**Lowcountry Workforce Board – Meeting Minutes**  
**WEDNESDAY, January 25, 2023 - 9:30 A.M.**

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**Guests:** Dr. Juanita Murrell (Adult ED) Mark Williams (Ross) Stephanie Ferguson (Ross) Jeremey Dunbar (DSS) Melissa Rodgers (SCDEW) Emily Mitchell (LCCA) Joyceestean Pringle (SCVR)  
**Staff:** Shelly Campbell, Charles Myers, Shere Grant, 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. **Minutes:** A motion was made by Heyward Horton to accept the November 9, 2022 minutes as sent in the meeting pre-reads and seconded by Chris Horvath. All voted in favor with none oppose.

**New Business:**

3. **PY22 Request for Proposal (RFP) Approval - Shelly Campbell:** Shelly Campbell shared with the board the need to begin the PY22 RFP process because of the importance of timing and the need to have proposals reviewed, evaluated and scored by a select RFP committee with a recommendation
presented to the full workforce board by the March 22, 2023 board meeting. A motion was made by James Williams and seconded by Quandara Grant. All voted in favor with non-opposed.

4. **RFP Committee Selection** Shelly Campbell- Shelly explained to the board the need and purpose of creating a RFP Review Committee to read, evaluate and score any proposals received. Shelly stated that it would be ideal to have one person from each county to sit on this committee, with some of the committee being from the business sector of the board.

The following board members volunteered to serve on the RFP Review Committee: Chris Horvath, Quandara Grant, Arlene Dunbar, James Williams and Darwin Cleveland. A motion was made by Melanie Gallion to approve the RFP Review Committee, Andy Thorson seconded the motion. All voted in favor with non-opposed.

5. **PY22 Ross Contract Modification** Shelly Campbell- Shelly shared with the board that the LCOG received a Engage Build and Serve grant from the State Workforce Board and as a result of portions of the grant is being allocated to Ross for participant cost. Shelly asked Mike Butler to explain in detail the nature of the grant.

Mike shared the following: The Engage Build & Serve Grant was awarded to the Lowcountry Workforce Area via the State Workforce Board. The grant award was $343,567 and these funds will be used for continued participant services via Occupational Skills Training, Supportive Services, Adult and Youth OJT’s and Youth Work Experience. Business Service Staff member Sheree Grant will head up the Youth Work Base Learning efforts to fulfill the requirements of the grant. The breakdown is as follows: Adult/DW $218,733 and Youth $124,834. Ross will receive $70,000 for Adult/DW participant cost services and $34,090 for Youth participant cost services.

Heyward Horton made a motion to approve a contract modification of the PY22 Ross contract, Quandara Grant seconded the motion. All voted in favor with non-opposed.

6. **Business Service Updates** Charles Meyers- PY22 is shaping up to be a successful year.

We note 9 employers participating so far this year in the OJT Program
ComForCare, an in-home care service in Bluffton, SC, has the most participants with 5 thus far.
The career sectors served thus far are as follows:
- Health Care (CVS and ComForCare)
- Technology (PakNet and Advanced Fiber Optics)
- Manufacturing (KBRS and WastePro)
- Construction (Alabama Engineering, Freedom Air and Prestige Air)

The wage range of our OJT contracts thus far is between a low end of 14 dollars per hour at ComForCare to 25 dollars per hour at Alabama Environmental.

Our goals remain the same: Serve our business community to ensure the best candidates are matched with the best career.

We highlight Prestige Air as one of our newest clients. Thus far, they have hired two new individuals and are committed to training them in all aspects of HVAC. Their initial rate of pay is $18 dollars per hour, and they are eager to continue a relationship with LCOG.
Business Services Operational Recap

In July 2022, the LCOG business services team attended certified business services consultant training given by TAD grants at the trident SC works. The team has since earned their national business services consultant certificates.

In September, the IBST hosted a Virtual employer round table at the Don Ryan Center in Bluffton. We discussed various topics, but the most talked about was finding skilled talent to fill open positions.

In August, Charles and I presented our job readiness workshop at the fall SETA conference. The conference was held in Louisville, Kentucky.

The first podcast interview has been filmed and is up on the SCWORKS Lowcountry Facebook page.

7. SCWORKS Operator Report Mark Williams- 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.

Upcoming Events: Colleton H.S. will be having a Career Fair February-TBD, POC Stephaine Wright (LVER) DEW and Denise Wright Colleton Technology Center Global Career Specialist.

Lowcountry Job Fair Tuesday March 21,2023. 1pm-5pm at the Beaufort National Guard Readiness Center 1 Cavalry Lane -Beaufort SC, (on Hwy 21 next to the MCAS)

Special Collaborated Events: Trident and Lowcountry are planning a Reentry Event on April 12,2023 location and time-TBD

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

8. Youth Committee Report Chris Horvath- The Youth Committee would like to accomplish the following objectives for 2023:

1. Increase participation through building upon relationships with other committees and community organizations.
   a. Acknowledge and provide publicity for valued partners such as Technical College of the Lowcountry and SC Vocational Rehabilitation.

2. Utilize established and proven professional development resources that foster positive outcomes.
   a. Prioritize high leverage virtual training through Workforce GPS at [mailto:https://www.workforcegps.org/](mailto:https://www.workforcegps.org/)
3. Use the above resources to plan and execute a series of youth summits held in each of the counties we represent.
   a. Coordinate with the Business Services Team and identify interested parties through Partner Meetings.

9. **One Stop Committee Report Roy Dupont** - Roy shared with the board the One Stop Committee 2023 goal is to be creative in finding ways to increase customer traffic for future hiring events. Roy mentioned the committee’s task is to continue using social media platforms but also return to the roots of advertising these events and that is word of mouth, utilizing local churches, placing flyers were people are known to visit frequently and partnering with community-based organizations.

10. **Priority Populations/Disability Committee** – Mike Butler read the report for committee chair Greg Gilbert who was not in attendance.

   1. Increase Business knowledge of benefits of hiring Priority Populations
   2. Increase school knowledge of working with Priority Populations
   3. Increase knowledge of services available to Priority Populations

11. **Ross Update Report Stephanie Ferguson** – Stephanie shared the following report:

    Ross has been operating the WIOA program and One Stop Centers in the Lowcountry since July 2019. Since that time, we have networked with local agencies, employers and partners to connect nearly 800 participants to employment and training opportunities. With a focus on quality services, we are pleased to be able to say that we are meeting and exceeding all performance measures. We are thrilled that we have had the opportunity to be a part of many participant success stories. Today I would like to highlight 2 of those:
    1. Sommie Harris Jr.
    2. Corey Williams

I also would like to highlight a couple of things that have helped set us up for success in the Lowcountry area:

First is the Support and Partnership of the board and Partners. Mike and Shelly have been instrumental in providing support, training and partnership.

Second is the Ongoing Training and Development of Staff

As an organization, Ross has invested in the training and development of all of our staff. It is a priority for the company to ensure that development and training for staff is ongoing. This allows us to be current and confident in serving our participants.

Ross has created the Ross Academy that provides monthly workshops to all Ross staff across the country facilitated by National Workforce Development experts.

We offer these to all Ross staff across the county and also invite all partners to attend for free. These monthly events allow us not only to continue our development but also connect us to other Ross's
staff and other national partners. We have been trained in implicit Bias, From Case Management to Coaching, Homeless, not Helpless and How to Help People Build their Social Capital to name a few. We also have an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion team to highlight issues that we educate and highlight our teams across the country. Our very own Regional Coordinator, Mark Williams is a very active member of this team.

Additionally, we have established best practices that are shared across the group to help staff and enhance services. We lean on others across the group for ideas, resources and tools that help us avoid reinventing the wheel while also ensuring teams have what they need to be successful. Going forward we are planning more employee/employer engagement for better workplace outcomes. That, in turn, will increase our work-based learning numbers. We also look to be more visible and provide more services in the outlying regions to increase participation in those areas. We will continue to redefine our program in order to optimize better team performance.

12. Workforce Presentation Mike Butler- Mike presented to the board a power point presentation highlighting accomplishments, passing of performance measures, employer engagement numbers, hiring event numbers, participant training dollars expended, youth work experience dollars spent as well as a number of participants served for PY21/22, number of grants awarded and more.

Mike expressed his gratitude to the entire workforce team and partners and express his thanks to the board for their continued success for him and staff.

13. Budget Report Mike Butler- Mike reviewed the budget report and discussed why the need to apply for grants and how the grants help the Lowcountry achieve so many milestones as results of the additional funding. Mike also shared with the board how having so many grants effects the spending levels for the regular allocation due to having to expend from each grant in order to meet: the spending requirements and timelines for each grant.

14. Directors Notes Mike Butler- Mike shared the following information:

The Engage Build & Serve Grant was awarded to the Lowcountry Workforce Area via the State Workforce Board. The grant award was $343,567 and these funds will be used for continued participant services via Occupational Skills Training, Supportive Services, Adult and Youth OJT’s and Youth Work Experience. Business Service Staff member Sheree Grant will head up the Youth Work Base Learning efforts to fulfill the requirements of the grant. The breakdown is as follows: Adult/DW $218,733 and Youth $124,834.

Assistant State Executive Director (SCDEW) Nina Staggers along with State Deputy Assistant Director Scott Ferguson visited the Lowcountry Council of Governments on Friday January 13, 2023. Ms. Staggers presented a power point presentation highlighting current LMI, agency information, employment numbers, labor participation rates and more. Ms. Staggers presentation also recognized the Lowcountry team for meeting all performance measures in PY21 and Fund Utilization Rate requirements. Mark Williams SC Works Regional Operator was applauded for his efforts for having high staff participation rates with SC Works 101. The meeting was well attended by LCOG Workforce Board staff, agency partners and Workforce Board members Roy Dupont Vice-Chair and Greg Gilbert SCVR. Attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions of Ms. Staggers.
LCOG Executive Director Sabrena Graham and Workforce Director Michael Butler met with both Ms. Staggers and Mr. Ferguson in a private meeting. The meeting topics varied and the overall outcome from all involved was very positive. Ms. Staggers in closing was very complimentary of both staff and partners who were in attendance for the meeting.

Tony Pollen will be attending Future Leaders training in Atlanta Ga, February 14-17 2023.

The Board received the PY22 Monitoring report and both Board staff and Ross’s staff are finalizing our responses and CAP plans. Our response is due by February 6, 2023. Over all the monitoring was good with no issues noted in the financial monitoring and just two non-major issues in the programmatic monitoring.

The 4-Year Local Plan Draft modification which the board has received has been submitted to SCDEW for their review. If any additional information is needed, they will inform us and we will add the additional requested information into the plan and resubmit for final approval.

The Combined Center Operations Business Engagement (COBE) Plans were submitted as well and we are waiting on approval as well. The same process will apply for the COBE as well.

The PY23 MOU/IFA negotiation meeting will be held here at the LCOG on March 23, 2023 at 11am. All partners will be encouraged to attend and provide input. This meeting is designed to determine what methodology will be used to fund the SCWorks centers. Full Time Equivalent (FTE) has been the preferred method since this 2016. The alternative method is square footage which has not been the preferred method local partners have agreed on since the inception of the MOU/IFA process.

15. Board Chair Kevin Pak made several remarks to the board, thanking those who volunteered for the RFP committee, he thanked the workforce team for their hard work and efforts and he encourage the board to learn as much about the program as possible in order for the board to become a stronger board via knowledge of the program.

Kevin adjourned the meeting at 10:48am and stated the next meeting will be March 22, 2023 in person at the LCOG beginning at 9:30am.