



BLUE RIDGE REGION

**Chief Local Elected Officials Consortium
Local Workforce Development Area 3**

September 23, 2020 – 2:30 PM – 4:00 PM

<https://vccs.zoom.us/j/99039940738?pwd=bDhGNVYrTmdRVHNLWHczazZIM0h6QT09>

| CLEO Members | Locality | Present |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| The Honorable Stephen Bennett | Alleghany County | |
| The Honorable Billy Martin | Botetourt County | X |
| The Honorable Tom Sibold, Jr. | City of Covington | |
| The Honorable Kathi Toelke | Craig County | X |
| The Honorable E. Cline Brubaker | Franklin County | |
| The Honorable Sherman Lea | City of Roanoke | |
| The Honorable Martha Hooker | Roanoke County | X |
| The Honorable John Saunders | City of Salem | |
| Alternate Members | Locality | Present |
| Jonathan Lanford | Alleghany County | X |
| Gary Larrowe | Botetourt County | |
| n/a | City of Covington | |
| Dan Collins | Craig County | |
| Christopher Whitlow | Franklin County | X |
| The Honorable Joseph Cobb | City of Roanoke | X |
| The Honorable P. Jason Peters | Roanoke County | |
| n/a | City of Salem | |

| Board Staff | Present |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Morgan Romeo | X |
| Leah Gibson | X |
| Michelle Brennan | X |
| Bobby Welch | X |

Welcome

Martha Hooker called the meeting to order at 2:39pm and welcomed the group.

Review of Electronic Meeting Process

Morgan Romeo reviewed the process for an electronic meeting of a public body during the COVID-19 crisis. She outlined the parameters of having an electronic meeting as approved by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Attorney General's office. Morgan noted that only items related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the continuation of operations during the pandemic could be discussed. Morgan also noted that if any votes were taken, they must be roll call votes and recorded as such in the minutes.

Public Comment

There were no guests present and no comments from the public.

Consent Agenda

Martha Hooker asked all attendees to review the minutes from the July 8, 2020 and August 21, 2020 meetings as well as the five (5) workforce policies with updates for approval.

CLEO Action: Joe Cobb moved to accept the minutes and policies as presented. The motion was seconded by Jonathan Lanford. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| CLEO Members | Vote |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Jonathan Lanford | Yes |
| The Honorable Billy Martin | |
| The Honorable Martha Hooker | Yes |
| Christopher Whitlow | Yes |
| The Honorable Joseph Cobb | Yes |
| The Honorable Kathi Toelke | Yes |

Director's Report

Morgan Romeo provided an update on three new funding opportunities that the Board has been presented. The INSPIRE Grant is an opportunity through the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), which serves a greater area that includes Alleghany, Covington, Craig & Botetourt. This grant provides an opportunity to serve those affected by substance abuse with job training & career services. She noted that we typically consider grants that serve the entire region, but the data supports the greater impact of substance abuse felt on these localities within our region, and the Board felt we need to take advantage to help this section of our workforce region. Board staff are currently considering applying for this grant to target individuals who have been in treatment for at least 6 months, regularly attending treatment and provide services to continue treatment as well as provide supportive services to assist in getting those participants back into the workforce. Jon Lanford expressed thanks to Morgan for bringing the opportunity to their attention and doing all possible to support those localities. Kathi Toelke agreed that Craig feels the impact of substance abuse and many will be assisted with this service. Joe Cobb noted that we should do all we can to assist these individuals, even if the grant does not serve the entire region.

The National Dislocated Worker Grant is funding provided by the USDOL to the states to help those who have been dislocated from their jobs due to COVID-19. Virginia received \$3.3 million, which local workforce areas can apply for to either provide additional training tuition assistance or provide disaster related employment opportunities. The Board is considering applying for funding for both types of services. The funding request would be for limited funds for training, as we want to ensure we can expend it all, in addition to our WIOA Title I program funds already allocated. The Board would also consider applying for disaster-related employment funds, to help non-profits in our region hire part time workers to help with cleaning and sanitization services. Board staff have already reached out to all local school systems as well as the United Way and organizations providing childcare and have received very positive feedback and support that this service would be utilized within our region. Morgan noted that no one from Franklin County responded to her requests regarding this potential project. Chris Whitlow noted that he would talk with Morgan separately and work to help make those connections for Franklin County. This grant application is due Monday.

Morgan also shared that the Board applied for CARES Act funding through Roanoke City, which was available to non-profits in the locality. The application is for funds to assist in purchasing a full Zoom license (to allow for full capabilities including recording Zooms), a DocuSign corporate license (as we have exceeded our usage with current license), and supplies to make the Resource Room at the Roanoke Center to be fully available. Currently, only about half of the Resource Room computers can be used by customers at a time because of social distancing requirements. Board staff worked with DOLI to have a review of OSHA requirements to determine supplies needed to make all Resource Room computers accessible for customers during this time. The request is for approximately \$16,000 and we expect to hear back soon. Martha Hooker noted that Roanoke County may have unspent CARES Act money and she will

share updates when that is available. Jon Lanford noted that their locality is making a request through state and federal representatives to have the deadline for using CARES Act funds to be extended beyond 12/30/2020, in order to have a more meaningful impact with those funds in their localities.

COVID-19 One Stop Operations

Morgan noted that the Roanoke Center is the only center open in the region currently for workforce services. The process for service customers at the Roanoke Center has changed a few times to adapt to serving the population and protecting staff at this time. Currently, there have been no staff exposures or positive tests from staff at the Roanoke Center. The Franklin Center is open to the public and for students, but there is no staff present at the Resource Room and Title I Program staff are present only occasionally, as needed. The Covington Center is not open to the public at all right now, but there is Title I program staff on-site. The VEC has added 11 new positions in Covington and 8 at the Franklin Center.

Memorandum of Understanding Modification

Morgan shared with the group that this document had been updated to remove our previous WIOA Title I program services contractor, Ross IES, as well as a few logistical updates. JobCorps is now providing direct services locally in our region, and that was added as well. The updated document is out for signatures from all partners.

CLEO-Board Agreement

Morgan shared the agreement with the group. The agreement was previously approved about 2 years ago, but a modification was made, on page 30 of the packet. The modification notes that the WVVDB is now providing the WIOA Title I Adult & Dislocated Worker programs directly, and that program operations are overseen by the CLEO.

CLEO Action: Chris Whitlow moved to accept the agreement as presented. The motion was seconded by Billy Martin. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| CLEO Members | Vote |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Jonathan Lanford | Yes |
| The Honorable Billy Martin | Yes |
| The Honorable Martha Hooker | Yes |
| Christopher Whitlow | Yes |
| The Honorable Joseph Cobb | Yes |
| The Honorable Kathi Toelke | Yes |

PY2020 and PY2021 Performance Negotiations

Morgan noted that the information on page 35 of the packet was presented to the Board at their meeting last week. Every 2 years, the local workforce boards negotiate Title I program performance measures with the Virginia Community College System (VCCS), that oversees those programs within Virginia. Board staff recently negotiated for the performance measures for this program year and next, and the results were in the packet. The USDOL provides measures to each state and then the state provides goals to each local area, to negotiate. However, there is not always much negotiation within that conversation, because the state has already agreed to the levels with the federal government. Morgan shared that both VCCS and DOL confirmed that they did not take COVID-19 into consideration when setting performance measures. The Board was unhappy with this fact, that we are in a state of emergency and that is not considered in our employment and wages performance measures. The Board requested that Board staff write a letter to the state to express their disagreement that COVID-19 was not

considered and go on record that the measures may not be attainable due to that impact. The Board also is asking for the CLEO to jointly sign and send that letter with them, to do all we can do to express that we are uncomfortable with the goals set by the state.

CLEO Action: Billy Martin moved to jointly sign the letter with the Board to send to the state regarding PY2020 and PY2021 performance measures. The motion was seconded by Joe Cobb. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| CLEO Members | Vote |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Jonathan Lanford | Yes |
| The Honorable Billy Martin | Yes |
| The Honorable Martha Hooker | Yes |
| Christopher Whitlow | Yes |
| The Honorable Joseph Cobb | Yes |
| The Honorable Kathi Toelke | Yes |

CLEO Action: Kathi Toelke moved to table the acceptance of the PY2020 and PY2021 performance measures pending VCCS response to the above-mentioned letter. The motion was seconded by Joe Cobb. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| CLEO Members | Vote |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Jonathan Lanford | Yes |
| The Honorable Billy Martin | Yes |
| The Honorable Martha Hooker | Yes |
| Christopher Whitlow | Yes |
| The Honorable Joseph Cobb | Yes |
| The Honorable Kathi Toelke | Yes |

Title I Adult & Dislocated Worker Report

Michelle Brennan, the new Program Manager for the Adult & Dislocated Worker programs in-house, provided an update on the program operations since July 1, 2020. The report presented on page 36 of the packet. Michelle noted that all staff are new as of 7/1/20, that no staff were retained from the previous contractor. In July, staff attended a lot of internal and external training. In August, the team began enrolling new participants, enrolling 15 Adults and 3 Dislocated Workers. So far in September, there have been 13 Adults enrolled and 6 Dislocated Workers. Obligated funds have doubled since the August figures presented on the report. Morgan noted that we are monitoring the Dislocated Worker funds, since many of those participants are dual enrolled into the Trade Act program, which uses their own funds for training. Morgan also noted that we are in conversation with the state to see if the Dislocated Worker program can be used to serve individuals who have been temporarily laid off due to COVID-19.

CLEO Action: Billy Martin moved to accept the report presented. The motion was seconded by Chris Whitlow. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| CLEO Members | Vote |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Jonathan Lanford | |
| The Honorable Billy Martin | Yes |
| The Honorable Martha Hooker | |
| Christopher Whitlow | Yes |
| The Honorable Joseph Cobb | |

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| The Honorable Kathi Toelke | Yes |
|----------------------------|-----|

Financial Reports

Bobby Welch presented the PY2019 Budget vs. Actual – Year End report with the group. Most figures were pulled directly from the financial records that were kept by the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC) who handled financial records for the Board before Bobby was hired internally to be our grant accountant. One discrepancy he noted when he began working on the records was that the entire 2-year funding for some grants was included in the PY2019 Board budget, rather than just the 1-year worth that should have been included. Morgan also noted that WIOA Title I program funds were lower than we had anticipated, but nothing to be of concern.

CLEO Action: Billy Martin moved to accept the report presented. The motion was seconded by Joe Cobb. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| CLEO Members | Vote |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Jonathan Lanford | |
| The Honorable Billy Martin | Yes |
| The Honorable Martha Hooker | |
| Christopher Whitlow | Yes |
| The Honorable Joseph Cobb | Yes |
| The Honorable Kathi Toelke | Yes |

Bobby asked the group to review the PY2020 Budget Revision found on page 46. The changes are that funding for the Rapid Response COVID-19 Business Assistance grant and the Roanoke Center funding agreement was added.

CLEO Action: Joe Cobb moved to approve the budget modification presented. The motion was seconded by Billy Martin. The motion was carried by a roll call vote as follows:

| CLEO Members | Vote |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Jonathan Lanford | |
| The Honorable Billy Martin | Yes |
| The Honorable Martha Hooker | |
| Christopher Whitlow | Yes |
| The Honorable Joseph Cobb | Yes |
| The Honorable Kathi Toelke | Yes |

Regional Career & Technical Education Study Report

Morgan noted that all attendees had received a copy of the report via email last week. The study allowed a third party to make recommendations to regionalize CTE programs in the area. Some suggestions on how to do that included a regional physical facility, the academy method of providing CTE, facility specialization, virtual learning, sharing equipment, sharing instructors, and a mobile CTE lab. The report also suggested the creation of a regional CTE collaborative group to meet on a regular basis and establish priorities, using the report as a starting point. The schools requested that Board staff lead that collaborative, and Morgan will be providing that service to the group. The collaborative will be made up of school staff, business members, community colleges, Board staff and Morgan would like there to be at least 2 CLEO representatives as well. Joe Cobb volunteered to participate in the collaborative. Chris Whitlow noted that it is important for Franklin County to be involved and he would discuss with the Board of Supervisors to delegate a representative to serve. Morgan also offered to review the report in

more detail with anyone who was interested. Joe Cobb, Chris Whitlow and Martha Hooker all requested such a meeting.

Updates from CLEO Members

Morgan asked the group if they had any ideas or projects that the Board could help with. None were presented, but Morgan ensured they all understood to contact Board staff with any needs they have.

Upcoming Meetings

The next CLEO Consortium meeting will be January 6, 2021 at 2:30pm.

Adjournment

Morgan Romeo adjourned the meeting at 3:39pm.