

## **Virginia Career Works Northern Region**

**Thursday, September 7, 2023**

### **Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting**

#### **Summary Notes**

##### **Members Present:**

Robert Bartolotta	Debora Harvey	Todd Rowley
Michael Becketts	Debby Hopkins (for Sheila	Roopal Saran
Glenda Blake	Dixon)	Daisy Sauls
Anthony Cancelosi	Roxana Mejia	Cindy Shao
Louis Cernak	Derwin Overton	Zuzana Steen
Julie Coons	Steve Partridge	Hector Velez
Edward Dupass	Leanne Rerko	Michele Weatherly
George Harben	Christopher Rieley	Tonya White

**Executive Director:** David Hunn

**Staff:** Sabrina Miller, Seema Jain, Nancy Nguyen, Rebecca Bennett, Wossenu Weldekiros, Deborah Shaffer, Sheila Jones, Karla Quiroz, Angela Harris, Claudia Barrios, Lauren Parker, Virginia Judd, Jannette Sequeira, Jenny Pardo, Haimanot Andaleum, and Eliza Chappell

**Observers:** Robin Baker, Lindsay Washington, Toi Tanton, Trang Montgomery, Mike Bozeth, Greg Vaughn, William Browning, Kimberly Carr, Shelly Rodriguez, Myra Mobley, Susan Orehowsky, Kayla May, Linda Siam, Sandra Zacarias and Jennifer Lucio Corsini

The meeting commenced at **8:35 a.m.**

**Board Member Roll Call:** Sabrina Miller conducted roll call and a quorum was met.

**Approval of June 2, 2023 Summary Notes:** A motion was made by Louis Cernak to approve the Board Summary notes from June 2, 2023 and was seconded by Michael Becketts. The Summary Notes were approved unanimously by the full Board of Directors, with no abstentions.

##### **Chairman's Report:**

Mr. Chris Rieley, filling in for Mr. William Trumbull, the Chairman of the Virginia Career Works Northern Region Board of Directors, welcomed the Board to the meeting.

Mr. Rieley discussed the organization being nearly through the First Quarter of FY 2024. Our Team and the Virginia Career Works One Stop Operator, the Fairfax County Department of Family Services, finished FY 2023 with an excellent year of program expansion, innovative partnerships, and outstanding job placements. Mr. Rieley shared a brief overview of new issues that have emerged over the Summer and then got into the specific Agenda items in the Board Package.

Mr. Rieley sent congratulations to one of our fellow Board Members, Ms. Debora Harvey, the Executive Director of the Heavy Equipment Operators of Virginia, for her recent appointment by Governor Youngkin to the State Board of Workforce Development. Deborah joins another VCW Northern Board Member, Zuzana Steen, of Micron, on the State Workforce Board.

Mr. Rieley updated the board on the Implementation of State Workforce Portal. At our June Board meeting, our Team outlined their Implementation Plan for moving ahead with the State Workforce Portal, as of July 1, 2023. Our Team, and other local workforce areas throughout the State, had been planning for months on how best to move ahead with Portal implementation, with all its technological challenges. In early August, State officials notified all local workforce areas that Portal Implementation was being suspended immediately and that State officials would not be holding local workforce areas responsible for implementation. No reasons were provided by State officials.

Mr. Rieley discussed the U.S. House of Representatives Committee proposing massive Workforce program funding reductions. In July, the Appropriations Subcommittee for the U.S. House of Representatives approved an FY 2024 Budget proposal that recommends significant funding reductions to the WIOA programs, including substantial cuts to the WIOA Adult Program, and complete elimination of the WIOA Youth Program and the Senior Community Service Employment Program. The VCWN Board Chairman signed a letter expressing our Board's concerns to Congresswoman Jennifer Wexton that is included in today's Board Package that we will discuss in our Agenda review. Mr. Rieley noted that this Subcommittee budget has not been considered by the full Appropriations Committee or the full House of Representatives, likely due to insufficient support by many House members.

Mr. Rieley then updated the board on the WIOA Training Expenditure Requirement. Our Team learned recently that the Governor and Labor Secretary will be proposing legislation later this year to increase the WIOA Training Funding percentage to 50% (from 40%), to be effective July 2024. The definition of training will be expanded to include time spent by WIOA case managers for job placement of WIOA jobseekers. **In 2015, our local workforce area was one of the most vocal opponents of this initial legislation, but it was accepted by the Fairfax County Board as it was proposed by a Democratic Governor.** The VCWN Board needs to see much more detail on how the definition of training expenditures will be outlined in the policy documents.

This Summer, our Board staff worked closely with Michele Weatherly of the Prince William Department of Economic Development to plan and organize the Prince William Workforce Round Table, a taped interview session that included Ms. Christina Winn, the Director of the Prince William County Department of Economic Development, Dr. Anne Kress, President of Northern Virginia Community College, and Ms. Latanya McDade, the District Superintendent of Prince William Public Schools. This video interview was taped at TriVision Studios in Chantilly and the final product is close to being produced. Michele Weatherly shared her perspective on the Round Table taping and how her department plans to utilize this video session.

Later in September, the SkillSource Group Board Chairman, Christopher Rieley, in collaboration with Ms. Rebecca Moudry, the Director of the Fairfax County Department of Economic Initiatives will publish a new workforce editorial in The Washington Business Journal, highlighting a new

Fairfax County initiative called Talent Up Fairfax. There will be a briefing on this initiative later in today's Board Meeting and its anticipated impact on the local workforce system. The SkillSource Group, Inc. has been invited to administer the Talent Up Fairfax program, with funding made available from the American Rescue Plan (ARPA).

Finally, in the September 15th edition of the Washington Business Journal, the Virginia Career Works Northern Region will be highlighted in a new Workforce Directory, to be highlighted to the region's employers who read the Washington Business Journal.

### **Introduction of New Board Members**

Mr. Rieley then introduced a new board member. He called on each board member and affiliations and invited them to introduce themselves to their fellow Board Members.

- Michael Hain, Director of Human Resources, Salamander Resort and Spa

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

**The SkillSource Group, Inc. (SSG) Board of Directors:** George Harben reported for the SSG Board of Directors. Since the Virginia Career Works Northern Board meeting in June 2023, the SSG Board of Directors met later in June and acted on the following items:

- Reviewed and approved the Final FY 2024 Budget for SkillSource, the Virginia Career Works Northern and the WIOA One Stop Operator. This Board will be asked to ratify the updated and revised FY 2024 Budget.
- Harben highlighted that the FY 2024 Budget is continuing to fund armed security guards at two American Job Centers in Northern Virginia, Alexandria, and Woodbridge, which include Virginia Employment Commission employees. **The Virginia Employment Commission is providing no funding to support these security guards in this fiscal year and the Agency has not responded to our request to share 50% of security costs in FY 2024.** VCWN will discuss our budget appeal to the Virginia Labor Secretary later in the meeting.
- In June, SkillSource was notified by the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office that our SkillSource Group Pre-Release Employment Center at the Fairfax Jail was to close. That Center had been opened since 2008 (15 years) and served over 900 inmates transitioning back to the community. While the Center has closed down, SkillSource staff were able to negotiate having a staff person work closely with inmates at the Fairfax Adult Detention Center, which will be an ongoing service.
- The SkillSource Group Board authorized the purchase of a new SkillSource Management Information System, using LaunchPad as a product vendor. LaunchPad is a Salesforce FedRamp certified vendor, and this new system will be used for our non-WIOA programs such as Ticket to Work and the TANF Employment Assistance program.

- Finally, Mr. Harben shared that The SkillSource Group President has announced that the offices in Tysons Corner will be open five days per week, starting on Monday June 5th. SSG staff will continue with a hybrid work environment, both in office and off-site. The SkillSource offices will also be used by trainees with the Senior Community Service Employment Program and the WIOA Youth Program, as needed.

**Youth Committee:** Leanne Rerko reported for the Youth Committee.

- The Youth Committee last met on June 6, 2023.
- As of May 31, 2023, the Northern Virginia WIOA Youth Program was at 154 enrollments, with 1 In-School Youth enrollment.
- The Committee was apprised of the activities around the upcoming summer Educating Youth through Employment (or EYE) program, which the Board will hear more about during our meeting today.
- The Committee approved hiring two new positions to support the expansion of the Northern Virginia WIOA Youth Program, including a part-time Youth Ambassador to conduct outreach to youth. The other position is a WIOA Youth Job Developer position who would develop work-based learning opportunities with local employers and identify permanent employment for enrolled youth. Both positions have now been hired
- Lastly, the Committee reviewed the PY 2022 obligations and expenditures, as well as the performance report for the third quarter; the Northern Virginia WIOA Youth program exceeded three of the five performance measures. The program was falling short on Measurable Skills Gain, but is expected to meet this measure by the end of the program year.

### **Necessary Board Actions Aligned with Approved 2021 – 2024 Strategic Priorities**

#### **Become a Thought Leader for Workforce Development**

#### **Virginia Career Works – Northern Letter to Congress on FY 2024 Appropriations Funding Level**

David Hunn reviewed the letter to Congress, highlighting the negative impacts of the allocations included in the FY 2024 House Appropriations Subcommittee for Labor-HHS Education and Related Agencies bill. The Subcommittee bill proposes to reduce core Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I funding by 50.1 % or \$2.85 billion, and includes:

- A cut of \$886 million for WIOA Adult Job Training funding to States. In Northern Virginia, our five American Job Centers served over 50,000 jobseekers this past year, of which at least 85% of these jobseekers meet WIOA Adult program eligibility.
- Funding elimination for WIOA Youth Job Training state grants, a cut of \$948 million that would eliminate job training and employment services. Our Northern Virginia WIOA

Youth Program is on track to serve over 200 at-risk young adults currently, one of the largest youth employment programs in Virginia.

- Funding elimination for the Senior Community Service Employment Program, a cut of \$405 million. Our workforce area is a subcontractor with the National Council on Aging and our Northern Virginia SCSEP Program reaches over 130 older workers throughout the region, one of the largest older worker programs in the Mid-Atlantic region.

If enacted, these proposed funding reductions and program eliminations will dramatically impact our ability to serve Northern Virginia jobseekers and employers. It was asked that these anticipated program impacts be shared with all Committee members before the full U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee hearing on this legislation.

### **Virginia Career Works – Northern Appeal of FY 2024 Infrastructure Funding Agreement**

David Hunn reviewed the Appeal letter on Proposed FY 2024 Infrastructure Funding Agreement - American Job Centers, Alexandria and Prince William.

### **Ratification of Updated FY 2024 SkillSource Group Budget**

Nancy Nguyen discussed the Final Draft of the FY 2024 Budget shows a balanced budget with total revenues equal total expenses, at \$11.294 million. The increase in Net Assets with Donor Restrictions is expected to offset the decrease in Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions, resulting in no deficit or surplus.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Increase / (Decrease) in Net Assets</b>
United Way Financial Empowerment Center (UW FEC)	16,823
Ticket to Work	(17,161)
Unrestricted Program	(5,039)
Indirect cost	5,379
<b>Total Increase / (Decrease) in Net Assets</b>	<b>(0)</b>

This draft of the budget incorporates the following changes regarding the WIOA programs:

- Addition of new Dislocated Worker funding of \$47,873, which is the result of fixing an error in the State formula calculating Dislocated Worker funding allocations to local workforce areas. This new funding is added to the temporarily unobligated funds.
- Increase in Dislocated Worker Training to \$65,000 from \$55,000 in the second draft of the budget.
- One-Stop Operator – Fairfax County Department of Family Services

- Revised the number of staff: 22.5 FTEs for the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs combined, 1.5 FTE for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), and 3 for the Prince William ELEVATE program.

Other changes include:

- Conclusion of the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) project (Contract #17-033) funded by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) at the end of fiscal year 2023. The previous budget draft assumed the project continues into fiscal year 2024.
- Updating the FY 2024 SCEP budget based on the actual funding level stipulated in the FY24 MOU between SkillSource the National Council on Aging (NCOA).
- Updating health insurance and life & disability premiums increases, with health insurance.
- premium increases by 15.24% on average for all employees, and 0% premium increase for life & disability insurance in FY 2024. The previous budget versions assume 9% increase of health insurance and 6% for life & disability insurance.
- Miscellaneous staff time allocation adjustments across grants and programs.

The SkillSource Group, Inc. Board of Directors approved this budget at its June 23, 2023, meeting.

A motion to ratify Final Draft of the FY 2024 *SkillSource* Budget, was made by George Harben and seconded by Debora Harvey. The motion was unanimously approved by the full Board of Directors.

### **Expand Talent Pipeline of Youth and Adults for Business**

#### **Review of Northern Virginia Career Pathways for Refugee State Grant**

Eliza Chapell presented to the Board of Director the Northern Virginia Career Pathways for refugees State Grant. This grant is targeted to support WIOA Clients Transitioning from Afghanistan and Ukraine during the period of November 2023 until March 31, 2024. \$168,000 has been allocated to reduce barriers for clients. This includes certification training, Work-Based learning opportunities, interview coaching, resume writing and more.

Ms. Chapell shared data about NVCPR clients, this data included age, gender, visa status etc. While also providing information on the potential positive economic impact of refugee clients under the new grant.

Lastly, Ms. Chapell shared a success story and the goals and progress of the Northern Virginia Career Pathways for Refugees WIOA Initiative.

#### **2023 Educating Youth through Employment (EYE) Program Update**

Seema Jain presented on the wrap up of the 2023 EYE Program. The Educating Youth Through Employment (EYE) Program, a private sector initiative of The SkillSource Group, Inc., in collaboration with the Fairfax County Government, provides young adults with professional paid employment opportunities at agencies, non-profit organizations, and private sector companies throughout Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties.

This year, Fairfax County Department of Family Services – Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) and Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS), Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act Youth Program (WIOA Youth); and Kaiser Permanente (KP) sponsored young adults ages 14-24 with paid work experiences for just under six weeks. Participants were provided the opportunity to build professional skills through workforce development trainings throughout the summer. EYE program counselors acted as mentors and provided guidance as the participants built important skills for their future.

In 2020 and 2021, the program converted to 100% virtual training sessions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, the program offered both in-person work experiences for WIOA and DARS Youth and virtual training for County agency-sponsored youth. In 2023, the program returned to pre-pandemic services, and training and work experiences for all youth were offered in-person.

Ms. Jain shared the EYE process beginning in January through April, which includes meeting with sponsoring agencies and preparing applications and marketing materials. April begins the outreach to EYE Youth individuals and collecting applications. May through June, EYE counselors start and continue to collect applications and payroll documents. EYE Youth participants also go through two paid job readiness trainings. Finally, July through August, EYE Youth participants start their paid work experiences, attend a career exploration session and then come together for a EYE Ceremony recognition event.

Ms. Jain shared outcome data as follows.

Applications received:171

Enrolled:152

Placed:140

Completed:124

Lastly, Ms. Jain highlighted the EYE Worksites and shared success stories of two EYE Participants.

### **Expand Strategic Partnerships Across Northern Virginia to Accomplish Our Goals**

#### **Northern Virginia One Stop Operator Update on Caseload and Service Strategy for FY 2024**

Sandra Zacarias and Trang Montgomery from the Fairfax County Department of Family Services, the One-Stop Operator for the Virginia Career Works Northern Region, gave a presentation

reporting on the Training caseloads for FY 2023 during the period of July 2022 through June 30, 2023. They also provided an update on FY2024 for the period of July 1-31, 2023.

## **Build Sustainable Partnerships with Region's Targeted Industries**

### **Overview of New Fairfax County Talent Up Initiative**

Seema Jain and Rebecca Bennett gave a presentation of the Talent Up Initiative. Talent Up Is a Work-Based Learning (WBL) 17-month demonstration pilot project funded by Fairfax County's Department of Economic Initiative (DEI). \$2.3 million initiative using ARPA funding, that will end on December 31, 2024. Staffing costs included part-time Project Director and 3 staff positions. Talent Up staff will utilize multiple strategies to engage approximately 400-500 Fairfax County employers (including employers interested in revising their job background and education requirements to be more inclusive of previously overlooked candidates who may not have initially qualified). Talent Up will sponsor 185 or more temp-to-perm internships to create or expand the use of work-based learning as a low risk and high-return method of filling hard-to-recruit jobs in gateway occupations.

Ms. Jain and Mrs. Bennett reviewed the program benefits, the eligibility criteria, and the Talent Up Fairfax goals.

## **Board Business Items**

### **Program Management Reports**

David Hunn provided an overview of the Program Management report, which highlighted service and performance data for FY 2023 from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023.

### ***Executive Director Items***

David Hunn provided an overview on FY 2023 (through June 2023) WIOA Training expenditures, by vendor and OJT Commitments, The New Skilled Trades Partnership with Google Data Centers, New Northern Virginia Health Foundation Report on Health Disparities, and the VCW Northern Annual WIOA Compliance Review. Finally, he reviewed the ***SkillSource*** Group Summary of Grants and Contracts Award Matrix

### **Adjournment**

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.