Lowcountry Workforce Board – Meeting Minutes
WEDNESDAY, Jan 27, 2021 - 9:30 A.M.
Zoom Call

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Guests: Mark Williams (Ross), Tashia Harrison (Telamon) Melissa Rodgers (DEW)
Dr. Murrell (Bft AD Ed) Cynthia Harned (SCCB) Alison Kitler (SCVR) Karen Whitlock (Adult Ed) Jody Buchholz (Ross) Allison Kitler (SCVR)

Staff: Mike Butler, Shelly Campbell, Sabrena Graham, Tony Pollen

1. **Call to Order:** Heather Simmons, Board Chair called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Introduction of Guests. A quorum of board members was present on the call, and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with business.

2. **Minutes:** ***A motion was made by Patrick Harris to accept the minutes as sent in the meeting pre-reads and seconded by Greg Gilbert. All voted in favor with none opposed.***

3. September 23, 2020 minutes were amended to add the One Stop Committee report that was inadvertently left off the minutes. A motion was made by Chris Horvath to accept the amended minutes and it was seconded by Patrick Harris. All voted in favor with none opposed
New Business:

4. **PY19 Year in Review/ 3-Year Cumulative**- Mike Butler shared a power point presentation that outlined accomplishments, services, employer engagements from the workforce staff and their success of navigating through the COVID-19 Pandemic. Mike also shared a three-year synopsis of workforce activities from PY16-PY19 outlining overall success of the workforce program for the past three years.

5. **PY19 Fund Utilization Report (FUR)**- Mike Butler shared with the board the FUR report generated from the state that outlined the 70% expenditure goals for Adult/Dislocated Worker (DW) and Youth programs. 80% obligation rate goals for Adult/DW and Youth funding streams, 30% Participant Cost Rate goals and 20% Work Base Learning (WBL) The Lowcountry met all goals with the exception of DW expenditures coming in at 61% and Participants Cost Rate at 28.53%. Mike stated any failed measure would require a board approved corrective action plan detailing why the goal was not met and what actions will be implemented going forward that will assist the local area in meeting these goals.

6. **FUR Corrective Action Plan (CAP) Approval***– Board Chair Heather Simmons ask for a motion to be made to approve the PY19 FUR CAP submitted by board staff in the meeting pre-reads. Patrick Harris made the motion to approve and Chris Horvath seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the PY19 FUR CAP as presented with none opposed. The FUR CAP will be submitted to Workforce Support Department of SCDEW for their review.

7. **Basic Skills Deficient Policy (BSD) Update***- Shelly Campbell explained the update in the policy that removed the language that stated “any individual lacking a high school diploma or high school equivalency would be considered basic skills deficient”. Also added in the updated state suggested language “an individual who is enrolled in Title II Adult Education as an English as a Second Language (ESL) student, and/or the individual presents a BestPlus/Best Literacy test (regardless of the score) for those who are Limited English Skills proficient”.

Board Chair Heather Simmons asked for a motion to approve the BSD update. Chris Horvath made a motion to approve and Greg Gilbert seconded the motion. All voted in favor with non-opposed.

8. **Assessment Policy (New)***- Shelly Campbell stated to the board that new policy would serve as guidance on assessment services provided through the Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The policy is mostly a restatement of the current contract requirements with the addition of a Soft Skills Assessment in response to the state board’s initiative, strategic plan, and the local plan document to describe soft skills assessment and increase attainment of soft skills. The draft policy was received in the boards pre-reads sent out a week prior to the meeting.

Board Chair Heather Simmons ask for a motion to approve the new Assessment Policy as written. Heyward Horton made a motion to approve and Chris Horvath seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve the new Assessment policy with none opposed.

9. **Operator SC Works Center Report**- Mark Williams shared the following report to the board.
Number of days open to the public: 145- days since June 3, 2020 not counting the weekends.

Services being provided: Unemployment Claims filing, WIOA Certifications and general questions concerning SC Works, Typing Test, Job Readiness Class, Adult Education and DSS.

New Basic Computer Skills Workshop - SC Works Colleton Center. Wednesdays 2:30pm- 3:30pm Fridays 10am-11am, 2:30pm-3:30pm – computer terminology, Keyboard and mouse commands, Internet research and email basics.

Basic overall traffic counts for all three center totals as of June 3, 2019. 7,303 Patrons, Post COVID-19.
Beaufort total of 5446, Colleton total 1374 and Hampton 483.

Peak Hours of operations over the last 145 days, are during hours of 9am-11am over the last seven months.
Peak Hours in January- 9am – 11am

On average for the last 26 days Beaufort office traffic average 48 on Mondays, 60 on Tuesdays, 35 on Wednesdays, 31 on Thursdays and 27 on Fridays

Events: Honoring Our Veterans, Virtual Job Fair, February 24, 2021 10am-1pm Beaufort SC Works
On site, Job Fair at 164 Castle Rock Rd, Beaufort SC, 29906

Beaufort SC Works Hiring Event are still ongoing every week.

Coastal Employment, Express Professional, GMI, Glass Works and SCDOC are among the most active employers, conducting hiring events Post Covid-19 in each of the Beaufort and Colleton Career Centers.

SC Works continues to hold Hiring events weekly, job posting on DEW Website, Facebook and office hiring board.

10. Business Services Report - Tony Pollen shared the following report to the board.

Before the New Year, I sat in on a meeting hosted by Economic Development. They introduced an industrial fabric company from California (project Cali) looking for a new location. So, they brought some partners together to help sway their decision. This company makes anything from outdoor furniture pillows to body bags. The company's biggest concern is the workforce since they will need employees to operate a Sonic Sewing Machines.

The agricultural technology campus (Early Branch) should start recruiting sometime this year. The last I heard; they were working on wage information. And the heavy lifting will begin in 2022.

Yield scientific (Hemp Plant) in Early Branch new operations are expected to be online this month or next, the 30-million-dollar investment is projected to create 107 jobs over four years.
On January 8, the IBST team held its first meeting of 2021. In this meeting, we discussed how each the partners are handling the new normal for employer engagement during COVID-19.

The South Coast Manufacturing Partnership continues to make significant progress since launching in September. On Thursday, February 18, @10-11:30 we will hold our first virtual quarterly meeting.

11. Committee Reports

a) Disability Committee- Greg Gilbert Committee Chair provided the following report to the board. Due to technical issues and holiday leave for members we were unable to have our meeting on December 1, 2020 as scheduled.

We met via a series of phone conference to determine our direction moving forward. We discussed several ideas and decided to reach out to Jackie Taylor at the state level to get a feel for what is happening statewide. We will hopefully have her to attend or discuss activities shared at our next meeting.

b) Youths Committee- Chris Horvath Committee Chair provided the following report to the board.

Chris discussed the importance of adding new committee members that play a vital role in the local communities in working directly with youth and youth programs. Chris submitted the names of two individuals that he felt would complement the Youth Committee as well as strengthen the team. Emily Mitchell (Lowcountry Community Action Agency) and Jalacy Green of Lowcountry AHEC, SC Area Health Education Consortium.

Board Chair Heather Simmons ask the board for a motion to approve the request of Youth Committee Chair Chris Horvath to add two additional members. Heyward Horton offered a motion to approve and it was seconded by Greg Gilbert. All voted in favor with none opposed.

b) One Stop Committee Report- No report submitted

12. Directors Notes- Mike Butler shared a few notes with the board:

1. The Local Area and Board Subsequent Designation forms are due on February 15, 2021
2. The 4-year local plan deficiencies are being corrected and will be finalized by the due date of February 21, 2021
3. PY21 MOU/IFA negotiation meeting is scheduled for March 4th 2021 at 11am via zoom.
4. Orientation power point is now in Spanish and additional brochures will be ordered in Spanish.
5. Ross contractor has hired a new WIOA Project Director, former LCOG staffer Stephanie Ferguson.

13. Vice-Chair Nominee Approval- Heather Simmons informed the board that Kevin Pak submitted his
name as a candidate for Vice-Chairman of the Lowcountry Workforce Board. Mr. Pak was thanked for his interest in serving as the Vice-Chair. Kevin was politely asked to remove himself from the board meeting by logging off the zoom call so that his fellow boards members could discuss his request. Heyward Horton made a motion to approve Kevin Pak as the LWB new Vice-Chair. Lynn Bowers seconded the motion. All voted in favor with none opposed.

14. Board Chair Heather Simmons made several closing statements and the meeting was adjourned at 10:35am.

Respectfully submitted
Michael V. Butler