



BLUE RIDGE REGION

**Western Virginia Workforce Development Board
Executive Committee Meeting**

October 26, 2020 – 11:00 AM

Virtual Meeting – Zoom

<https://vccs.zoom.us/j/87250995786?pwd=V1INV2hXaW11cU1vOG5xSXVsMkRDQT09>

Members	Present
Casey Nicely	X
Crystal Hall	X
Karen Michalski	X
Phil Peters	X
Michael Gardner	X
Dave Olsen	X

Staff	Present
Morgan Romeo	X
Leah Gibson	X
Bobby Welch	X

Welcome

Casey Nicely called the meeting to order and welcomed all at 11:04am.

Review of Electronic Meeting Process

Morgan Romeo reviewed the process for an electronic meeting of a public body during the COVID-19 crisis. A screen was shared with all Executive Committee members outlining 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 for public comment.

Consent Agenda

The group reviewed the minutes from the June 19, 2020 meeting.

Executive Committee Action: A motion was made by Crystal Hall to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Dave Olsen. The motion was carried by a roll call vote:

Casey Nicely	Yes
Crystal Hall	Yes
Phil Peters	Yes

Michael Gardner	Yes
David Olsen	Yes

Director’s Report

Finance Chair Appointment

Morgan shared that Karen Michalski had self-nominated to be the Finance Committee Chair/Treasurer for the Board.

Executive Committee Action: Dave Olsen moved to accept the nomination of Karen Michalski to serve as the Board Treasurer/Finance Committee Chair. Crystal Hall seconded the motion. The motion was carried by a roll call vote:

Casey Nicely	Yes
Crystal Hall	Yes
Phil Peters	Yes
Michael Gardner	Yes
David Olsen	Yes

Title I Programs Report

Morgan reviewed the program report in the packet with the group. As of the end of the first quarter, the WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs were not yet at 25% of the budget, but are on track considering all staff are new and the first month was training and onboarding. Phil asked if other areas were struggling around the state due to COVID-19. Morgan noted that she had investigated enrollment across the state, and we are performing higher than many areas, and that, yes, many areas are struggling for enrollments. Morgan shared that the Youth program enrollments are on track, at exactly 25% of the goal for the year at the end of September.

Morgan shared with the group that expenditures for the Youth program were much lower than we would like to see after a quarter of the year. She had a call with the Vice President of The WorkPlace to discuss this concern as well as spoke with our attorney. The group agreed that when we receive the next monthly invoice, if there is not a significant improvement in spending for the program, Morgan will send a letter from the Executive Committee addressing our concerns and potential changes to the contract terms, including canceling contract for default, as a result. After the letter is sent and a response from The WorkPlace is received, the group will discuss next steps. Morgan also shared with the group that The WorkPlace has yet to hire the second full-time position they had proposed in their proposal for the contract and is in their budget. Morgan also noted Board staff are having conversations with the state regarding underspending youth funds and the impact that can have on our local budget and operations. The state has also encouraged Board staff to explore ways we can create youth initiatives within the region to help move along potential program expenditures by the contractor. Board staff were approached by Joe Cobb, Roanoke City Vice Mayor, with a proposal to work with local government to set up internship opportunities for youth. Board staff are exploring this as an option moving forward.

Economic Equity Initiative

Morgan reminded the group of this grant that we received in February, right before COVID-19 impacted our community. The Board staff requested an extension on this grant, which was set to end March 31, 2021. The extension was approved, and the grant will now end 6/30/2021. The grant provides cohort-style training that runs concurrently with tutoring and soft-skill training from Adult Education. The current training is Certified Nurse Aide training through TAP, in partnership with Medical Facilities of America, who has guaranteed interviews for those who successfully complete the course.

Norfolk Southern Initiative

Morgan shared with the group that we have slightly more funds left in this pot than expected at this time. Board staff are preparing to send a letter to the City Manager to see if we can use these funds to serve individuals who have been laid off due to COVID-19, and not just those impacted pre-COVID, as originally proposed. We want to have the city's support since this is a change from the initial service plan.

H1B One Workforce Grant

Morgan shared this new grant opportunity with the committee. This is a Department of Labor funded grant that will work to keep jobs within the country, and work to limit the number of H1B visas being utilized. Board staff, in partnership with staff from the New River Valley and Martinsville areas, are working to apply for this funding, which is due November 12. If approved, we would receive funding for 4 years to serve students, spanning from high school to 4-year universities, to keep them in the regions. We have confirmed that we will receive letters of support from the Governor's office and the state Economic Development office. The application will be for approximately \$4 million.

INSPIRE Initiative

Morgan shared another grant opportunity that Board staff are exploring that is also due November 12. This grant will only serve the Highlands, but the committee agreed this is an initiative we need to pursue. The grant would allow us \$300,000 over 3 years to provide services for individuals impacted by substance abuse. The grant source is the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Old Business

Fiscal Agent Discussion

Morgan shared a comparison sheet with the committee. Currently, we are presented with two viable options for change to fiscal agent: have the City of Roanoke become our fiscal agent or become our own fiscal agent. The group discussed and reviewed the pros and cons of each option. Morgan acknowledged to the group that Board staff would need some Human Resources and additional training if we become our own fiscal agent. The group also discussed the value of an employer that offers a pension plan to employees. Conversation was held regarding looking into a third party for payroll, to help reduce board time spent on that specific job. The group discussed and agreed that the most beneficial option at this time is for Board staff to explore more about becoming their own fiscal agent. The Executive Committee would act on behalf of the Board in this decision so that staff can move forward, and report to the full Board, but the CLEO would make ultimate decisions regarding fiscal agent.

Executive Committee Action: Phil Peters moved to request Board staff move forward with taking steps to become our own fiscal agent. Michael Gardner seconded the motion. The group had additional discussion. The motion carried with a roll call as follows:

Casey Nicely	Yes
Crystal Hall	Yes
Phil Peters	Yes
Michael Gardner	Yes
David Olsen	Yes
Karen Michalski	Yes

New Business

PY2019 VCCS Monitoring Report

Morgan presented the report and corrective action plan to the committee and reviewed in detail the findings and actions required.

Executive Committee Action: Dave Olsen moved to accept the report as presented. Michael Gardner seconded the motion. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Casey Nicely	Yes
Crystal Hall	Yes
Phil Peters	Yes
Michael Gardner	Yes
David Olsen	Yes
Karen Michalski	Yes

Policy Updates/Additions

Leah reviewed all changes and new policies in the packet with the group.

Executive Committee Action: Michael Gardner made a motion to accept all policies as presented. Karen Michalski seconded the motion. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Casey Nicely	Yes
Crystal Hall	Yes
Phil Peters	Yes
Michael Gardner	Yes
David Olsen	Yes
Karen Michalski	Yes

Bylaws Revision

Morgan reviewed the changes to the bylaws in the packet including adding electronic meeting language, changing the name, duties, and makeup of the Workforce Center & Services Committee. Phil noted the address on page 90 needed to be corrected.

Executive Committee Action: Phil Peters moved to accept the bylaws with the correction noted. Michael Gardner seconded the motion. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Casey Nicely	Yes
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Crystal Hall	Yes
Phil Peters	Yes
Michael Gardner	Yes
David Olsen	Yes
Karen Michalski	Yes

Other Business

Casey noted that we have a meeting on November 10, 2020 for Strategic Planning.

Upcoming Meetings

Casey shared that the next Board meeting is scheduled for December 18, 2020 at 9:00am.

Adjournment

Casey adjourned the meeting at 12:47pm.