



SANTEE-LYNCHES
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Virtual Youth Committee Meeting via Zoom
Monday, August 17, 2020 – 10:00 AM

Minutes

Youth Committee Members Present: Calvin Hastie, Sr., Chairman, Barbara Brown, Brenda Gardner, Ramona Lies, Veronica Robinson

Youth Committee Members Absent: Corp. Fred Brantley, Melina Hodges, Sharon Teigue, Valencia Gray-Williams

Staff Present:

Areatha Clark, Deputy Executive Director/Chief, Workforce Development
Esmonde Levy, Workforce Development Manager
Freda Amerson, Workforce Development Coordinator
Steve Berger, SC Works Business Services Lead
Becky Minegar, Santee-Lynches RCOG Administrative Assistant II

Guests:

Caroline Rogerson – Eckerd Connects - Workforce Development (Youth)

I. Call to Order, Welcome & Introduction

Chairman Calvin Hastie called the Santee-Lynches Workforce Development Board's (WBD) Youth Committee meeting to order at 10:08 AM and welcomed everyone.

II. Youth Performance Update

Ms. Caroline Rogerson, Eckerd Connects - Workforce Development, reviewed their Youth Performance Report for PY'20 through July 21, 2020. Ms. Rogerson stated the youth team has started off strong and have had some staffing changes over the last year.

Ms. Rogerson reviewed the Active Caseload: Clarendon County – 33, Kershaw County – 9, Lee County – 3, and Sumter County – 16. Ms. Rogerson indicated in Clarendon they have seen more word of mouth participants coming in than from GED classes which is the opposite for Sumter. She further indicated with classes not being in full swing due to the pandemic have impacted enrollment of GED participants. They have had to find other avenues, such as social media, to get participants for enrollments. High school dropouts are low with 5 in Clarendon County and 9 in Sumter County.

Basic Skills Deficient numbers are higher than they have been seen in the past, Clarendon County – 30, Kershaw County – 7, Lee County – 2 and Sumter County - 2. This is due to the change in the TABE testing, which is harder than in the past. Ms. Rogerson stated she took a section of the TABE test and it was very difficult. Ms. Rogerson continued they are working with unemployed participants to place them on Work Experience.

A discussion ensued concerning the caseload numbers for each county and why the big difference with Clarendon County. Ms. Rogerson explained that in Clarendon County participants have shown interest through word of mouth while Lee and Sumter County participants usually come from Adult Ed. She explained they have struggled getting participants in Kershaw County. They have had reverse referrals from training providers and are waiting to get these individuals into Adult Ed for TABE testing prior to enrollment. It was then discussed that due to the pandemic, there has been a disruption to our education system; which Clarendon County seems to be more successful in the nontraditional word of mouth, whereas Sumter and Kershaw County being more structured and dependent on Adult Ed. Ms. Areatha Clark added we now must look at nontraditional avenues to get participants enrolled, such as virtual platforms, social media, snap chat, etc. Ms. Brenda Gardner suggested having the provider join in a virtual meeting with the Career Specialist in the high schools. This year students have graduated and because of the pandemic they are unaware of what to do next. She further stated having someone from Eckerd talk with the Career Specialist again about their program. Ms. Gardner will be providing Eckerd contacts for the high schools in the region.

Ms. Rogerson then reviewed Work Ready Services: Work Experience – 7; she stated they have placed participants at Bicycle Corporation of America in Manning, Caterpillar, a virtual Work Experience with a health care provider doing more on the administrative side, Humane Society and a mechanic in Kershaw County. Career Smart – 7 - the participants meet with the career coaches via Zoom. Ms. Rogerson indicated the participants seem to be more engaged with the online platform. She then stated they have had several students go to Central Carolina Technical College for forklift training. This was a Hybrid course where students did virtual training and then came into the classroom at FE Dubose for the 2-hour driving portion.

Performance Outcomes reviewed: 34 Measurable Skill Gains, 0 GEDs & Diplomas, 16 Occupational Credentials, and 6 Placements. Ms. Rogerson reported they have had 11 individuals enter training with 4 individuals currently active. Those currently active are in welding and administrative medical assistant training at Florence Darlington Technical College.

Ms. Rogerson then shared a youth success story:

Autumn Wells was described by her career coach through the following quote by Julieanne O'Connor, "Powerful people come in all packages, Sometimes unpredictable and unsuspecting packages. Each with their own priorities, dreams, challenges, gifts to give, and journey." "Autumn has something powerful in her package. From our first encounter, it was clear she wanted to be a welder, and not just any welder-one of the be best welders. She was striving for independence and to be a greater support for her mother. While attending welding training at Florence Darlington Technical College,

Autumn was working at Zaxby's and Walmart. She graduated from welding training at the top of her class, and because she came early and stayed late, she was able to finish training earlier than her peers. Her priorities were clearly set. Following training, the opportunity to work at Honda as a welder became available. Autumn, a powerful, small, unpredictable, unsuspecting package is continuing on the journey to be one of the best welders out there.

Chairman Hastie announced he will be highlighting Ms. Wells in his next newsletter.

III. Financial Report

Mr. Esmonde Levy provided the Youth Financial Report thru June 30, 2020 of Program Year 2019: Mr. Levy provided an overall trend and a monthly trend in order to see the flow of last year. There have been some ups and downs with no real trend line. In speaking with Eckerd, they have come up with a plan to make these trends lines/peaks and valleys a more-steady flow.

A discussion ensued concerning the decline in March and April and will it continue to decline in the future. Mr. Levy stated we are now four months into telework and we have gotten a handle on things. He also added the career coaches, managers, and staff will be able to work through these hardships. Mr. Rogerson stated a lot of companies are opening back up which will increase the Work Experience numbers and training providers are also opening again with a Zoom option for training. Ms. Clark added Eckerd was asked toward the end of the program year to slow down on spending in April, May, and June so as to not overspend and overrun on their contract. In doing this, they were able to have carryover funds into the new fiscal year. Their total Contract Amount - \$500,000; Actual Expenditures - \$462,413.81; Balance - \$37,586.19. Ms. Clark stated due to budget cuts this year, two of the Eckerd Youth Career Coaches will also be working with the Adult and Dislocated Worker program. By doing this, it will allow us to distribute cost through all these funding streams and allow us to do more with less dollars.

Mr. Levy then provided the Youth Financial Report thru July 31, 2020 for Program Year 2020: Total Contract Amount - \$460,000; Actual Expenditures - \$24,628.16; Balance - \$435,371.84. Ms. Rogerson added with companies opening back up this will increase their Work Experience opportunities and spending. She stated they have a lot of high school graduates ready to go to training.

IV. Other Business

Review of Structure and Purpose of the Committee

Mr. Levy indicated we are looking to revamp this committee to better serve the youth population in our Region. Ms. Brenda Gardner explained there is an Emerging Leaders program for high school juniors in Sumter and Lee Counties that teaches leadership programs and community involvement and after one year, with the curriculum, as seniors they are expected to serve on area boards and committees in an ex officio or advisory capacity. The students receive three hours of credit from USC Sumter as part of the Emerging Leader program. Ms. Gardner added it would be nice to have one or two youth from the program to sit on this committee, not in a voting capacity, but to give their perspective. Ms. Clark indicated in past years we had youth and parent participants on this committee.

A discussion ensued regarding the selection of the students for the Emerging Leaders program. Ms. Gardner explained there is an application process through the Career Specialist in each school in Sumter and Lee Counties. There is a committee made up of the partner entities who review the applications and pick the best student that would benefit the most from the program.

Recruitment of new Youth Committee Members – Possible candidates

- Youth from Emerging Leaders
- Parent(s)
- Career Specialist
- Fatherhood Coalition
- Solicitors Office – Bronwyn McElveen
- DSS – Jeannine Gamble
- DJJ

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

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