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**Western Virginia Workforce Development Board**

**Program Oversight Committee**

August 30, 2021, at 2:00pm

Virginia Career Works – Roanoke Center

3601 Thirlane Road, Suite 2, Roanoke, VA 24019

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| **Members** | **Present** |
| Karen Michalski | X |
| Joe Brinley | X |
| Dr. Milan Hayward | X |
| Abby Hamilton, Chair | X |
| Emily Smith | X |

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| **WVWDB Staff** | **Present** |
| Morgan Romeo | X |
| Leah Gibson | X |
| Morgan Romeo (phone) | X |

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| **Guests** | **Present** |
| Toni McLawhorn | X |

**Call to Order**

Leah Gibson called the meeting to order at 1:56pm.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Meeting Minutes Approval – May 27, 2021**

Leah Gibson asked the group to review the minutes from the last meeting.

**Program Oversight Committee Action**: A motion was made by Karen Michalski to approve the minutes as presented. Joe Brinley seconded the motion. The motion was carried by vote.

**Old Business**

VCW Roanoke Center Operations

Toni McLawhorn provided an update to the Committee of the operations of the Roanoke Center and services being provided. Toni shared that the Center re-opened to customers in early June, for appointments only at first, but currently serving walk-in customers as well. We continue to follow all VDH and CDC guidance, and adjust accordingly for safety. She shared that the Center had 519 visitors in June and 862 in July. Most customers are still coming in for assistance related to unemployment assistance. Staff are also beginning to get more and more results on the Customer Satisfaction Survey, so we can adjust processes and services to ensure we are meeting the needs of our constituents. Staff are preparing, as much as possible, for any influx that we may receive after the extended unemployment benefits end after the Labor Day holiday.

**WIOA Title I Programs Report**

Michelle Brennan presented the WIOA Title I programs report that was included in the packet. She also reviewed a few success stories from participants with the committee members. She noted that we have hired one new Career Coach, Lashaunda Sample, who is doing very well so far, and we are excited to have her. Abby Hamilton asked Michelle if there were places where the staff are seeing gaps, that stimulus funds could be used within the localities to fill. The group discussed this, agreeing that wraparound services in general are the best place for those funds, as there are many pots of funding for tuition assistance currently. The group also discussed places and efforts to recruit youth for enrollments into the Title I program, including reaching out to the schools and being involved in the new Roanoke City Gun Violence Prevention efforts.

**New Business**

Updated Policies

Leah Gibson shared that we are reviewing all internal policies to ensure we are compliant and up to date and that those will be coming soon for approval.

Individual Training Account Maximum Funding

As a standing agenda item for the Committee’s review, the group discussed the current maximum funding levels available, focusing on the local funding cap on Commercial Driver’s License training. The group reviewed where the budget stands currently, as well as demand, and jobs available in the region. After productive conversation, the committee agreed to leave the current policy in place and continue to monitor, determining if a change is needed later.

PY2020 Monitoring

Leah Gibson shared with the Committee that Board staff had recently received the final monitoring report from PY2020 from the Virginia Community College System. The report was overwhelmingly positive, with zero programmatic or fiscal findings. The group discussed previous monitoring reports and compared performance results with those of the previous years, when programs were operated by the contractors.

PY2020 WIOA Title I Program Operations

Leah Gibson shared with the group that Board staff had just recently received written approval from the state to continue to operate the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, so we will continue to do that at the request of the Board and CLEO for this program year. We are also currently operating the Youth program under emergency operations, through September 30, 2021, and there will be further conversations about this at the Board meeting.

Committee Member Change

Leah Gibson shared that Amanda Rogers had taken a new job opportunity at Carilion, which meant she was leaving her seat on the Board, and on the Committee. We will be searching for a replacement for her position on the Board & Committee, with the Committee seat needing to be a business representative.

CareerQuest 2021: September 28 – 29 and October 19 – 20

A reminder was shared with those in attendance about the upcoming CareerQuest events in September & October and to sign up to volunteer and/or have your business attend with a hands-on activity for the students.

**Other Business**

Discretionary Grants

Morgan Romeo provided an update on discretionary grants for the committee. The INSPIRE grant was awarded to us from the Appalachian Regional Commission to enhance the recovery ecosystem and create connections to the workforce for affected individuals in the Highlands. Lychelle Hall is our staff in Covington who is providing services through this grant. Board staff are also in the works of discussing applications for two additional funding opportunities. One of those is the Good Jobs Challenge put forth by the US Department of Commerce. Staff are in conversations with partner agencies to determine the best plan for this potential grant application, which would be due January 2022 if we decide to move forward. The second opportunity is funding through the Virginia Department of Social Services to receive funding for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education & Training (SNAPET), which is a service for SNAP recipients to connect them to the workforce and ultimately become self-sufficient.

Additional Comments

Karen Michalski noted that her staff are working on a resource mapping in the Alleghany Highlands and will share those results once they are completed.

Karen also shared that the Blue Ridge Independent Living Center does still have CARES Act funds to assist individuals with disabilities that have been affected by COVID, and to let her know if you have someone who could benefit from these funds.

**Upcoming Meetings**

The next Committee meeting will be October 28, 2021 at 9:00am. The next Board meeting is September 24 at 9:00am.

**Adjournment**

Abby Hamilton adjourned the meeting at 3:08pm.