Lowcountry Workforce Board – Meeting Minutes  
WEDNESDAY, July 26, 2023 - 9:30 A.M.

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**Guests:** Stephanie Ferguson (Ross) Andray Holmes (BJEOC) Joyceesten Pringle (SCVR) Tamara Lewis (SCDEW) Juanita Murrell (Bft Adult Ed) Jo Anne Sanders (JAHA Adult ED) Jeremy Dunbar (DSS) Duchett Hylton (Jasper First Steps) Shelby Broomfield (LSCOG) Shelby Simmons (SCDEW) Brian Warner (SCA) Anthony Williams (Coastal Employment)

**Staff:** Tony Pollen, Angela Jenkins, Sabrena Graham and Michael Butler

1. **Call to Order:** Kevin Pak, 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. Introduction of guest was initiated by Board Chair Kevin Pak along with special introductions by Workforce Director Michael Butler.

3. **Minutes:** A motion was made by Chris Horvath to accept the May 24, 2023 minutes as sent in the meeting pre-reads and seconded by Andy Thorson. All voted in favor with none oppose.

**New Business:**
4. Youth Incentive Policy Update: Mike Butler reviewed the draft revision of the Youth Incentive Policy outlining the addition of a $250 incentive for successful completion of Work Experience for the Youth. Incentive eligibility will be based on policy guidelines being met. The incentive expenditure would also be reflective as a part of the 20% WBL that has to be met each performance year. A motion was made by Greg Gilbert to approve the updated Youth Incentive Policy. Quandara Grant seconded the motion. All voted in favor with non-opposed.

5. PY23 Adult/DW Transfer Approval: Mike Butler asked the board for approval to allow Board Staff to transfer up to 100% between Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams for PY23. All transfers will be made known to the board both electronically and at the next scheduled in-person meeting. Kimberly Alexander made a motion to approve allowing board staff to transfer up to 100% between Adult and DW funding streams for PY23. Andy Thorson seconded the motion, all approved with non-opposed.

6. Workforce Staffer of the Year: SCDEW Business Consultant Charles Myers was recommended to the board as the Lowcountry Workforce Professional for the year. Mike Butler read the criteria that the board set forth in order to receive this award. The LWB listed the following categories: Professionalism, Customer Focus, Teamwork, Commitment and Display of Soft Skills. A motion was made by Kimberly Alexander to approve Charles Myers as the LWB Staffer of the year. Julie Washington seconded the motion. All voted in favor with non-opposed.

7. Business Service Update; Angela Jenkins Business Service Specialist provided the following report.

   Tenure and Learning Curve: Over the past two months, I have been deeply involved with business services in the Colleton and Hampton regions. Despite initially having minimal knowledge of workforce development and business services, I have managed to get up to speed rapidly, thanks to our skilled mentors.

   Engagement with Businesses: A significant part of my role involves proactive engagement with businesses to help them benefit from employment services. I work to inform them about the state-provided resources they may be eligible for, such as incumbent worker training, on-the-job training, and work experience programs, to name a few.

   Success Stories: Since stepping into this role, I've successfully connected with over fifty employers across the Hampton and Colleton regions, providing crucial support for on-the-job training programs. I've had the opportunity to enable several businesses to join the SWOS system, consequently opening avenues for job postings and enhanced visibility for these organizations among jobseekers.

   The Balancing Act: Navigating the inherent challenges of each work experience, I've learned the importance of being discerning about candidate referrals to employers. It's crucial to ensure that factors such as shift timings, pay rates, and health benefits align with the prospective employees' expectations.

   Engagement Challenges: Despite considerable efforts in reaching out, including door-to-door visits and leaving business cards, there have been instances of non-response from employers. We need to discuss strategies to enhance engagement.
**Measure of Success:** I consider my success not merely by the number of businesses I interact with, but also by the successful placement of WIOA clients in the workforce. Each successful interaction—phone calls, face-to-face meetings, or emails—is a step forward.

**Validating the Need for Business Services:** Lastly, the ability to onboard new employers into the SWOS system and initiate recruitment processes stands as a testament to the vital role of Business Services in workforce development. We need to continue our efforts to broaden this impact.


*Services being provided: Unemployment Claims filing, WIOA Certifications and general questions concerning SC Works, Federal Bonding, Typing Test, Job Readiness Class, Adult Education and DSS. Job Corps – Orientation’s 1st Tuesday of every Month:

**Walterboro Career Skills Center recent activity:** Hiring Events to include: South Carolina Department of Corrections. Three hires resulted from those events. Going forward we have SCDC planned Monthly events for Colleton Career Center facility.

**Hampton County:** Since last month we have held 1 event in Hampton: Hurricane’s Sports Cafe.

**New Business Activity:**

We are working closely with three new partners in Colleton County: Pomega, Ironline and BAR Marine.

- Pomega, a battery company planning on hiring nearly 500 employees, will begin hiring in August, and we held our first ‘sit down’ meeting with their VP yesterday in Walterboro. They are now connected with SC Works and LCOG for OJT assistance.

- Ironline, a metal fab company, will begin hiring in August, also. They will be moving from their Walterboro location and into a new site on 100 acres in Yemassee. Plans are to hire 40 people in the area. They are also set with LCOG for OJT.

- BAR Marine, this is an older client that reached out for help. Located in Jacksonboro, they are expanding and need hiring assistance. Met with them Monday and have made plans for an event and OJT assistance. They have someone now in mind for a Reverse Referral OJT, and Tony has reached out to get that started.

- JCB North America, Company, located Savannah, GA, looking to start another shift, has very strong interest in Veterans. Met with Mr. McFadden along with Charles Myers back in June, he just attended our TCL Career Event (July 11, 2023). Scheduled to attend the Sept 13, 2023 hiring event on MCAS.

- Eviro-Vac, I was referred to Mr. Charles from Eviro-Vac, by Mr. McFadden from JCB North America. His company has had great experience with Veterans and they have Manager’s position, they would love to fill with some of our Veterans exiting the Military.

- Atlas Survey

All of the above represent teamwork between SC Works and LCOG.

**The Beaufort Center**
Upcoming Events:
1. Parris Island Protective Services Fair Tuesday July 25, 2023 11am-2pm
2. MCAS Career Fair the Officer’s Club Wednesday September 13, 2023 11am-2pm
3. SC/GA Coastal Career Fair Hardeeville Recreation Center Tuesday September 19, 2023 1pm-5pm

SC Works continues to hold Hiring Events weekly, job posting on DEW Website, Hardeeville television interviews, Facebook and office hiring Board.

9. One Stop Committee Report Roy Dupont:

Committee Discussion: 06/29/2023

1. We spoke about the American Disabilities Act (ADA)

2. Received an update on security for the SC Works buildings. We were informed by Mark Williams that security cameras were installed back in January.

3. A quick review of the Combine Center and Business Engagement (COBE) plan. We received an update on the referral process. Mark Williams stated that there were no outstanding referrals over 30 days.

4. Foot traffic is up in the centers.

5. We discussed and highlighted the business service team and its efforts across the region.

6. Mark Williams provided an update on SC Works Staff Cross Training Development.

7. Dr. Murrell, Beaufort Adult Education Director spoke about having 96 students graduating on the She had a goal of 100

8. Mark Williams spoke about the Partners Meeting scheduled on August 16, 2023 from 11am to 12pm via zoom.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:32am. Next meeting is scheduled for August 10th.
10. **Budget Report Mike Butler** - Mike reviewed the budget in detail. Greg Gilbert asked a question relating to Resiliency Adult grant being spent at 101%. Mike explained that overage will be re-charge back to regular allocated adult funds in order to be at 100%. Mike explained the importance of securing discretionary grants for program efficiency but also shared how it makes meeting formula funds requirements more difficult due to having to meet spending and participant cost rate standards across all additional grants. Mike informed the board of pending Corrective Action Plans (CAP’s) to be written for both Youth expenditures not meeting 70% and PCR rate not meeting the 30% guideline for PY22.

11. **Directors Notes Mike Butler:** Mike shared the following notes with board members and guest.

    Lowcountry Workforce Area’s Subsequent Designation and Local Workforce Development Board’s Subsequent Certification for Program Years 22-23 was approved by the State.

    Both the Regional and Local Plan Modifications (PY22) have been approved by the State.

    Modifications to the Participant Cost Rate (PCR) was approved by the State Workforce Board on June 28, 2023. The new policy goes into effect on July 1, 2023. The PCR will remain at 30% but will be reviewed again for PY24.

    The new policy was issued on State instruction Number 17-04 Change 3. Main highlights are: staff SFI who work directly with participants for eligibility certification, case management, workshops and assessments can be included in reaching the PCR goal of 30%

    The Lowcountry Workforce Area PY23 Allocation is $992,778 an increase of $62,666 over PY22 allocation of $930,112. We have since received a revision reduction of allocation to $991,976 a reduction of $802.

    PY23 MOU/IFA agreements have been signed by all partners signatories including the Lead CEO for the four county CEO (Chief Elected official) consortium.

    PY22 Program Performance Goals are trending to be all green for another year. Kudos to all of our Ross Workforce Staff and LCOG Business Service Staff for making this possible.

    We have two new Ross staff members in Beaufort, Ashley Mirelez and Tosha Phillips.

    Thank you to all of the board members who submitted your choice of standing committee to serve on as a board member. A special thank you to Board members Quandara Grant, Kimberly Alexander and Arlene Dunbar who all agreed to assist on all three committees. Arlene will now Chair the Youth Committee for PY23. A special thanks to Chris Horvath for serving as Chair for the past several years. Chris will continue to serve on the Youth Committee.

    Thank you to all the board members who choose to be re-appointed for another 3-year term. We had 6 out of 7 that choose to continue to serve, the 7th person having a valid reason for not returning.
12. **Business Service Lead PY23**

SC Works Core partners Adult ED, SCDEW, SCVR and WIOA made the recommendation to re-appoint Tony Polien as the Lowcountry Workforce Area (LWA) Business Service Lead for PY23. Kimberly Alexander made a motion to accept the recommendation of the core partners and re-appoint Tony Polien as the LWA Business Service Lead for PY23. Greg Gilbert seconded the motion, all approved with non opposed.

13. Board Chair Kevin Pak stated next meeting was November 9, 2023 in person at the Lowcountry Council of Governments 634 Campground Rd Yemassee SC 29945 at 9:30am. The meeting was adjourned at 10:20am

*** Denotes Voting Item