SANTEE-LYNCHES
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, December 3, 2024
Via Zoom

MINUTES

Members Present:
Robert Edwards (Chairman), Gail Lemmon (Vice-Chairman), Dr. Vanessa Canty, Paige Clack, John Hornsby, Calvin Leiter, Tad McIntosh, Kari Middleton, Berri Outlaw, Emily Peele, Kanzora Robinson, Kim Smith

Members Absent:
Lynn Blizzard, JoAnn Eaddy (excused), Charles "Scottie" Hayes, Celeste Taylor, Virginia Pryor, Teresa Justice, Samuel Lowery, Tiffany Myers, Heather Waddell, Dr. William Wright, Jr.

Workforce Development/COG Staff Present:
Areatha Clark, SLRCOG Deputy Executive Director, Workforce Development Director
Freda Amerson, SLRCOG Workforce Development Operations Coordinator
Steve Berger, SLCOG Business Services Lead
Dennis Cyphers, SLCOG Executive Director
Linda Jackson, SLRCOG Administration Director
Esmonde Levy, SLRCOG Government Services Director

Guests:
Stacie Bitondo, 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
Valencia Alexander, Sr. Operations Director, Eckerd Connects – Workforce Development
Margarita Servance, Lead Career Coach, Eckerd Connects – Workforce Development
Mac Young – SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department - Camden
Brenda Gardner, Regional Workforce Advisor, SC Department of Employment and Workforce

I. Welcome and Call to Order
Chairman Bob Edwards called the Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board of Directors Meeting to order at 5:02PM. A quorum was present.

II. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance
Ms. Areatha Clark, Deputy Executive Director/Workforce Development Director provided the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Introduction of Guests and New Board Members
Ms. Areatha Clark introduced guests, staff and new Board Members Tad McIntosh (Bicycle Corporation of America – BCA) and Kari Middleton (Central Carolina Technical College.

IV. Adoption of Agenda – (M)

Chairman Bob Edwards called for a motion to adopt the agenda. **A motion was made by Ms. Kim Smith and seconded by Mr. John Hornsby.** There being no discussion, Chairman Edwards called for the vote. **All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

V. Approval of Minutes – October 22, 2024 (M)

Chairman Bob Edwards called for a motion to approve the minutes of October 22, 2024. **A motion was made by Mr. John Hornsby and seconded by Ms. Paige Clack. There being no discussion, Chairman Edwards called for the vote. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

VI. Special Presentation

Ms. Breanda Gardner, Regional Workforce Advisor for the SC Department of Employment and Workforce stated that they have been successful with their efforts to connect business and education to our future workforce. In the past year and a half, Regional Workforce Advisors transitioned to the SC Department of Employment and Workforce, leading to exciting developments. They recently awarded BMW with the State Workforce Champion Award and launched Operation Space Talk South Carolina, allowing students to communicate with astronauts on the International Space Station. With collaborations from community partners and STEM education initiatives, they are shaping the profile of our future South Carolina graduates. on. This project involved collaboration with community partners and STEM lessons for participating schools. In the Santee-Lynches region, Hillcrest Middle School participated out of 4 middle schools. The agency is proud of the progress that has been made in preparing our students for successful careers. Ms. Gardner highlighted recent school events. Held was a successful space talk with eighth graders and a manufacturing expo with great business participation. The Career Technology Expo was also a hit, with hands-on activities and engaging business partners. Staff are looking forward to more opportunities for our students in 2025 and are open to any suggestions for future partnerships. Ms. Gardner thanked the Board for their support and input as we continue providing enriching experiences for our young people.

VII. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Dennis Cypher reported the proposed WIOA reauthorization of 2024 introduces significant changes impacting South Carolina's local workforce development boards. These changes include a 50% training mandate, supportive services allowance, Eligible Training Provider Lists modifications, increased state-level funding, new accountability measures, enhanced data collection, industry partnerships promotion, and skills-based hiring encouragement. These changes may disproportionately impact rural areas through LWDA consolidation, reduced resources, harm to small businesses, potential inequitable service delivery, and limited local flexibility.

VIII. Reports

SC Works Operator Report

Mr. Ray Jackson, SC Works Operator/Center Manager, presented the SC Works Center Report for July 1, 2024, through November 18, 2024.

Chart 1: Santee- Lynches Center Traffic

SC Works' Center Report

Santee-Lynches

Date range: 07/01/2024 - 11/18/2024

Center Traffic

Office	Individuals	%	Veterans
Sumter Center	4,871	75.68%	329
Camden Center	1,397	24.32%	105
Office	**Individuals**	**%**	**Veterans**
Total:	6,268	100.00%	434

Mr. Jackson reported that for both centers combined, 6,268 individuals came into the centers for services through the date reported. Of that number, 434 identified themselves as veterans.

Chart 2: Area Profile for Santee- Lynches, SC

Mr. Jackson provided a synopsis of the unemployment rates for October 2024 in our region, noting that the State of South Carolina stands at 4.7%, the region at 5.7%; Sumter County was at 6.0%, Kershaw County was at 4.8%, Clarendon County was at 6.3%, and Lee County was at 6.8%. There has been a slight increase in unemployment rates compared to the previous month of September. Hopefully we can strive to work together to bring these numbers back down.

Area Profile for Santee-Lynches, SC

Area Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Data Table

The table below shows the monthly not seasonally adjusted Labor Force, Employment, and Unemployment data for Santee-Lynches, SC in October 2024.

Area	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
South Carolina	2,531,314	2,413,189	118,125	4.7%
Santee-Lynches	93,471	88,155	5,316	5.7%
Sumter	42,983	40,402	2,581	6.0%
Kershaw	31,355	29,854	1,501	4.8%
Clarendon	12,389	11,611	778	6.3%
Lee	6,744	6,288	456	6.8%

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

Chart 3: Unemployment Rate by County (Not Seasonally Adjusted) Map

Mr. Jackson provided a map that reflects the unemployment rate by county for the State of South Carolina. The Santee Lynches region is highlighted in green compared to other regions. The highest unemployment rate fluctuated between 7.4% in Orangeburg to 8.5% in Marlboro. Factors such as weather and tropical storms impacted employment in October. Hopefully, with the holiday season approaching and more seasonal employment becoming available, we will see a drop in the unemployment rate.

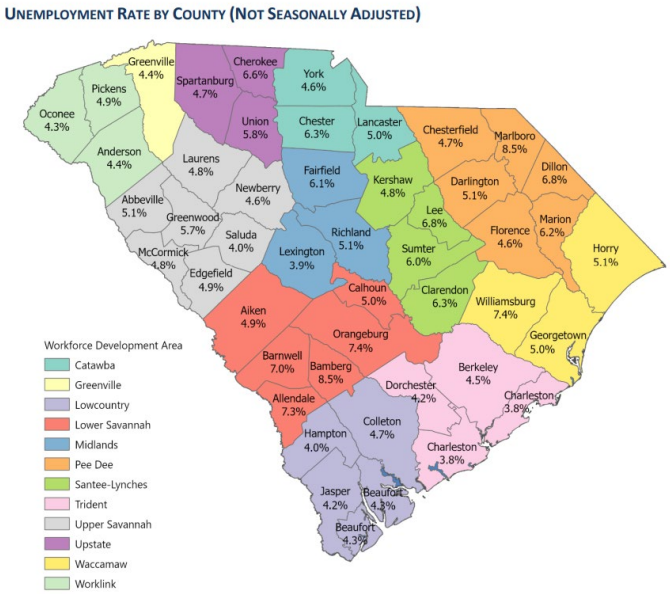

Chart 4: Hiring Events

Mr. Jackson reported on the successful November events at the SC Works Centers. Mr. Berri Outlaw added that staff have hosted several companies for workforce development in honor of Veterans Month. Despite the low turnout of 28 job seekers, 11 of whom were veterans, we received positive feedback from participating employers. We are now focusing on improving event marketing to increase attendance, especially for veterans. 14 employers have expressed interest in following up and potentially offering employment.

Chart 5: Get Rolling with a Hassle- Free Commute

Mr. Jackson reported on the importance of transportation for job seekers, while highlighting Santee-Wateree RTA's new extended route down Hwy 521 to Continental Tires. Ms. Emily Peele shared the progress of the route to Continental. She emphasized the need for increased participation by their workers. Ms. Clark shared that there are plans to expand the project to other counties with support from local corporations like Coca-Cola in Bishopville. This initiative aims to address transportation barriers and improve access to employment opportunities. Exciting progress is being made towards serving all four counties effectively.

Get Rolling with a Hassle-Free Commute

Continental

ROUTE 52 - 521 Express (Continental Tires | eVAC)

Stop Name	Bus Stop #	Monday - Friday												
JEC Intermodal Center	101	6:00	7:00	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S Main St | Caldwell St | Kimbrell's		6:01	7:01	8:01	9:01	10:01	11:01	12:01	13:01	14:01	15:01	16:01	17:01	18:01
Manning Ave | Bracey Plaza | Family Dollar	502	6:03	7:03	8:03	9:03	10:03	11:03	12:03	13:03	14:03	15:03	16:03	17:03	18:03
Manning Ave | Atlantic Ave		6:04	7:04	8:04	9:04	10:04	11:04	12:04	13:04	14:04	15:04	16:04	17:04	18:04
Manning Ave | across from South Sumter ART PARK		6:05	7:05	8:05	9:05	10:05	11:05	12:05	13:05	14:05	15:05	16:05	17:05	18:05
Manning Ave | Refuel		6:07	7:07	8:07	9:07	10:07	11:07	12:07	13:07	14:07	15:07	16:07	17:07	18:07
Manning Ave | W Patricia Dr | Young's	513	6:08	7:08	8:08	9:08	10:08	11:08	12:08	13:08	14:08	15:08	16:08	17:08	18:08
Manning Ave | across from Misty Ridge | Bracey Square		6:09	7:09	8:09	9:09	10:09	11:09	12:09	13:09	14:09	15:09	16:09	17:09	18:09
Manning Ave | J & L Restaurant		6:15	7:15	8:15	9:15	10:15	11:15	12:15	13:15	14:15	15:15	16:15	17:15	18:15
eVAC Magnetics		6:16	7:16	8:16	9:16	10:16	11:16	12:16	13:16	14:16	15:16	16:16	17:16	18:16
US-521 | Dollar General		6:20	7:20	8:20	9:20	10:20	11:20	12:20	13:20	14:20	15:20	16:20	17:20	18:20
Continental Tires		6:25	7:25	8:25	9:25	10:25	11:25	12:25	13:25	14:25	15:25	16:25	17:25	18:25
Manning Ave | Misty Ridge | Bracey Square		6:30	7:30	8:30	9:30	10:30	11:30	12:30	13:30	14:30	15:30	16:30	17:30	18:30
Manning Ave | E Patricia Dr | across from Young's		6:31	7:31	8:31	9:31	10:31	11:31	12:31	13:31	14:31	15:31	16:31	17:31	18:31
Manning Ave | Brent St | across from Refuel		6:32	7:32	8:32	9:32	10:32	11:32	12:32	13:32	14:32	15:32	16:32	17:32	18:32
Manning Ave | South Sumter ART PARK		6:35	7:35	8:35	9:35	10:35	11:35	12:35	13:35	14:35	15:35	16:35	17:35	18:35
Manning Ave | Jehovah Baptist Child Development	517	6:36	7:36	8:36	9:36	10:36	11:36	12:36	13:36	14:36	15:36	16:36	17:36	18:36
Manning Ave | South Sumter Resource Center		6:37	7:37	8:37	9:37	10:37	11:37	12:37	13:37	14:37	15:37	16:37	17:37	18:37
Bus Stop - Caldwell St		6:39	7:39	8:39	9:39	10:39	11:39	12:39	13:39	14:39	15:39	16:39	17:39	18:39
JEC Intermodal Center	101	6:40	7:40	8:40	9:40	10:40	11:40	12:40	13:40	14:40	15:40	16:40	17:40	18:40

SWRTA Fare Information
- Standard Fare: $1.00 per ride (Children 6 and under ride free).
- Reduced Fare: $0.50 per ride for:
  - Seniors (65+ with ID)
  - Medicare cardholders (with photo ID)
  - Veterans (with military ID)
- Free Fare Fridays: Free rides on all fixed and commuter routes every Friday.
- Veterans: Ride free on fixed and commuter routes with an SWRTA-issued ID.

Note: Exact change is required. For details, accommodations or reduced fare applications, contact SWRTA at (803) 775-9347 or www.swrta.com.

TRACK THE BUS LIVE
SEARCH THE APP STORE FOR SanteeBus
Stay up-to-date!
Track route schedules, receive alerts and plan your trip all in real-time.

WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Performance Reports

Ms. Margarita Servance presented the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Program Report for July 1, 2024, through November 18, 2024.

Adult/Dislocated Worker Programs

Chart 1: PY'24 Total Active Adult/DW Enrollments

- New – 63
- Actual -123
- Goal - 156

Chart 2: Received Training:

- Adults/DW – 27

Healthcare remains the dominant area for training.

Chart 3: Performance Outcomes Update

- Credentials - 24
- Measurable Skills Gains - 99

Adult Program Highlight

Ms. Laquasha Fleming- Miller

Mr. Laquasha Fleming-Miller enrolled into the WIOA Program in July 2023 as low income and basic skills deficient. She completed Clinical Medical Assistance Training at Professional Medical Training Center. Ms. Fleming-Miler passed her CMA certification exam on July 2, 2024 and obtained full-time employment at McLeod Physician Associates on August 26, 2024 as a Clinical Medical Assistant making $17/hour with benefits.

Youth Program

Chart 4: Total Active Youth Enrollments

- New – 27
- Actual – 58
- Goal- 130

Ms. Servance briefly discussed the challenges with recruiting and enrolling Out-of-School Youth.

Chart 5: Received Training

- Youth - 10

Ms. Servance stated all training programs attended under the Youth program thus far were in the medical field.

Chart 6: Performance Outcomes Updates

Youth Credential - 15 Measurable Skills Gain – 50 WEX/OJT – 4 Resumes created/updated - 21
Career Smart – 13 Adult Education - 5

Youth Program Highlight

Ms. Jahmaya Williams

Ms. Jahmaya Williams enrolled into the WIOA Youth Program in April 2024 seeking supportive services while obtaining her GED. She graduated for Kershaw County Adult Education on May 30,2024 and enrolled into the accounting program at Central Carlina Technical College on August 16, 2024, while continuing to work part-time.

Financial Report

Mr. Areatha Clark, SLRCOG Deputy Executive Director & Workforce Development Director presented the Financial Report for Program Year 2024 through 10/30/2024:

Chart 1: Total Percent Expended for PY'24

Eckerd Adult – 16.1% (YTD: $51,556; Balance: $268,444)
Eckerd DW – 21.6% (YTD: $21,623; Balance: $78,377)
Eckerd Youth – 21.1% (YTD: $84,583; Balance: $315,417)
Eckerd SC Works Operator – 30.2% (YTD: $39,286; Balance: $90,714)

Chart 2: Individual and Employer Training (IET) Grant

Ms. Clark reported that for the Individual and Employer Training (IET) grant we have spent YTD: $109,206 (95.4%); leaving a balance of $5,301. This grant has ended.

Chart 3: Planning & Development Grant

Ms. Clark also reported that for the Planning and Development Grant (PAD) we have spent YTD: $2,182 (15.10%); leaving a balance of $12,318. This grant is designed to fund training (staff training and development for staff and board members), strategic planning, local planning, etc.

IX. New Business:

WIOA Eligible Training Provider and Program Approval (MOTION)
Ms. Freda Amerson, Workforce Development Operations Coordinator, presented information on a new training provider, Pee Dee Medical Career Training Center from Lake City, who has submitted programs for clinical medical assistant, certified nursing assistant, phlebotomy technician, and EKG technician. Staff is seeking approval from the Board to add them to our list of eligible training providers. **Chairman Edwards called for a motion to approve Pee Dee Medical Career Training Center and it recommended programs for the Santee-Lynches Eligible Training Provider List. The motion was made by Ms. Kim Smith and seconded by Ms. Gail Lemon. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

Program Years 2024-2027 – Regional And Local Plans
Ms. Clark reported that WIOA requires the Governor to designate LWDAs and identify planning regions consisting of one or more local workforce development areas. Each local workforce development board (LWDB) is responsible for developing a local plan in partnership with the chief elected official(s) (CEO) every four years. Additionally, LWDBs and CEOs are required to engage in a regional planning process that results in the development of a regional plan that incorporates the local plans within the region – in this instance, the Greater Pee Dee region. The regional and local plans serve as a four-year action plan to develop, align, and integrate service delivery strategies and to support South Carolina's vision and strategic and operational goals. Ms. Clark stated that a copy of both plans will be sent to the Board in approximately a week to 10 days for review and feedback. She added that both plans are due to the State by January 15, 2025.

SC Works and Youth Committees Board Member Recruitment
Ms. Clark stated that we are actively recruiting board members to serve on either the SC Works Committee or Youth Committee. She indicated that she would send to the Board information on both committees to assist with the process and to engage interest in board members serving on one of them. She added that If a board member is not already serving on a committee, to please consider joining one.

X. Other Business - N/A

XI. Chairman's Comments
Chairman Edwards expressed his gratitude for the brevity and professionalism of the Workforce Development Board meeting. He thanked all attendees for their participation and valuable contributions. Their presence and contributions were greatly appreciated.

XII. Adjourn
The Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board of Directors' meeting was adjourned at 6:04PM.

Recorded by,

Shala Dinkins, Administration Assistant
Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments