



SANTEE-LYNCHES
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, March 28, 2023 - 5:00PM
via zoom

MINUTES

Members Present via Zoom:

Calvin Hastie (Vice-Chairman), Dr. Vanessa Canty, Dr. Joshua Castleberry, Gail Lemmon, John Hornsby, Bobby Anderson, Mike Murrow, Debra Young, Brian Reilly, Berri Outlaw, Tiffany Myers, Robert Edwards, Jeff Burgess, George General, Kanzora Robinson, Celeste Taylor

Members Absent:

Charles Hayes (excused), Virginia Pryor, Teresa Justice, Samuel Lowery

Workforce Development Staff Present:

Dennis Cyphers, SLRCOG Executive Director, Government Services, Chief
Areatha Clark, SLRCOG Deputy Executive Director, Workforce Development, Chief
Esmonde Levy, SLRCOG Workforce Development Manager
Steve Berger, SLRCOG Business Lead
Freda Amerson, SLRCOG Workforce Development Operations Coordinator
Kourtney Hammond, SLRCOG Administrative Assistant I-PR

Guests:

Ray Jackson, SC Works Operator/Center Manager, Eckerd Connects-Workforce Development
Deidre Smalls, Area Manager, Eckerd Connects-Workforce Development
Caitlin Brazell, SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW)

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Vice-Chairman Calvin Hastie called the Santee-Lynch Workforce Development Board of Directors Meeting to order at 5:00PM. A quorum was present.

II. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Ray Jackson provided the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Introduction of Guests

Ms. Areatha Clark, Deputy Executive Director, and Workforce Development Chief introduced staff and guests.

IV. Approval of Agenda – (M)

Vice-Chairman Hastie called for a motion to approve the agenda. **A motion was made by Mr. Bobby Anderson and seconded by Ms. Gail Lemmon.** There being no discussion, Chairman Hastie called for the vote. **All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

V. Approval of Minutes - January 24, 2023 (M)

Vice-Chairman Hastie called for a motion to approve the minutes of January 24, 2023. **A motion was made by Mr. Berri Outlaw and seconded by Dr. Joshua Castleberry.** There being no discussion, Chairman Hastie called for the vote. **All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

VI. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Dennis Cyphers, SLRCOG Executive Director and Government Services, Chief presented the Executive Director's report. Mr. Cyphers shared with the Board two items of importance for the Workforce Board.

1. House Bill 3762:

Mr. Cyphers shared information on House Bill 3726: Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act, introduced by House speaker Murrell Smith and many others to streamline workforce development in best efforts to repair and assist with employees current and future workforce needs. The bill had been moved up to the House, Labor, Commerce and Industry Committee for a final reading. Mr. Cyphers provided the following link for the bill for all Board members to review: https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/bills/3726.htm. Mr. Cyphers added that the COGs have worked alongside the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce to clarify the language in the bill along with House Speaker Smith, staff, and attorneys to ensure that the bill is compliant on both federal and state levels. Mr. Cyphers shared with the Board that one of major moves is that the Regional Education Center (REC) will be realigned under SCDEW in which our local REC Coordinator, Ms. Brenda Gardner would be moved under SCDEW.

2. House Bill 4060: Statewide Workforce Readiness Goals Bill

Mr. Cyphers explained to the Board that they have also collaborated with the Speakers and Legislature Offices which will focus on remediation in literacy and math for high school seniors. This will also require all seniors to apply for federal student loans and evaluation for seamless transition from high school to a higher institution. Mr. Cyphers expressed to the Board that the free FASFA applications will be overseen by the counselors at each high school who will oversee to ensure that the applications are successfully completed. Mr. Cyphers also said the bill will require SCDEW to provide online access on information about economic value of college majors and will require the SC Department of Education to submit a report to the General Assembly on working age adults with post-secondary education or industry credentials to include student assessments, adult-education, and careers and technology centers, etc. The House Education and Public Works Committee gave the bill a favorable report. Mr. Cyphers also provided the following link for all Board members to review this bill: https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/bills/4060.htm. He also expressed the bill is still under review and SC Teacher will be collecting the data from the schools to support the bill. We will be able to access that data to determine any gaps within the region. Also added was that this bill is trying to expand the STEM capabilities of our workforce. The bill is still under review for revisions and the COGs will be a part of those conversations. Board members were encouraged to speak with their legislators to advocate for some of these things to happen in our region.

Dr. Vanessa Canty expressed that for the part of the bill regarding moving adult education from under the SC Department of Education to under the technical college, the adult education partners are not in agreeance to suggested change. She highlighted that these concerns are generally based on the benefits provided under the Department of Education vs the Technical School. They are in the process of reaching out to their different legislators to ask them not to consider that part of the bill. Mr. Cyphers stated that the information that Dr. Canty referenced is in Section 7 of the first link provided for House Bill 3762.

Vice-Chairman Hastie expressed the importance of Board members reaching out to our delegates addressing their concerns so that they will know this information prior to casting their vote on important issues.

VII. Reports

SC Works Operator Report

Mr. Ray Jackson, One-Stop Manager presented the SC Works Operator Report for July 1, 2022, through February 28, 2023, with some data through March 15, 2023.

Before beginning his presentation, Mr. Jackson informed the Board that the SC Works report will consist of two parts in which Mr. Berri Outlaw will present the Small Business report portion of it.

Chart 1: Customer Traffic

Date Range: 07/01/2022- 02/28/2023

VOS Greeter: Individuals Served - 8,179; Of those individuals, 299 were veterans.

Mr. Jackson provided a comparison report for PY'21 vs the current year – PY'22:

Date Range: 07/01/2021-03/15/2022

Previous Program Year

Total number of Distinct Individuals that Registered	666
Total number of Individuals that Logged In	5,335
Total number of Distinct Individuals Receiving Services	19,606
Total number of Services Provided to Individuals	493,783
Total number of Internal Job Orders Created	1,210
Total number of Internal Job Referrals Created	11,992
Total number of Services Provided Employers	2,385

Date Range: 07/01/2022-03/15/2023

Current Program Year

Total number of Distinct Individuals that Registered	882
Total number of Individuals that Logged In	4,523
Total number of Distinct Individuals Receiving Services	6,049
Total number of Services Provided to Individuals	354,278
Total number of Internal Job Orders Created	1,094
Total number of Internal Job Referrals Created	19,848
Total number of Services Provided Employers	6,196

Mr. Jackson highlighted the dramatic decrease in distinct service provided to individuals from PY'21 to PY'22 and indicated that this is largely due to the reduced number of individuals coming in the centers to apply for unemployment benefits.

Vice-Chair Hastie asked Mr. Jackson about the number of Veterans served in PY'21 vs. the 299 served this far this program year. Mr. Jackson replied that the number served is more and that he would provide a comparison of this information moving forward. He also added that he will reach out to Mr. Kennedy of Shaw Air Force Base to retrieve more information on the veterans.

Chart 2: Santee-Lynches Workshops and Hiring Events for January & February

	Individuals	Veterans
Sumter Center	1,604	63
Camden Center	493	22
Total:	2,097	85

Mr. Jackson highlighted the Hiring Events that occurred during January and February. He expressed that Ollie’s had three hiring events that accumulated 219 in attendance but 1,000 applicants that applied.

Workshops and Hiring Events

- 253 - Jobseekers attending workshops and hiring events
- 180 – attended hiring event for Ollie’s 1/31 & 2/1
- 39 – attended hiring event Ollie’s 2/28
- 1,000+ applied for Ollie’s Online

Mr. Bobby Anderson asked Mr. Jackson how many were hired by Ollie’s. Mr. Jackson expressed that the hiring process has not started yet due to delays with construction. They have rescheduled the hiring date again. Mr. Jackson will provide updated hiring information once he is notified.

Ms. Clark shared with the Board that staff are seeing numbers increase in individuals returning back to the workforce and in the example with Ollie’s, many individuals are applying for the same jobs.

Mr. Jackson continued with sharing information on additional workshops/events occurring in March and upcoming in April:

Career Fair 2023: Adult Education- March 2nd

Forty-Five (45) vendors/employers took part at the event and 67 jobseekers showed up for this event.

Free Expungement & Pardon Workshop- March 24th

This event was held at the SC Works Center in which 14 individuals attended.

Community Awareness Day - April 21st

Other events were held with Carpenter Technology and Pilgrim’s Pride

Vice-Chairman Hastie requested Mr. Ray to send a notice out to the board on future workshops as a reminder for those interested to attend.

Chart 3: Area Profile for Santee-Lynches, SC

County	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Clarendon	11,698	11,120	578	4.9%
Kershaw	29,062	28,015	1,047	3.6%
Lee	6,310	5,971	339	5.4%
Sumter	42,010	40,064	1,946	4.6%

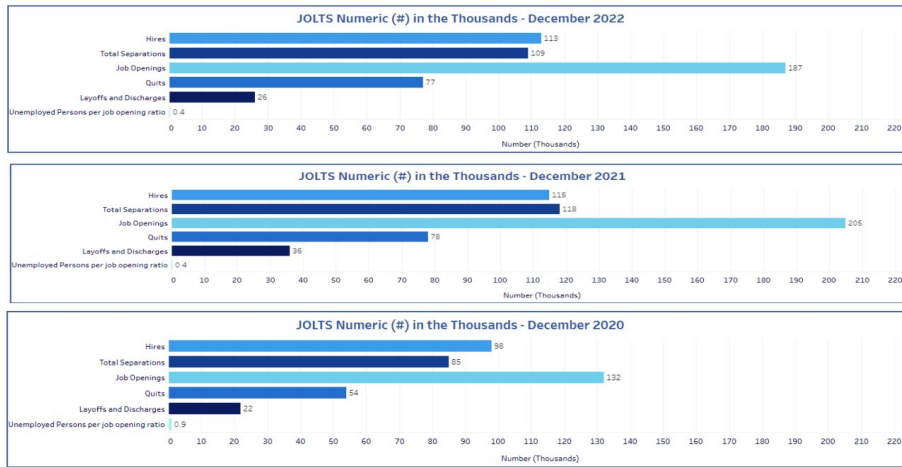
Rank	Area	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Preliminary
1	Waccamaw	186,270	177,203	9,067	4.9%	Yes
2	Santee-Lynches	89,080	85,170	3,910	4.4%	Yes
3	Pee Dee	149,965	143,605	6,360	4.2%	Yes
4	Lower Savannah	125,092	119,857	5,235	4.2%	Yes
5	Upper Savannah	109,786	105,767	4,019	3.7%	Yes
6	Upstate	190,304	183,550	6,754	3.5%	Yes
7	Catawba	204,851	197,613	7,238	3.5%	Yes
8	Midlands	355,048	343,292	11,756	3.3%	Yes
9	Lowcountry	112,604	108,846	3,758	3.3%	Yes
10	Worklink	183,600	177,654	5,946	3.2%	Yes
11	Greenville	260,653	252,868	7,785	3.0%	Yes
12	Trident	410,594	398,601	11,993	2.9%	Yes

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, SC Dept of Employment & Workforce

Mr. Jackson also provided the unemployment numbers for February 2023:

- Clarendon County - increased to 5.0%
- Kershaw County - increased to 3.9%
- Lee County - decreased to 5.0%
- Sumter County - remains as 4.6%

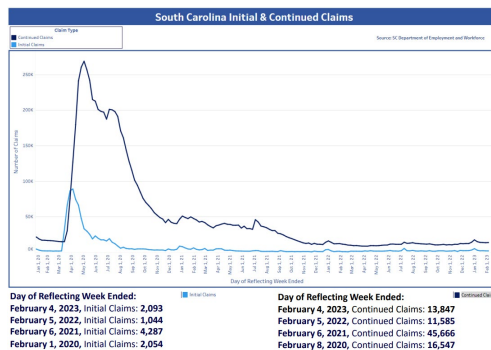
Chart 4: South Carolina Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey



Mr. Jackson provided a report on the SC Job Openings and Turnover Survey. He indicated that he is working diligently to retrieve a breakdown for the data for the Santee-Lynches Region.

Chart 5: South Carolina Initial and Continued Claims

Mr. Jackson also reported on Initial and Continued Claims for the State.



Small Business Outreach Project

Mr. Berri Outlaw presented information on SCDEW's Small Business Outreach Project as information.

Slide 1: Goal

Increase outreach with employers with 100 or less employees to:

- Reengage employers with SC Works
- Explain SC Works Services and why employers should have active SC Works accounts
- Assist in matching Business Consultants with employers if they need additional services
- 9 center locations were chosen based on Employer and Jobseeker traffic levels.

Slide 2: Project Scope

- To meet the state's Small Business Outreach goals, each week, small businesses have are sent an email advertising SC Works Services.
- There is a shared spreadsheet that is updated weekly with the small businesses that receive this email.
- Data provided was pulled from SCWOS that includes businesses with under 100 employees that have not utilized SCWOS in the 9 center locations in the past 3 years. Data was cross checked against businesses that have since closed.
- Outreach is conducted by phone and email using templates with at least 3 attempts to contact each employer.

Vice-Chairman Hastie asked Mr. Outlaw if the services can support small businesses that only have 10 or less employees. Mr. Outlaw said that based on data received 6,000 businesses throughout the region can be served through this initiative. He said that an outreach campaign will be shared across the region to register with SC Works for services on their hiring process, etc. Mr. Outlaw also added that they are facilitating a virtual project for those smaller businesses. This will allow those businesses without the staffing and infrastructure of HR to have a DEW representative manage their virtual event on their behalf to ensure that those businesses are in full operation without disruption.

Mr. Anderson said that the issue that needs to be resolved would be the process of job orders being sent, the qualified recipients being notified about the job opportunity but then are left to reach out to the employer. However, the center is not unaware if the jobseeker has completed this step. Mr. Outlaw said that they also do generate referrals directly to employers to assist with this process. Mr. Anderson asked Mr. Outlaw about the referral process. Mr. Outlaw said that referrals are sent over to the jobseeker and the employer through the SC Works online system. Mr. Clark added that there are times that employers have requested SC Works assistance in collecting applications for them, along with prescreening the individuals that apply.

Back to Work: Rural Employer Initiative

Mr. Outlaw continued his presentation with information on SCDEW's Back to Work: Rural Employer Initiative.

Slide 3: Project Goal

To strengthen our workforce and prepare job seekers for entry to mid-level work and link them up with rural employers in the surrounding counties become gainfully employed.

Mr. Outlaw expressed that this was a pilot project that they are planning to start in the summer.

Slide 4: Project Description

- The Department of Employment and Workforce is excited to offer a Soft Skill Employment and Training Program to the jobseekers that are targeted towards employment opportunities with employers located in rural areas.
- Soft skills are important attributes needed in today's workplace.
- Through this training, job seekers will be able to participate in a (2-5) day intensive soft skills training class to enhance their basic employability and professional work ethic skills.
- The classes are available at no cost to job seekers and will be customized to the Rural employer's specific hiring needs.
- All participants will be screened to match qualifications of targeted openings

Slide 5: Soft Skill Workshops

- Resume preparation and writing assistance
- Diversity in the Workplace
- Financial Literacy
- Dressing for Success
- Conflict Resolution
- Exploration of careers and job types
- Proper workplace etiquette
- Timeliness and punctuality

Mr. Outlaw shared with the board that this is a list that can be customized to fit the need of those rural employers. Mr. Anderson suggested to Mr. Outlaw that this information would be great to share with the administrators of the school districts because this is not done within the schools. Mr. Outlaw expressed that he is unsure if the schools are not doing soft skill training. He stated that soft skills are picked up along the way and taught by mentors and family values as well.

Slide 6: Employer Participation

Mr. Outlaw stated that the ask to the Employer is a commitment to interview all of the participants at the conclusion of the program with the intention to hire multiple candidates in positions paying above \$15.00 an hour; and provide information on new hires that can be used to report placement of participants into meaningful employment. Mr. Outlaw expressed that this pilot project was revamped, and they are aiming to jumpstart this project again soon. Vice-Chairman Hastie suggested that it will be good for them to reach out to schools to confirm whether or not any of the soft skills provided by DEW are taught in the schools. Ms. Clark added that Ms. Brenda Gardner, REC Coordinator, who serves as a member of the Youth Committee, will be another person to gather this information from due to her close collaboration with guidance and career counselors in the school in our region. This will be information that Ms. Gardner could speak on at the next board meeting. Vice-Chairman Hastie said that he would be willing to find out what soft skill programs are taught from the city and how many are changed by this.

WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Services Report

Ms. Deidre Smalls presented the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Report for July 1, 2022, through March 15, 2023.

Chart 1: Total Active Adult/Dislocated Worker Enrollments

New - 96 Actual - 155 Goal - 192 (approximately 20% remaining)

Chart 2: Occupational Skills Training

Received Training - 71 (22 are employed)

Training provided primarily in the Transportation & Healthcare Sectors: CDL, Clinical Medical Assistant, Patient Care Technician

Ms. Smalls added that they are experiencing a hard time validating employment opportunities from those participants completing training/services. Vice-Chairman Hastie asked Ms. Smalls how many participants are enrolled in CDL training. Ms. Smalls said that she will provide that information to Mr. Hastie via email and will incorporate the breakdown the number of enrollees per program moving forward.

Chart 3: Performance Outcomes Update (Adult/DW)

Credentials - 89 Measurable Skills Gain - 271

Adult Program Highlight

Mr. Michael Kirkland

Mr. Kirkland came into the SC Works Sumter Center in July of 2022 seeking assistance with employment and training. He was unemployed and needed a career that would allow him to support his family. Michael attended Palmetto Training Truck Driving School in Sumter and obtained a CDL Class A license in December. Mr. Kirkland obtained full-time employment with Senn Freight Lines, Inc. He is paid .50/mile with benefits. Mr. Kirkland is excited about his earning potential and the ability to provide for his family.

Chart 4: Total Active Youth Enrollments

New - 33 Actual – 48 Goal – 105 (approximately 54% remaining)

Ms. Smalls expressed that outreach is key for the team to achieve their goal for the program year. She said that they are collaborating diligently with community partners along with other partners.

Chart 5: Occupational Skills Training

Received Training - 18 (8 obtained employment; 6- currently in training; 2-enrolled in the military; 2- still seeking employment)

Training provided primarily in the Transportation & Healthcare Sectors- Certified Nurse Assistant, Phlebotomy, CDL

Ms. Smalls expressed that despite their low numbers of enrollments, they have expended 89.1% of training funds by February. Based on this, their goal is to focus on their work based training programs.

Charts 6 and 7: Performance Outcomes Update (Youth)

Credentials – 41 Measurable Skills Gain - 97
WEX/OJT - 11 Resumes Created - 26 Career Smart - 28 Adult Education - 8

Youth Program Highlight

Daiona Washington

Ms. Washington enrolled into the WIOA youth program on August 9, 2022. She is a high school graduate, was unemployed and seeking assistance with training. Ms. Washington was interested in obtaining training in the medical field and after meeting with her Career Coach, decided to pursue the Certified Medical Assistant Training program through Professional Development & Training Services in Lugoff, SC. Ms. Washington graduated from the program in February and is currently employed as a Certified Medical Assistant at MUSC Health Kershaw Medical Center. She is making \$15.50 per hour with benefits.

Financial Report

Mr. Esmonde Levy, Workforce Manager, presents the Financial Report for the PY 2022 through 02/28/2022.

Chart 1: Percent Expended

Eckerd Adult – 66.36%

Eckerd DW – 48.08%

Eckerd Youth – 50.54%

Chart 2: Eckerd Adult Total

Eckerd has expended \$212,368 of \$320,000 (66.36% expended) with a remaining balance of \$107,663.

Chart 3: Eckerd Adult Total

Jul-22: \$13,870

Aug-22: \$15,829

Sep-22: \$18,820

Oct-22: \$17,475

Nov-22: \$17,853

Dec-22: \$28,843

Jan-23: \$59,962

Feb-23: \$39,716

Chart 4: Eckerd DW Total

Eckerd has expended \$48,075 of \$100,000 (48.08% expended) with a remaining balance of \$51,925.

Chart 5: Eckerd DW Total

Jul-22: \$4,211

Aug-22: \$3,884

Sep-22: \$5,954

Oct-22: \$5,437

Nov-22: \$6,260

Dec-22: \$6,121

Jan-23: \$6,097

Feb-23: \$10,112

Chart 6: Eckerd Youth Total

Eckerd has expended \$202,148 of \$400,000 (50.54% expended) with a remaining balance of \$197,852.

Chart 7: Eckerd Youth Total

Jul-22: \$17,872

Aug-22: \$12,121

Sep-22: \$47,841

Oct-22: \$20,460

Nov-22: \$23,210

Dec-22: \$20,761

Jan-23: \$37,476

Feb-23: \$22,406

Chart 8: Resiliency Total

Eckerd has expended \$254,024 of \$288,812 (87.95% expended) with a remaining balance of \$34,788. Mr. Levy expressed to the Board that the Resiliency Funds are expected to be spent by May. Chairman Hastie asked Mr. Levy what the Resiliency Funds are. Mr. Levy explained that the Resiliency Funds are added funding provided to subsidize regular formula funds to assist with budget cuts.

VIII. Committee Reports

SC Works Committee: Release of Request for Proposals for WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker Services

Mr. Anderson, Chairman of the SC Works Committee provided the report. He stated that the SC Works Committee approved the release of a Request for Proposals for Title I WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker services. Ms. Clark elaborated that every four years, they must seek proposals through an RFP process. The RFP was officially released yesterday. Proposals are due on April 27, 2023. A motion would be brought forth at the next Workforce Board Meeting in May 2023 to approve the provider for these services for PY'23.

Mr. Cyphers shared with the Board that all of the COGs are participating in a challenge to complete 2500 survey each. He expressed that staff would collect surveys from all four counties to help troubleshoot hotspots in rural areas which may be unserved or underserved. Statistics have shown that 2 years ago, internet speed was 25 download and 3 upload. Today, underserved is considered to be 100 download and 10 upload. Mr. Cyphers stated expressed that they are working to improve broadband connections in those areas to help the Broadband Development Office of the State and the Department of Administration. This survey will also help bring in grant funding to aid the private internet partners throughout the area. Vice-Chairman Hastie asked if the project Senator Clyburn was conducting have an impact on what the survey is doing. Mr. Cyphers responded that the project is what they are working on with the state. They have led the Broadband Survey in the region that was funded by EDA. The survey can be found on the COG's website www.santeelynychescog.org. Vice-Chairman Hastie asked how much funding did Congressman Clyburn present to the program. Mr. Cyphers said that \$30 million in federal funding is provided. Vice-Chairman Hastie asked how close we to meeting our goal are. Mr. Cyphers said that it depends on the region that you live in. He expressed that Clarendon County he hopes to have covered under the 5-year plan, Sumter is in good shape, Lee County have a lot of rural area that can be affected, and Kershaw County have its own barriers. However, he hopes to target those areas that need it the most. Mr. Cyphers said that he is currently collaborating with Senator Kevin Johnson on a legislative bill to carry to the Senate floor on infrastructure that are built but have resulted in many internet providers having to pay relocation fees. He expressed that the funding used towards relocation should be used in those rural areas for services instead of moving those services.

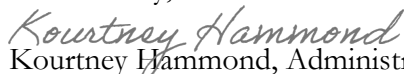
IX. Chairman's Comments

Vice-Chairman Hastie shared that there are a lot of events that were coming up such as the Festival on the Avenue starting April 28, 2023. He said that this will be a big turnout since its last existence 3 years ago. The flyer will be shared on social media platforms.

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:12PM.

Recorded by,


Kourtney Hammond, Administrative Assistant I-PR
Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments