



SANTEE-LYNCHES WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, January 28, 2025

Via Zoom

MINUTES

Members Present:

Robert Edwards (Chairman), Gail Lemmon (Vice-Chairman), Lynn Blizzard, Dr. Vanessa Canty, JoAnn Eaddy, John Hornsby, Calvin Leiter, Tad McIntosh, Kari Middleton, Tiffany Myers, Berri Outlaw, Emily Peele, Kanzora Robinson, Dr. Ora Spann, Heather Waddell, Dr. William Wright, Jr.

Members Absent:

Paige Clack (excused), Charles “Scottie” Hayes, Kim Smith, Celeste Taylor, Virginia Pryor, Teresa Justice

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
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
Margarita Servance, Lead Career Coach, Eckerd Connects – Workforce Development
Brandon Wilkerson – SC Department of Employment and Workforce
Dr. Bryan Grady – SC Department of Employment and Workforce
Brenda Gardner, Regional Workforce Advisor, SC Department of Employment and Workforce

I. Welcome and Call to Order

On behalf of Chairman Bob Edwards, Vice-Chairman Gail Lemmon called the Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board of Directors Meeting to order at 5:06PM. 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 Member Dr. Ora Spann (Executive Director - SC Rural Community & Workforce Development, Inc.).

IV. Adoption of Agenda – (M)

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

V. Approval of Minutes – December 3, 2024 (M)

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

VI. Special Presentation

Potential Labor Market Impacts of Artificial Intelligence – Mr. Brandon Wilkerson presented to the Board an analysis on the labor market impact of artificial intelligence, focusing on how it may affect various sectors, including manufacturing, retail, and transportation. His research suggested that job roles involving repetition and predictability are at higher risk of automation, while those requiring dynamic decision-making are less vulnerable. As South Carolina has significant employment in the vulnerable sectors, it is essential to prepare for potential disruptions by implementing strategies outlined in their proposed AI playbook. The playbook aims to guide businesses in navigating the changes brought by AI, ensuring a smooth transition and preparation for the emergence of higher-paying, higher-skilled job opportunities. Mr. Wilkerson encouraged everyone to work together to embrace the advancements of AI and thrive in its evolving landscape. He added that the implementation of early warning triggers to identify jobs and industries most affected by AI is crucial. By utilizing projections, we can pinpoint refuge jobs that are not susceptible to AI, enabling us to guide individuals to more secure employment opportunities. Additionally, we can develop a game plan to address job losses within specific groups, with a focus on enhancing our job center services and providing specialized training for staff to assist those most affected. Moving forward, we can adjust triage policies for resume selection and offer on-site placement services to help individuals transition into new roles. Our goal is to mitigate the impact of AI on job sectors and ensure the public is informed about our efforts in protecting and enhancing job opportunities.

A brief discussion was held regarding the potential impact of AI on various sectors, particularly manufacturing and education. The manufacturing sector was seen as less likely to be impacted by AI, while the education sector was already integrating AI into its operations. The use of AI in call centers and customer service was also discussed, with the possibility of AI replacing human representatives. The meeting also touched on the need for workforce policies and employee policies to adapt to the increasing relevance of AI.

VII. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Dennis Cypher informed the Board about the incorporation of AI technology into various aspects of our daily operations. Technology is increasingly becoming relevant in our workforce and employee policies, prompting the need for us to consider its implications. It was noted that AI is heavily integrated into student learning at Clemson University, indicating a shift in the skillset of future graduates entering the workforce.

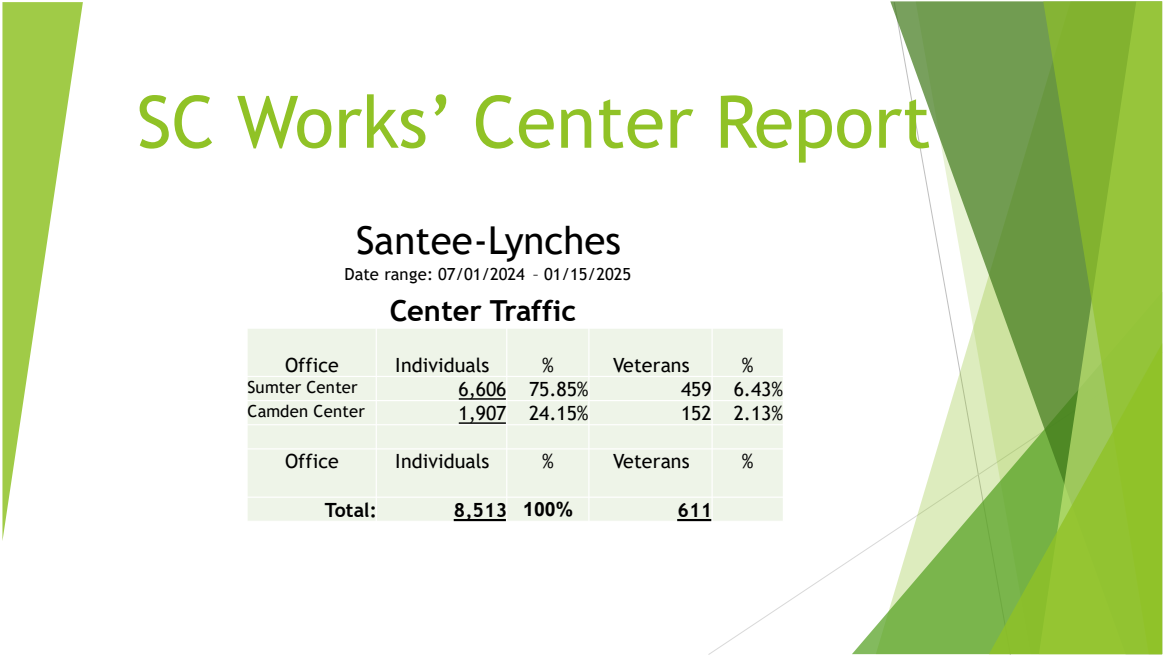
Additionally, an update was given on the status of the continuing resolution bill in Congress, with no major changes reported. We will continue to monitor the progress in the 119th Congress and assess any potential impact on our operations.

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 January 15, 2025.

Chart 1: Santee- Lynches Center Traffic



Mr. Jackson reported that for both centers combined, 8,513 individuals came into the centers for services through the date reported. Of that number, 611 identified themselves as veterans.

Chart 2: Individual and Employer Services

Summary	Total
INDIVIDUAL AND TOTAL SERVICES	
Individuals that Registered	
10 - Santee-Lynches	1,097
Total number of Individuals that Registered	1,097
Individuals that Logged In	
10 - Santee-Lynches	3,508
Information Not Provided	15
Total number of Individuals that Logged In	3,523
Distinct Individuals Receiving Services	
10 - Santee-Lynches	4,932
Total number of Distinct Individuals Receiving Services	4,932
Services Provided to Individuals	
10 - Santee-Lynches	334,559
Total number of Services Provided to Individuals	334,559
Staff Assisted Referrals to Providers	
10 - Santee-Lynches	626
Total number of Staff Assisted Referrals to Providers	626

Mr. Jackson highlighted the number of services provided to job seekers and employers in the above chart.

Chart 3 Area Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Data

Mr. Jackson informed the Board he has received updated unemployment figures through December. The current chart compares the unemployment rates from November 2024 to November 2023.

Santee-Lynches, SC

Area Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Data

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

Area	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	November 2024	November 2023
				Unemployment Rate	Unemployment Rate
South Carolina	2,533,987	2,412,486	121,501	4.8%	2.9%
Santee-Lynches	92,806	87,488	5,318	5.7%	3.5%
Sumter	42,945	40,327	2,618	6.1%	3.7%
Kershaw	31,045	29,570	1,475	4.8%	2.9%
Clarendon	12,166	11,395	771	6.3%	3.7%
Lee	6,650	6,196	454	6.8%	3.8%

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

Updated figures for December 2024 are as follows: - Santee Lynches region: 4.8% - Sumter: 5.2% - Kershaw: 4.0% - Clarendon: 6.3% - Lee: 5.3% These figures indicate a positive trend, with most regions experiencing a decrease in unemployment rates. This update is promising news for our organization.

Chart 4: Unemployment Rate by County (Not Seasonally Adjusted) Map

Mr. Jackson provided a map that reflected the unemployment rate for November 2024 by county for the State of South Carolina. The Santee Lynches region is highlighted in green compared to other regions.

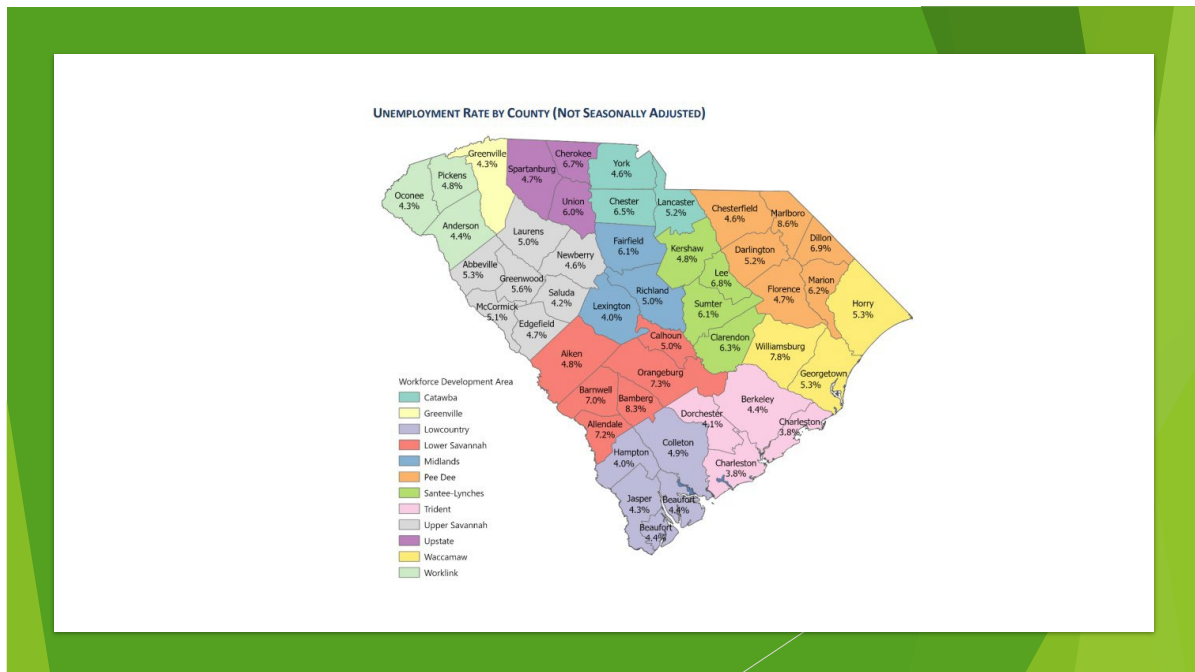


Chart 5: Employers by Number of Job Openings Table

Rank	Employer Name	Job Openings
1	Trace Systems Inc.	140
2	Prisma Health	110
3	Semper Valens Solutions, Inc.	93
4	Kershaw County School District	47
5	McLeod Health	43
6	V2X	42
7	Food Lion	38
8	Lee County School District	30
9	Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores, Inc.	29
10	McDonald's Corporation	28
11	City of Sumter, SC	26
12	University of South Carolina	25
13	Morris College	24
14	Clarendon County School District	19
15	Kershaw County, SC	19
16	GovCIO	18
17	Dollar Tree, Inc.	17
18	Suppressed	17
19	HRB Digital LLC	16
20	Pilgrim's	16
21	Wendy's International, Inc.	15
22	BD	14
23	Medical University of South Carolina Medical Center	12
24	Thompson Construction Group, Inc.	12
25	Pilot Company	11

Chart 6: Hiring Events

Mr. Jackson updated Board members on the upcoming hiring events and job fairs for January and a portion of February. He stated that some of the events have already taken place, and unfortunately, Newbold Service and Foundever have canceled their events, to be rescheduled to another date. However, there is a significant event on the horizon - the Clarendon County job fair, scheduled for February 19th. This presents a great opportunity for jobseekers to network and potentially find new job prospects. It was also added that a Second Chance Job Fair is being planned for April 17th at the North Hope Center in Sumter.



Hiring Events/Job Fairs



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 January 15, 2025.

Adult/Dislocated Worker Programs

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

- New – 93
- Actual -153

- Goal - 156

Chart 2: Received Training:

- Adults/DW – 38

Healthcare remains the dominant area for training.

Chart 3: Performance Outcomes Update

- Credentials - 47
- Measurable Skills Gains - 157

Adult Program Highlight

Ms. Tameeka Chisolm

Ms. Tameeka Chisolm enrolled into the WIOA Adult program on March 1, 2024 being both basic skills deficient and unemployed. She completed soft skills training and began Patient Care Technician Training in May 2024, receiving assistance with tuition and additional supportive services. Tameeka successfully completed all 3 training courses earning her CNA, Phlebotomy and EKG national certifications. Ms. Chisolm began working as a C.N.A. at Karesh Long Term Care on August 2024, making \$15/hour.

Youth Program

Chart 4: Total Active Youth Enrollments

- New – 37
- Actual – 68
- Goal- 130

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

Chart 5: Received Training

- Youth - 12

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 - 19 Measurable Skills Gain – 59 WEX/OJT – 10 Resumes created/updated - 36
Career Smart – 26 Adult Education - 6

Youth Program Highlight

Ms. Savannah Mahoney

Ms. Savannah Mahoney enrolled into the WIOA youth program in April 2024 seeking supportive services while attending Adult Education classes in Sumter with the goal of obtaining her GED. Despite being low-income and basic skills deficient, her dedication and efforts led to her successfully passing her GED exam in December 2024. Savannah is continuing to work with her Career Coach and is completing Virtual Work Experience to build valuable customer service skills, increase job market readiness and other softs skills which will help her to continue her career development.

Financial Report

Mr. Areatha Clark, SLRCOG Deputy Executive Director & Workforce Development Director presented the Financial Report for Program Year 2024 through 12/31/2024:

Chart 1: Total Percent Expended for PY'24

Eckerd Adult – 34.0% - (YTD: \$108,916; Balance: \$211,084)

Eckerd DW – 32.3% - (YTD: \$32,324; Balance: \$67,676)

Eckerd Youth – 34.2% - (YTD: \$136,937; Balance: \$263,063)

Eckerd SC Works Operator – 46.0% - (YTD: \$59,745; Balance: \$70,255)

Chart 2: Planning & Development Grant

Ms. Clark also reported that for the Planning and Development Grant (PAD) we have spent YTD: \$5, 857 (40.40%); leaving a balance of \$8,643. This grant is designed to fund training (staff training and development for staff and board members), strategic planning, local planning, etc.

IX. New Business: N/A

X. Other Business - N/A

XI. Chairman's Comments

Chairman Edwards expressed his gratitude to the staff and Workforce Board members for their engagement in the meeting. He thanked the presenter and all attendees for their participation and valuable contributions.

XII. Adjourn

The Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board of Directors' meeting was adjourned at 5.58PM.

Recorded by,

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