



## **West Piedmont Workforce Development Board Meeting**

### **Minutes**

**January 22, 2018**

Present: Julie Brown, Dick Ephgrave, Jim Daniel, Petrina Carter, Tim Clark, Tom Davis, Shannon Hair, Donna Higdon, Rhonda Hodges, John Moody, Tory Shepherd, Corrie Bobe, Tora Terry, Adam Wright, Stacey Wright and Guy Stanley

Guests Present: Natalie Hodge (Ross), Jason Everson (Ross), Allison Moore (DPC Chamber), Alexis Ehrhardt (DPC Chamber), Jenny Bolte (Pathways)

Staff Present: Robert Bencini, Alanna Nicholas, Robbin Hall, Aleighdrian Marshall, Tiffany Macklin, Tyler Freeland

Adam Wright, Chairman, called the meeting to order. Roll was called and quorum established.

Mr. Wright welcomed the new Executive Director, Robert Bencini, and all guests. He called for public comment and there was none. Mr. Bencini thanked Mr. Wright and Mr. Stanley, Interim Director, and all the welcoming him. He asked Allison Moore, Business Services for the Danville Pittsylvania County Chamber of Commerce to introduce their new Executive Director, Alexis Ehrhardt. Mr. Wright welcomed the two newest Board members: Donna Higdon from Davenport Energy and Shannon Hair from Danville Community College. Tory Shepherd from Sovah Health was absent.

Mr. Wright asked Board members to review the minutes of the November 6, 2017 meeting. Guy Stanley made a motion to approve the minutes; John Moody seconded; the motion passed.

Mr. Wright asked for consideration of the Consent Agenda. Julie Brown made a motion to remove the Rapid Response request of \$250,000 for closings of Pioneer Hospital and Shaw in Patrick County and Telvista and Kmart in Danville. Tim Clark seconded; the motion was unanimous. Mr. Bencini explained that the Finance Committee had discussed and approved this request based on the budget cut this program year and the fact that carryover money was used to cover the Ross Contract, this funding is needed to cover the increase in Dislocated Worker clients. Petrina Carter made a motion to approve the consent agenda with explanation; Guy Stanley seconded; the motion passed.

Natalie Hodge with Ross gave a performance update on the new Youth program LEAD, Leadership Exploration and Development, in Danville. It offers internships/work experiences with local employers at \$10/hour for a maximum of 500 hours. She invited Board members to attend the opening kickoff meeting on February 9 at The Institute. Ms. Hodge estimated 40 youth are eligible and already signed up. Their goal is 41. Ms. Hodge highlighted a success story from Martinsville of a CDL training client, who finished top of his class and is already placed in a job at a local company. Ms. Hodge informed that employers are needed for training and job placement and to provide contact information, so that Ross

can follow-up with them. Mr. Wright encouraged Board members to attend workshops and events on behalf of the Board. Ms. Higdon asked in what areas youth interns are being placed? Ms. Hodge explained that the LEAD program is for Danville and Pittsylvania County and that they are currently working on developing and implementing a youth internship/work experience program in Martinsville and Henry County. The 40 youth who are already signed up will be placed with employers in Danville and Pittsylvania County. Employers provide training, mentoring, and timesheets. The LEAD program includes workshops on soft skills, communications, financial literacy, and goal setting. Ms. Shepherd asked if there is a focus on in-demand occupations. Ms. Hodge replied that the in-demand occupations are always a focus and employer recruitment is focused on those training experiences.

Jenny Bolte, Pathways Project Manager, from New River Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board, explained the Pathways to the American Dream Promise Grant which includes Areas 1, 2, 3, and 17. She commended Area 17 for their hard work in working out issues in the beginning and getting on track now to help those prepare for middle skill occupations in three in demand industries of advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and information technology. She complimented our great attitude and informed that we are on target to meet and or exceed the year one goals. Tiffany Macklin, Area 17 Pathways Navigator, has done a great job bringing client needs to the table. Ms. Bolte explained that this is a four year project. She commended the Chambers' Business Services for their partnership in the project. Julie Brown asked if the clients have to be WIOA eligible. Ms. Bolte explained that WIOA eligibility is not required and that they must be able to work in the U.S. Stacey Wright complimented Ms. Bolte on her hard work. Ms. Bolte encouraged Board members to contact Ms. Macklin or the Board Office with potential referrals.

Mr. Bencini thanked Ms. Bolte for coming to Danville. He presented a financial overview explaining the sources of funds: Adult/Dislocated Worker/In School Youth/Out of School Youth/Pathways/Incumbent Worker Training Grant/Virginia Financial Success Network/Ride Solutions. He explained the Notice of Obligation (NOO) that is received from VCCS in October. Ms. Carter complimented Mr. Bencini on the explanation of a complicated subject.

## **Reports**

- Chair/Executive Committee (Adam Wright) – Mr. Wright attended the Governor's announcement of new branding program Virginia CareerWorks; Ms. Stacey Wright has a link that she will share with the Board that has the new logo.
- CLEO (Debra Buchanan) – No report
- Youth Council (Dick Ephgrave) – No report
- Audit (Tom Davis) – No report
- Finance (John Parkinson) – Mr. Stanley reported that the Finance Committee met on January 17; he complimented Ross for the development and implementation of a Youth Out of School program to spend the carryover money; he recognized that they are on target to meet/exceed Youth performance goals even though they lost the summer outreach due to staff transition.
- Governance (David Stone) – No report
- Marketing and ASR (Wayne Knox) – No report
- Program Planning & Development (Teresa Carter Fontaine) – Ms. Stacey Wright reported that they tabled the LifePush training provider application because it is a

soft skill program with no credential; Ms. Marshall, WIB Continuous Improvement Assistant, reported information for the State Monitoring Audit is due February 12 and the Audit is scheduled for March 5.

- Executive Director (Robert Bencini) – No other report

Old Business – None

New Business – Ms. Stacey Wright reported that State Modification Plans are due March 15. Mr. Bencini reported that Ms. Carter has accepted another position and will be leaving VEC in Danville. He thanked her for her service to the Board and wished her well in her new endeavors. Ms. Carter stated that she had enjoyed her service to the Board and that she believes with collaboration and teamwork, workforce in Area 17 is moving forward and turning a corner.

Guy Stanley made a motion to adjourn; Jim Daniel seconded. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 4:46 p.m.