

Virginia Career Works Northern Region

Thursday March 4, 2021

Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting

Summary Notes

Members Present:

Shakira Alvarado	Mohamed Hussein	Roopal Saran
Marc Austin	Susana Marino	Olivia Shultz
Robert Bartolotta	Roxana Mejia	Karen Smaw
Michael Becketts	Susan Mitchell	Zuzana Steen
Anthony Cancelosi	Fatimah Ogungbade	Joseph Terry
Louis Cernak	Steven Partridge	William Threlkeld
Julie Coons	Bruce Patterson	William Trumbull
Robert Frew	Leanne Rerko	Michele Weatherly
Kenneth Garrison	Christopher Rieley	Lisa Whetzel
George Harben	Todd Rowley	

Executive Director: David Hunn

Staff: Ann Hyslop, Deborah Shaffer, Seema Jain, Sabrina Walker, Nancy Nguyen, Mark Chernisky, Sheila Jones, Claudia Barrios, Lauren Parker, Laura Snell, Rebecca Bennett, Eliza Chappell

Observers: Lisa Tatum, Trang Montgomery, Dai Nguyen, Tatiana Nuth, Jamie Hudson, Lori Epp, Kimberly Carr, Lisa Vivian, Shelly Rodriguez, Mouly Aloumouati, Lori Strumpf, Theresa Byers, Desiree Roberts and Ingrid Abernathy.

Board Member Roll Call: Sabrina Walker conducted roll call and a quorum was met. The meeting commenced at **8:30 a.m.**

Approval of December 3, 2020 Summary Notes: A motion was made by Joseph Terry to approve the Board Summary notes from December 3, 2020 and was seconded by George Harben. The Summary Notes were approved unanimously by the full Board of Directors, with no abstentions.

Chairman's Report:

Chairman Rieley noted that today's Board Meeting will cover several mandated items, including our new 2021 – 2024 Strategic Plan and our required WIOA Local Plan, that was submitted to State officials in early March. He noted that the Board will also be briefed on the State's Certification Plan for the Virginia Career Works Northern Centers – both Comprehensive and Affiliate, that will be in effect for three years.

The Board will use some of our time today to discuss and consider how the Pandemic has changed the way we do business with both employers and jobseekers. One year in, most of our Centers are closed to the public and several are open only for in-person appointments. Our One Stop Operator has transitioned to providing virtual career counseling and case management services – a huge and

successful transition that occurred very fast. Yet, I am concerned that not all jobseekers who need assistance are able to find us. Moreover, the Pandemic has opened new funding streams to us for expanded services, such as the CARES Act funding with Prince William County, the City of Manassas, and the City of Manassas Park. Yet, other funding streams have closed, such as our contract with the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office to run the Employment Center at the Fairfax County Jail – funding was halted because there are so few jail inmates at the Alternative Incarceration Branch ready to work. We hope to open that Center again as the Pandemic fades.

The Pandemic has brought new Partners to the Virginia Career Works Northern region. Just this week, the City of Manassas Department of Economic Development has asked VCW Northern and SkillSource to coordinate their new strategic initiative to have every City resident earn at least a high school degree. For a city of over 40,000 residents, Census data suggests that there are over 7,000 adults 25 years or older, without a high school degree. The City of Manassas, with VCW Northern and SkillSource, will reach out to resident and enroll them online with Prince William County Schools Adult Education – the primary GED provider in their part of the region. I view this strategy as a remarkable effort and am pleased that we are part of it.

This week as well, SkillSource is working with State officials and Fairfax County Public Health Officials to convey new Federal Dislocated Worker COVID Pandemic grant funds to the Health Department to hire new Community Health Workers for their COVID Health Equity Initiative – that funding will likely be \$500,000 for the next year.

The Board will conclude our meeting this morning with a rare highlight – a very successful training and job placement event involving our second jail Center at the Prince William – Manassas Adult Detention Center and one of our Board Member Organizations, the Heavy Construction Contractors Association (HCCA).

Mr. Rieley then asked for Committee Report Updates, as follows

Quality Assurance Committee: Robert Bartolotta reported for the Quality Assurance Committee.

- There are currently 64 approved Eligible Training Providers in Area #11.
- VCWN recently worked with the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry to add a new Application Developer Registered Apprenticeship program through Smoothstack to the Virginia Eligible Training Provider List.
- Most, if not all, of the Area #11 Eligible Training Providers have reported that they are back to normal operating status, whether they are delivering training virtually, in-person following CDC guidelines, or a hybrid option of both.

Youth Committee: Roopal Saran reported for the Youth Committee.

- The last meeting of the Youth Committee convened on December 8, 2020.
- As of December 1, 2020, the Northern Virginia WIOA Youth Program was at 91 enrollments, and currently at 100% Out of School Youth enrollments, as well as the pros and cons of moving to virtual services.
- The Committee reviewed the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Youth Program services, including the challenges it has posed to enrollments and the requirement to spend 20% of expenditures on Youth work experiences.

- VCWN’s request to the State to add the National Retail Federation certification back as an eligible training was approved.
- The Committee approved increasing the WIOA Youth Work Experience Rate, which will now take effect in May 2021, following the State’s increase of the Minimum Wage rate.

The *SkillSource* Group, Inc. (SSG) Board of Directors: Hector Velez reported for the *SSG* Board of Directors. Since the Virginia Career Works Northern Board meeting in December 2020, the *SSG* Board of Directors and its Executive Committee have met and acted on the following items:

- The Board approved the 2019-2020 IRS Form 990. Our Form 990 was submitted to the IRS and a variety of regulatory agencies at the Federal and State level.
- The Board reviewed and approved a Revised FY 2021 Budget for The *SkillSource* Group, Inc. The Revised Budget included 1) an extension of Wagner-Peyser funding from the Virginia Employment Commission to continue offering workforce services at the Virginia Career Works Prince William Center from January – March 2021, totaling \$57,424, 2) Additional Federal CARES Act funding awarded to Fairfax County Government from the Commonwealth of Virginia, totaling \$45,000, and 3) \$215,000 in Dislocated Worker COVID-19 Pandemic funding from the Virginia Community College System.
- In January 2021, The Executive Committee of the Board approved multiple Incumbent Worker Training contracts totaling \$38,339 for the following local companies: IBM, Ennis Electric, The Washington Post, Kreative Technologies, LLC, and SYSUSA, Inc. We expect 20 incumbent workers to be trained with these funds.
- The Board approved and finalized the FY 2020 Audit and Uniform Guidance, as prepared by our independent audit firm, RRF, CPAs and Advisors. I am pleased to share that our Audit and Uniform Guidance was clear, with no management recommendations.
- I am pleased to share that The *SkillSource* Group, Inc. has been designated 2021 Platinum Status by GuideStar, the online directory of non-profit organizations through the United States. The Platinum designation represents the highest level of organizational transparency that can be achieved.
- The *SkillSource* Group Board of Directors will next meet on March 19th

Necessary Board Actions Aligned with Approved 2017-2020 Strategic Priorities

Become a Thought Leader for Workforce Development

Review of Final 2021 – 2024 Virginia Career Works Northern Strategic Plan

The VCW Northern Board Consultant, Lori Strumpf, provided a brief update on the Board’s Strategic Planning Work Group and its meetings and outcomes to date.

A motion was made by Louis Cernak and seconded by Susana Marino for the final review of the 2021-2024 Virginia Career Works Northern Strategic Plan. The motion was unanimously approved by the full Board of Directors, with no abstentions.

Impact of COVID Pandemic on Virginia Career Works Centers and Operations

David Hunn gave an update on current impacts of the Pandemic on Virginia Career Works Centers and operations. He shared the VCW Northern Region map and gave updates on what the reopening plan may look like moving forward. Mr. Hunn also shared the current process of finding a new location for a VCWN Center.

Expand Talent Pipeline of Youth and Adults for Business

Overview of Final 2021 – 2024 VCW Northern Local Plan (Submitted to State)

Seema Jain gave presentation on the four-year action plan designed to develop, align, and integrate service delivery strategies and to support the State's vision and strategic and operational goals. Local plans must be consistent with Virginia's Combined State Plan, which was recently approved by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Federal WIOA law requires each LWDB develop and submit to the Governor a comprehensive four-year local plan, in partnership with the CLEOs. The goal is to move beyond simply just complying to WIOA guidelines, but to formulate a more meaningful strategic planning approach for the local workforce system. A local workforce area must align with the state's vision and planned activities across its workforce system.

Every 4 years, the LWDB will develop a new Local Plan. At the end of the first 2-year period of the 4-year local plan, each Local WDB, in partnership with the CLEOs, must review the local plan and prepare and submit modifications to the local plan. The Northern Virginia CLEO, Chairman Jeff McKay, approved the Local Plan prior to public posting on February 1, 2021.

The Plan was publicly posted on the VCW Northern website from February 1-February 24, 2021, allowing for public review and comments. Advertisements were placed in the Washington Post for multiple weeks. No public comments were received. It was submitted to the State on March 1, 2021 and can be accessed online.

This plan involves:

- More forward thinking - greater focus not only on operational strategies related to the administration of WIOA programs, but also looking more strategically at partnerships and interagency collaboration.
- Examining strengths and weaknesses of the local workforce system.
- How measurable results and performance will be achieved, and a process for continuous improvement, transparency and accountability.

VCWN's Local plan is also in alignment with the State's Strategic Goals. Seema presented each Local Plan section (1-5) and what it entails.

2021 State Certification of Virginia Career Works Northern Job Centers

Seema Jain gave a presentation on Virginia Career Works- Northern Centers 2021 state Certification. The purpose of State certification is to ensure center's consistent delivery of services, ensure continuous improvement, evaluate effectiveness, and eligibility for One-Stop Infrastructure funding.

Seema reviewed the requirements for certification:

- The Virginia Board of Workforce Development must review certification criteria every 2 years
- Each Local Workforce Area must have at least one certified Comprehensive One-Stop Center
- Must certify Comprehensive and Affiliate Centers every 3 years

Seema noted that Area #11(VCWN) has one Comprehensive Center and five Affiliate Centers.

The criteria for certification are as follows:

- Evaluations of Effectiveness (18 factors)
- Evaluations of physical and programmatic accessibility (12 factors)
- Continuous Improvement (3 factors)
- Quality Assurance (5 factors)
- Center rated "Meets" or "Not Meets" on each factor.
- Center must be rated "Meets" on all factors to be certified.

The certification process will take place February 2021 – May 2021. During this time a Center Certification Team (CCT) will be appointed. Area 11's CCT is led by Lori Strumpf and comprised of VCWN Board members and staff. The CCT will conduct virtual desk reviews and virtual visits/interviews. Interviews must include Center Manager, EO Officer, random sample of at least 20% of frontline staff.

After the interviews the CCT shall determine as a group if the One-Stop Center has met all criteria. Evidence must be documented on Certification Application and a written determination must be submitted within 30 days of completing review. CCT will submit documentation and recommendation to the VCWN Board. The VCWN Board will approve recommendation at the June 3rd Board Meeting and will send recommendation to the Chief Local Elected Official for final approval. All documentation must be submitted to VCCS by June 30, 2021.

Expand Strategic Partnerships Across Northern Virginia to Accomplish Our Goals

Highlights of Unique Jail – Training Partnership Leading to Infrastructure Employment

Ann Hyslop and Mouly Aloumouati gave a presentation on the SSG Grant award of \$194K for EEI grant to replicate jail-based Employment Center and services from Fairfax County Jail to the Prince William-Manassas Regional Adult Detention Center. Grant ends: June 30, 2021. The goal is to provide workforce training and job placement support essential to reentry for pre and post release offenders.

Since February 2021 the Center has seen many visits. Ann highlighted that 44 work release inmates have been enrolled in EEI, 29 of them have completed training and overall, 49 work release inmates have obtained employment with an average hourly wage of \$14.39.

Northern Virginia One Stop Operator Update on Caseload and Service Strategy for FY 2021

Tatiana Nuth from Fairfax County Department of Family Services, the One Stop Operator for the Virginia Career Work Northern Region, gave a presentation reporting on the Employment and Training caseloads, job placements and related outcomes for fiscal year 2021 through January 2021.

Board Business Items

Program Management Reports

David Hunn provided an overview of the Center Program Management report, which highlighted service and performance data for the fiscal year of 2021 through January 2021.

Executive Director Items

David Hunn provided an overview on FY21 WIOA Training expenditures, by vendor. Finally, he reviewed the pending grants and contracts under consideration by *SkillSource*.

Adjournment

With all Board activities completed, Chairman Christopher Rieley sought a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made and seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.