



SANTEE-LYNCHES
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, March 26, 2024 - 5:00PM
Via Zoom

MINUTES

Members Present:

Dr. Vanessa Canty, Dr. Joshua Castleberry, Gail Lemmon, John Hornsby, Berri Outlaw, Tiffany Myers, Robert Edwards, Emily Peele, Kanzora Robinson

Members Absent:

Phil Briggs, Jeff Burgess, Charles “Scottie” Hayes, Celeste Taylor, Virginia Pryor, Teresa Justice, Samuel Lowery, Debra Young (excused)

Workforce Development Staff Present:

Dennis Cyphers, SLRCOG Executive Director
Areatha Clark, SLRCOG Deputy Executive Director, Workforce Development Director
Esmonde Levy, SLRCOG RDC Special Projects Director, Workforce & Economic Development Manager
Freda Amerson, SLRCOG Workforce Development Operations Coordinator
Steve Berger, SLRCOG Business Services Lead
Linda Jackson, SLRCOG Administrative Director

Guests:

Brenda Gardner, SC Department of Employment and Workforce
Stacie Bitondo, SC Department of Employment and Workforce
Lashawn Thompson, SC Department of Employment and Workforce
Deidre Smalls, Area Manager, Eckerd Connects-Workforce Development
Ray Jackson, SC Works Operator/Center Manager, Eckerd Connects-Workforce Development
Margarita Servance, Lead Career Coach, Eckerd Connects-Workforce Development

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Vice-Chairman Gail Lemmon called the Santee-Lynch Workforce Development Board of Directors Meeting to order at 5:05PM. A quorum was present.

II. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Ray Jackson, SC Works Operator/Center Manager for Eckerd Connects provided the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Introduction of Guests

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

IV. Adoption of Agenda – (M)

Vice-Chairman Gail Lemmon called for a motion to adopt the agenda. **A motion was made by Dr. Josh Castleberry and seconded by Mr. John Hornsby.** There being no discussion, Vice-Chairman Lemmon called for the vote. **All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

V. Approval of Minutes – January 23, 2024 (M)

Vice-Chairman Gail Lemmon called for a motion to approve the minutes of January 23, 2024. **A motion was made by Ms. Emily Peele and seconded by Dr. Joshua Castleberry.** There being no discussion, Vice-Chairman Lemmon called for the vote. **All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

VI. Special Presentation

Ms. Lashawn Thompson, Trade Adjustment Assistance Operations Manager for the SC Department of Employment and Workforce, presented information on the Trade Adjustment Assistance program (TAA) and how it may benefit, employers and others in the region. TAA is a federal reemployment program of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) that provides services to qualified workers who have lost their jobs, or whose hours have been reduced, as result of foreign trade. The results of this are due to cheaper services or goods imported from foreign countries or the shift in production or services to foreign countries. The funding for services can only be used for employees that have experienced separation from Trade certified employers on or before June 30, 2022. Benefits and services provided are Assessments of skill levels and services needs, Career Counseling, Soft Skills/Prevocational, Job Search Assistance & Referrals, Co-Enrollment with (WIOA), GED/HS Diploma, Remedial Training, Occupational Training, Work-Based Learning Opportunities: On-The-Job Training, Apprenticeship, Customized Training, etc. Information on a list of companies impacted was provided to the Board after the meeting.

VII. Executive Director’s Report

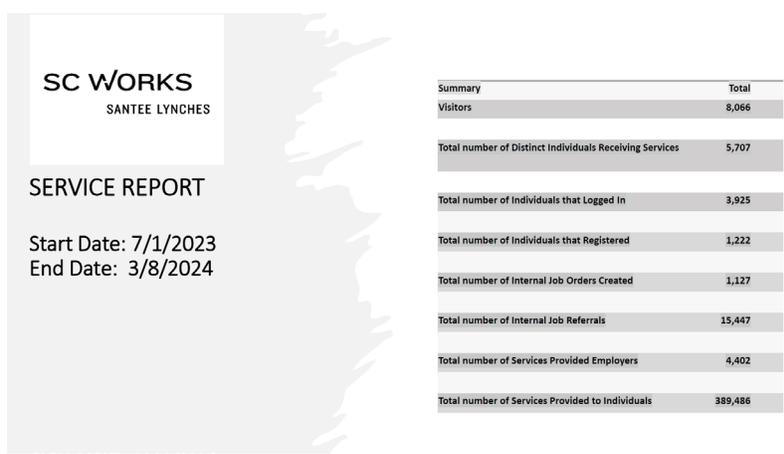
Mr. Dennis Cyphers, Executive Director, began his report by providing the Board with some statistical data from the Department of Labor’s website on the TAA program discussed earlier. He also provided a link for where updated information could be found. Mr. Cyphers also followed up from the last meeting touching on the Statewide Workforce Readiness Goals that did get approved by the House and was sent to the Senate and is currently still pending.

VIII. Reports

SC Works Operator Report

Mr. Ray Jackson, SC Works Operator/Center Manager presented the SC Works Center Report for July 1, 2023, through March 8, 2024.

Chart 1: South Carolina Service Report for SC Works



Mr. Jackson reported that this chart lists the total number of visitors served between the Camden and Sumter SC Works locations. The number of visitors between July 1,2023 and March 8, 2024 totaled 8,066. The number of distinct individuals receiving services was 5,707. The number of individuals that logged in was 3,925, and the number of individuals that registered was 1,222. The number of internal job orders created were 1,127 and the number of internal job referrals was 15,447. Lastly, the number of services provided to Employers was 4,402 and the number of services provided to individuals - 389,486.

Chart 2: Area Profile: Area Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Data Table (January 2024)

Area Profile for Santee-Lynches, SC

Area Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Data Table

This section shows preliminary estimated labor force, employment and unemployment information in January 2024 for Santee-Lynches, SC. These figures are not seasonally adjusted.

Area	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Preliminary
Clarendon	12,038	11,510	528	4.4%	Yes
Lee	6,489	6,202	287	4.4%	Yes
Sumter	41,269	39,518	1,751	4.2%	Yes
Kershaw	30,365	29,355	1,010	3.3%	Yes
Santee-Lynches	91,161	86,585	3,576	4.0%	Yes
South Carolina	2,453,684	2,371,078	82,606	3.4%	Yes

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

Mr. Jackson stated that the chart above shows Area Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment data reported by each county in the region. He reported updated numbers for the month of January for unemployment: Clarendon County’s unemployment rate is 4.4%; Lee County’s is at 4.4%; Sumter County’s is 4.2%; and Kershaw County’s is 3.3%. Santee-Lynches is 4.0%; the State is 3.4%.

Chart 3: Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Distribution Table (January 2024)

Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Distribution Table

The table below shows the workforce development areas with the highest preliminary unemployment rate in South Carolina for January 2024. These figures are not seasonally adjusted.

Rank	Area	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Preliminary
1	Waccamaw	193,322	184,715	8,607	4.5%	Yes
2	Lower Savannah	127,628	122,407	5,221	4.1%	Yes
3	Santee-Lynches	90,161	86,585	3,576	4.0%	Yes
4	Pee Dee	152,652	146,675	5,977	3.9%	Yes
5	Upper Savannah	111,124	107,153	3,971	3.6%	Yes
6	Upstate	193,726	187,115	6,611	3.4%	Yes
7	Catawba	210,385	203,203	7,182	3.4%	Yes
8	Worklink	189,039	183,044	5,995	3.2%	Yes
9	Lowcountry	117,610	113,854	3,756	3.2%	Yes
10	Midlands	371,295	359,647	11,648	3.1%	Yes
11	Greenville	267,705	259,582	8,123	3.0%	Yes
12	Trident	429,035	417,099	11,936	2.8%	Yes

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

Santee-Lynches currently ranks third at a 4.0% unemployment rate. Mr. Jackson also stated that the highest rate was obtained by Waccamaw at 4.5% and the lowest was Trident at 2.8%.

Chart 4: Area Profile Employers by Number of Job Openings Table (March 12, 2024)

Area Profile for Santee-Lynches, SC

Employers by Number of Job Openings Table

The table below shows the employers with the highest number of job openings advertised online in Santee-Lynches, SC on March 12, 2024 (Jobs De-duplication Level 2<i aria-hidden="true" class="" far fa-external-link-alt fa-fw"></i>Opens in New window).

Rank	Employer Name	Job Openings
1	Prisma Health	126
2	Integral Federal, Inc.	84
3	Kershaw County School District	49
4	Integral Consulting Services, Inc.	42
5	Clarendon County School District	38
6	City of Sumter, SC	32
7	Lee County School District	29
8	McDonald's Corporation	28
9	Morris College	28
10	Central Carolina Technical College	27

Source: Online advertised jobs data

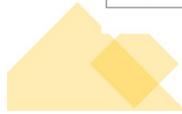


Chart 4 lists the top ten Employers by Number of Job Openings in our region through March 12, 2024. Mr. Jackson highlighted that 50% of job opportunities are in the education field. Prisma Health has 126 job openings, Integral Federal Inc. (Contractor on Shaw) has 84 job openings, Kershaw County School District has 49 job openings, and Integral Consulting Services has 42 job openings. This chart helps when talking to clients about companies that are hiring.

Job Fairs

Mr. Jackson provided an update on Job Fairs recently held in the region along with On the Floor Hiring events:

Job Fairs:

- Sumter Adult Education (Career Fair 2024) – February 29, 2024: 15 Employers, 6 Community Resources, 26 Jobseekers
- Kershaw County Spring into Work Job Fair – March 7, 2024: 11 Employers, 6 Community Resources, 31 Jobseekers (7 Veterans)
- SC Works Rural Connections Hiring Event and Workshop – March 13, 2024: 7 Employers, 6 Community Resources, and 7 Job Seekers

Employer On-the-Floor Hiring Events:

- Pilgrim's – 6 Jobseekers
- Pacesetter Personnel Services – 3 Jobseekers
- Diversified Maintenance – 12 Jobseekers
- SC Department of Corrections – 6 Jobseekers

Upcoming Job/Career Fairs:

- Second Chance Job Fair – April 18, 2024 from 9am – 2pm at the North Hope Center in Sumter. Sc Legal Services will be onsite conducting Expungement Workshops
- Shaw's Military & Family Readiness and Education Center's 2024 Education & Career Fair – June 18, 2024 from 10am-2pm at Shaw AFB

Upcoming Employer On-the-Floor Hiring Events:

- Pilgrim's, Pacesetter Personnel Services, Comfort Keepers, and Diversified Maintenance.

WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Program Report

Ms. Deidre Smalls presented the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth Program Report for July 1, 2023, through March 13, 2024.

Adult/Dislocated Worker

Chart 1: Total Active Adult/Dislocated Worker Enrollments

New- 80 Actual- 156 Goal- 185

Chart 2: Received Training

Received Training - 61

Training was primarily provided in the Healthcare and Transportation sectors: Clinical Medical Assistant, Patient Care and CDL Training were the predominant training fields trained in.

Chart 3: Performance Outcome Updates

Adult/DW Credentials - 80 Measurable Skill Gain - 233

Ms. Smalls explained again what a Measurable Skills Gain is and how an individual can earn multiple gains at different points in their participation in the program.

Adult Program Highlight

Ms. Kimberly Otten

Ms. Otten enrolled into the WIOA Adult Program in May 2023 seeking assistance with employment and medical training. Ms. Otten was unemployed and a mother of four children. She attended Professional Development & Training Services for Medical Assistant Training. After graduating from the training course, Ms. Otten obtained fulltime employment with Low Country Urgent Care in Camden, employed as a Certified Medical Assistant making \$16.00 per hour with fulltime benefits.

Youth

Chart 4: Total Active Youth Enrollments

New – 50 Actual- 84 Goal- 142

Ms. Smalls explained that they are at approximately 60% of the Youth enrollment goal. Staff continue to recruit and work with our Adult Education partners to enroll new participants.

Chart 5: Received Training

Received Training - 28

Ms. Small stated that currently 28 individuals have received training and based on the chart, the medical industry has the largest training areas with Patient Care Technician at 53%.

Chart 6: Performance Outcomes Updates

Youth Credential - 61 Measurable Skills Gain – 171 WEX/OJT – 20 Resumes created/updated - 79
Career Smart - 48 Adult Education - 12

Youth Program Highlight

Ms. Keyonna Burris

Ms. Burris enrolled into the WIOA Youth Program in April 2023 seeking assistance with obtaining her GED and medical training. Ms. Burris was unemployed and a high school dropout. Ms. Burris earned her GED on May 10, 2023 and completed Patient Care Technician training program in January 2024. Obtained fulltime employment at Karesh Long Term Care & Rehab in Camden, SC. She’s now employed as a Certified Nursing Assistant, making \$16.50 per hour with full-time benefits.

Financial Report

Mr. Esmonde Levy, Workforce and Economic Development Manager, presented the Financial Report for Program Year 2023 through February 29, 2024:

Chart 1: Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Total Percent Expended

Eckerd Adult – 49.10% (YTD: \$157,225; Balance: \$162,775)

Eckerd DW – 43.30% (YTD: \$43,292; Balance: \$56,708)

Eckerd Youth - 57.40% (YTD: \$229,477; Balance: \$170,523)

Chart 2: Engage, Build, and Serve Total Percent Expended

Mr. Levy informed the Board that the Engage, Build and Serve Grants has been closed out. One hundred percent (100%) of both Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth grants have been expended.

IX. Other Business: WIOA Eligible Training Provider Program – Board Approval (M)

Mrs. Freda Amerson, Workforce Development Operations Coordinator, presented to the Board for approval a new training provider program offered by Coding Clarified from Dalton Gardens, Idaho: Professional Medical Coding Classes (online) in the amount of \$4,999. Vice-Chairman Lemmon called for a motion to approve the request to approve Professional Medical Coding Training offered by Coding Clarified. **Mr. Bob Edwards made the motion and it was seconded by Mr. Berri Outlaw and passed.** There being no discussion, Vice-Chairman Lemmon called for the vote. **All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

X. Chairman’s Comments

Ms. Areatha Clark, Deputy Executive Director, and Workforce Development Director opened the floor for any other comments along with Vice-Chairman Gail Lemmon. Chairman Bob Edwards thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He did a recap on a information provided on the TAA program and asked a few additional questions of Ms. Thompson. Ms. Thompson replied to all questions and also provided additional information at Vice-Chairman Gail Lemmon’s request. Ms. Clark agreed to send out Ms. Thompson’s contact information along with the handouts presented to the Board.

X1. Adjournment

The Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board of Directors’ meeting was adjourned at 6:02 PM.

Recorded by,

Shala Dinkins, Administrative Assistant I-PR,
Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments