All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### 5. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – December 7, 2021

Vice-Chairman Anderson motion to approve the Workforce Development Board (WDB) Meeting Minutes of December 7, 2021. **A motion was made by Mr. Calvin Hastie, Sr., and seconded by Ms. Renee Baker.** There being no discussion, Vice-Chairman Anderson called for the vote. **All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### 6. Special Presentation

**Ms. Brenda Gardner, SC Department of Commerce presented the Department of Commerce Report.**

Ms. Gardner shared that her key talking points for the board was the Impact of Covid, SC Days Virtual Initiative, Manufacturing Expos, and Graduate to Greatness.

**Impact of Covid-** Ms. Gardner shared with the board that the pandemic has made an impact with some of our students who are struggling with Mental Health, facing delays in educational studies, and lack of career exposure. Currently, the South Carolina Department of Commerce is bringing back in person activities to assist in these areas.

**SC Days Virtual Initiative-** Ms. Gardner shared that they have had some success virtually with their SC Days Event on last month. This event had targeted Cyber Careers needed in the region. The event had cyber professionals from Sumter School District, Microsoft, SC Codes, USC Cyber Institute, and Shaw AFB.

Vice-Chairman Anderson asked for the number of students that attended the event. Ms. Gardner shared that almost 700 students from our four-county region had signed up to attend. She also shared that the vast majority of those students may have been in cyber courses in school.

**Manufacturing Expos-** Ms. Gardner announced the first post-covid in-person Sumter and Lee Manufacturing Expo for 8<sup>th</sup> graders to be held on Friday, March 25<sup>th</sup>. She also shared that there will be some Workforce Development Board members participating in this event. Coming up next, the Kershaw Manufacturing Expo would take place. The Department of Commerce is also planning a Clarendon County Manufacturing Expo for the Fall.

**Graduate to Greatness-** This new project in partnership with the Sumter Economic Development Board, will be held on Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> with the involvement of numerous Sumter Businesses. This project is a “decision day” for high school seniors that do not have plans after graduation. Ms. Gardner shared that they are working closely with the career counselors and guidance counselors to identify those students. As they approach the day of the event, students and businesses will complete the Ping survey designed by Tallo to prep students for a “match list” based on their interest and businesses that match. Appointments will be made for all students that participates. In addition to this discussion, Ms. Gardner discussed how they’ve encouraged those businesses to promote differently for these students of Generation Z, due to their different characteristics from other generations.

Interim Executive Director Ms. Clark, asked Ms. Gardner to elaborate more on the characteristics of Generation Z. Ms. Gardner shared a presentation that identified the following traits about this generation: Value Salary Less, Stay at Jobs Longer, Role-Hoppers, choose carefully where they will seek employment, join careers and jobs that reflect their values, Realistic, Loyal, Independent, Digital Natives. She also shared that they are not as prepared for next steps in their careers due to Covid.

Ms. Clark asked Ms. Gardner to provide strategies on how they will get the students engaged with the surveys. Ms. Gardner stated that the school officials have been meeting with those students to help prepare them for the event and to complete the survey. Dr. Canty asked how she could have students that have just graduated, participate in this event. Ms. Gardner stated that she would pose that question to District contacts.

Ms. Kayla Padgett informed Ms. Gardner that her company would be interested in participating in their Clarendon County Manufacturing Expo.

## 7. Reports (Information Only)

### Youth Committee Report

Mr. Calvin Hastie, Chairman of Youth Committee stated that there was no additional information other than the information that will be reported later by Eckerd staff.

### SC Works Committee Report

Vice-Chairman Anderson, who serves as SC Works Committee Chair, stated that they met last month and is on target with funding levels and the program.

### The SC Works Operator and Program Services Report

The SC Works Operator and Program Services Report for July 1, 2021 – February 28, 2022, was presented by Mr. Ray Jackson.

**Chart I:** Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Distribution Table for South Carolina (December 2021)

The table below shows the workforce development areas with the highest preliminary unemployment rate in South Carolina for December 2021. These figures are not seasonally adjusted.

Rank	Area	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Preliminary
1	Waccamaw	182,947	174,819	8,128	4.4%	Yes
2	Lower Savannah	129,649	124,241	5,408	4.2%	Yes
3	Pee Dee	153,536	147,208	6,328	4.1%	Yes
4	Santee-Lynches	91,013	87,638	3,375	3.7%	Yes
5	Catawba	202,935	195,767	7,168	3.5%	Yes
6	Upstate	198,864	192,177	6,687	3.4%	Yes
7	Upper Savannah	112,633	108,907	3,726	3.3%	Yes
8	Midlands	361,408	350,386	11,022	3.0%	Yes
9	Lowcountry	115,749	112,301	3,448	3.0%	Yes
10	Worklink	184,145	178,749	5,396	2.9%	Yes
11	Trident	399,797	388,147	11,650	2.9%	Yes
12	Greenville	259,217	251,977	7,240	2.8%	Yes

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, SC Dept of Employment & Workforce  
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**Chart II:** Area Labor Force, Employment, and Unemployment Data Table for Santee-Lynches (December 2021)

The table below shows the monthly not seasonally adjusted Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment data for Santee-Lynches, SC in December 2021.

Area	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
South Carolina	2,391,893	2,312,318	79,575	3.3%
Santee-Lynches	91,013	87,638	3,375	3.7%
Sumter	42,750	41,117	1,633	3.8%
Kershaw	29,509	28,583	926	3.1%
Clarendon	12,208	11,701	507	4.2%
Lee	6,546	6,237	309	4.7%

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

**Chart III:** Number of Unemployed per Job Openings Distribution Table

The table below shows the number of unemployed (non-seasonally adjusted), number of advertised online, and the ratio of the number of unemployed to number of advertised online in job openings by South Carolina in Workforce Development Area (Jobs De-duplication Level 2).

Rank	Area	Unemployed	Job Openings	Number of Unemployed per Job Opening	Preliminary
1	Santee-Lynches	3,375	4,549	0.74	Yes
2	Lower Savannah	5,408	7,427	0.73	Yes
3	Pee Dee	6,328	8,982	0.70	Yes
4	Waccamaw	8,128	12,783	0.64	Yes
5	Upper Savannah	3,726	6,125	0.61	Yes
6	Upstate	6,687	11,344	0.59	Yes
7	Worklink	5,396	10,050	0.54	Yes
8	Catawba	7,168	13,409	0.53	Yes
9	Lowcountry	3,448	8,492	0.41	Yes
10	Midlands	11,022	29,002	0.38	Yes
11	Greenville	7,240	22,079	0.33	Yes
12	Trident	11,650	36,717	0.32	Yes

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, SC Dept of Employment & Workforce and Online advertised jobs data  
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#### Chart IV: Industries by Advertised Jobs Table

Santee-Lynches - 2,678 job openings that advertised online in Santee-Lynches on March 9, 2022. (Jobs De-duplication Level 2)

The table below shows the industries with the highest job openings advertised online in Santee-Lynches, SC on March 9, 2022 (Jobs De-duplication Level 2) Opens in a new browser window.

Rank	Industry	Job Openings
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	395
2	Retail Trade	316
3	Educational Services	262
4	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	248
5	Accommodation and Food Services	163
6	Manufacturing	155
7	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	110
8	Wholesale Trade	58
9	Public Administration	58
10	Unclassified	746

Source: Online advertised jobs data  
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Mr. Jackson shared the Department of Veterans' Affairs' press release pertaining to their partnership with Ping by Tallo, SC Future Makers, and Sumter Economic Development to host the first South Carolina Military Community Hiring Fair held on Wednesday, March 9, 2022, at the Sumter Civic Center. Also shared was the following roster of all industries and companies that attended the Hiring Fair: VA & Hiring Fair Check-In, EMS-CHEMIE (North America) Inc., Harbor Freight Tools, Jemison Metals, Maysteel Industries, LLC, MERMEC Inc., Prisma Health, Santa Crus Nutritionals, SKF (formerly Kaydon), SYKERS (now a part of SITEL Group), Thompson Construction, Becton Dickinson, BD, Denka America, New Indy Containerboard, Pilgrims, Sylvamo Papers, City of Sumter Police Department, Norman Williams & Associates, Inc., Lexington County Sheriff's Department, Roper Staffing, SC Department of Corrections, SC Department of Veterans' Affairs, SC Department of Veterans' Affairs-Veterans Services, SC Department of Veterans' Affairs, SC Department of Veterans' Affairs, SC Department of Veterans' Affairs, Veterans Readiness & Employment, SC Thrive, SC Works, Central Carolina Technical College, USC Sumter, and Morris College.

Next, Mr. Jackson shared with the board Hiring Events that took place in March: March 10 (Comfort Keepers) and March 14 (Santee-Wateree RTA) at SC Works in Sumter. He stated that the last Hiring Event (2022 Community Career Day) will be held on March 31, 2022, from 10AM-1PM. They are also planning to participate at the Graduate to Greatness Event hosted by the SC Department of Commerce.

Mr. Jackson presented the Adult Program Report for July 1 through February 28, 2022, report.

#### Chart I: Adult: Active Enrollments

Mr. Ray stated that they have enrolled 178 clients out of a goal of 375 enrollments.

## **Chart II: Performance Outcomes Update for Adult and Dislocated Workers**

Credentials: 51

Measurable Skills Gains: 186

## **Chart III: Youth Program Report**

73 active Youth have been enrolled out of 145 potential enrollments (goal).

Mr. Jackson further explained they are working closely with Adult Eds trying to get those students enrolled.

## **Chart IV: Participant Training Data from July 1, 2021, to March 1, 2022:**

Classroom Training: 39 Work Experience: 11

Adult Education: 6

Training Program- Nursing Assistant Prog: 8

Administrative: 7

Manufacturing: 4

Truck Driving: 4

EKG: 6

## **Chart V: Performance Outcomes Update for Youth:**

WEX/OJT- 11

Resumes Created- 37

Career Smart- 22

Adult Ed Enrollments- 6

Credentials- 40

Measurable Skills Gains- 125

Placements- 104

## **Youth Program Highlight:**

### **Aaliyah Dinkins**

Ms. Dinkins is a Lee County native who completed her CDL training on December 21, 2021. Currently, she is employed at Harbor Freight and is seeking opportunities to drive locally.

Aaliyah writes: "Thank you for the opportunity for believing in me and encouraging me. I have exceeded my dream and hope to go further. I hope to find a local job to get training and experience, and then drive across the country." Based on her experience, Aaliyah would like to encourage other youth to stay positive and focus on their dreams even when times get rough. She shared that finding her purpose has been one of her hardest challenges, until she heard about the WIOA program. After talking with her career coach and doing some of the programs, she ended up finding her purpose.

Chairman Anderson asked Mr. Jackson based on his goal of enrolling 145 youth by the end of the program year, is this goal achievable. Mr. Jackson stated though it may be challenging, however they are working hard to achieve that goal. Ms. Clark added that they are encouraging Eckerd to work closely with Youth Committee partners to get referrals towards that goal.

## **Financial Report**

The Financial Report for Program Year 2021 through February 28, 2022 was presented by Mr. Esmonde Levy.

## **Chart I: Program 2021 Percent Expended**

Eckerd Adult: 43.75% Eckerd DW: 30.87% Eckerd Youth: 48.54%

## **Chart II: Eckerd Adult Total**

Eckerd spent \$192,945 of \$441,066 (43.75% expended) with a balance of \$248,121.

## **Chart III: Eckerd Adult Monthly:**

Mr. Levy shared the trending of Eckerd Adult expenditures since July 2021.

July-21: \$17,816

Oct-21: \$37,885

Jan-22: \$17,426

Aug-21: \$32,512

Nov-21: \$20,083

Feb-22: \$19,448

Sept-21: 14,312

Dec-21: \$33,464

## **Chart IV: Eckerd DW Total:**

Eckerd spent \$79,943 of \$258,933 (30.87% expended) with a balance of \$178,990.

## **Chart V: Eckerd DW Monthly:**

July-21: \$7,612

Aug-21: \$10,495

Sept-21: \$12,483

Oct-21: \$11,651  
Nov-21: \$9,479

Dec-21: \$8,942  
Jan-22: \$9,676

Feb-22: \$9,605

**Chart VI: Eckerd Youth Total:**

Eckerd spent \$203,857 of \$420,000 (48.54% expended) with a balance of \$216,143.

**Chart VII: Eckerd Youth Monthly:**

July-21: \$29,945  
Aug-21: \$24,166  
Sept-21: \$20,948

Oct-21: \$31,946  
Nov-21: \$27,903  
Dec-21: \$29,787

Jan-22: \$22,492  
Feb-22: \$16,669

**8. Other Business (If Applicable)**

**Ms. Areatha Clark discussed the following updates with the board:**

**Establishment of an Ad-Hoc Group for Industry Study Follow-Up-**

Ms. Clark shared the need for this group would be to work with Mr. Dennis Cyphers and his team to discover more information/ideas on tackling their economic challenges brought forth from the industry study. Ms. Clark extended the invitation for volunteers to join from the board or committees. She will send an email with a copy of that study for those who may be interested to tackle those various needs in our region.

**Good Jobs Challenge Grant Application-**

Ms. Clark discussed that Santee-Lynches COG partnered with other local workforce areas to apply for a \$25 million-dollar Good Jobs Challenge grant amongst 509 other entities. The Workforce funding is steadily decreasing, and any grants will help replenish those funds. She extended appreciation to Mr. Nickerson for providing updates on grants that are available for local areas to apply for.

**Resiliency Grant Funding Update-**

Ms. Clark shared with the board that Santee-Lynches had applied for funding available from the Governor's Reserve Funding. Santee-Lynches was awarded \$375,199 that would be used towards participant training costs and other operational costs. She added that the State is anticipating a 10% cut in funding for PY'22 and these grant funds will be used to help absorb some of the anticipated funding loss.

Dr. Vanessa Canty shared information on the "*GED by Twenty-Three*" state initiative that covers students who are working to achieve their GED by 2023, which would make them eligible to attend technical colleges for free.

Ms. Annette Karlinsky shared that Coca-Cola has had expansion in their business. They had a hiring event for 56 positions and currently they are going to be adding 15-20 positions to their small bottle line. Anyone interested would need to apply through their website.

**9. Chairman's Comments:** No comments

**10. Adjourn**

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

Recorded By,



Kourtney Page, Administrative Assistant I-PR  
Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments