



Program Oversight Committee Meeting

August 21st, 2024

Virtual Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82271304971?pwd=aeNo2gSfSyua8huMQmCPppA0aFZT3s.1>

Members	Present
Abby Hamilton, Chair	X
Joe Brinley	X
Joe Cobb	
Karen Michalski-Karney	X
Maiya Ashby	X
Stephanie Hoer	X
Kimberly Dameron	X

GRWDB Staff	Present
Elizabeth Manns	X
Emma Howard-Woods	X
Leah Gibson	X

Call to Order

Abby Hamilton called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Meeting Minutes Approval

Abby Hamilton asked the group to review the minutes from the last meeting.

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

Center Reports

Leah reviewed the Cumulative Center Report, showing data from July 2024, noting the closure of the Thirlane Road Roanoke Center on July 31st, and significant service interruptions during the moving process. Services have still been available out of the Franklin and Covington Centers. Leah noted that this data will be abnormal due to these circumstances.

New Business

One Stop Center Update

Leah shared an update about the move of the Roanoke Center out of the Thirlane Road location. The Roanoke Center had interrupted service during the move, as movers were actively disassembling furniture at the Center. The last day that the Roanoke Center was open was July 29th, with a formal move out date of July 31st. All the furniture has been moved to the new location, 707 South Jefferson Street, 3rd floor. There have been delays in finalizing the move, as another tenant of the 3rd floor had a delayed move-out, and contractors have been working on replacing carpets, building walls, painting, and wiring electrical systems. Leah shared the hope of finalizing utilizes like internet and phone service in the coming month, with the hope of opening the new Center to the public in the month of September, but no date has been finalized. Services are still being offered virtually, as well as in pop-ups around Roanoke.

Kimberly Dameron added that senior staff were notified of a September 1st move in by Morgan Romeo, but she is unsure if that date is a public opening, or for senior staff to begin transitioning to the new space. Leah noted that she is unsure of any formal progress update and noted to follow up with Morgan on the logistics.

Grant Updates

Leah reviewed the YouthBuild grant, provided by the Department of Labor to Goodwill, in partnership with the GRWDB, Habitat for Humanity, and Build Smart Institute. Goodwill has decided to end the grant program in December 2024, sooner than anticipated. The GRWDB is working to mitigate service disruption, as this partnership provided half the funding for one Career Coach.

Karen Michalski Karney asked the reason for the early closure of the grant program, and Leah shared that their notice stated a program misalignment with Goodwill's mission, connecting it to larger changes being made to Goodwill's internal workforce programming. Leah also shared that the GWRDB is in communication with the DOL to explore opportunities to shift remaining funding to other community partners, including the GRWDB, to help ensure that services remain available in our community. Karen asked about the amount of funding provided in this grant. Stephanie Hoer shared that the initial program was in the area of \$1.7 million, and that the current state is part of the 2nd renewal of the funds. Leah shared that the funds are set to expire in December 2024 unless another agreement is made with the DOL.

Leah also reviewed the Jobs Plus grant, a DOL grant provided to the Roanoke Regional Housing Authority in partnership with the GRWDB, to provide career services to residents of Indian Rock and Jamestown. This grant is also ending earlier than anticipated, although this shift was made due to an incorrect date on our MOU. This will also be a shift for the GRWDB, as this grant also provided half the funding for one Career Coach.

Maiya Ashby asked what the GRWDB is doing to navigate the change in this funding. Leah shared that the GRWDB is always working to diversify funding streams to minimize service disruptions. This grant specifically can't be changed, as it was set to end in December, we were just told it would last past that date.

Leah also reviewed two of the grants received by the state. The first is the Transportation to Learn grant, which has been extended until at least December 2024 to accommodate additional field trips with the school. Leah noted to review the extension to confirm the end date of this grant.

Leah also shared about the second state discretionary grant, the Youth Outreach and Marketing grant, which has been almost fully expended on updates to the Career Quest website, and an upcoming video to be filmed at our September CQ event.

ETPL Payment Plan

Leah shared the new proposed ETPL payment plan, designed to help hold training providers accountable for participants completing their training program and attaining their credentials. The proposed plan, which has been reviewed by the Executive Committee and Board, would adjust payment plans to training providers based on cost and duration of the training program. For programs under \$5,000 and under 4 weeks long, payments will continue to be made in one lump sum at the completion of the training program. For programs outside this cost and length, payments will be split between 2 or 3 payments, made at varying times in the program, with the last being paid only at the completion of the training program. The GRWDB has spoken to all local training providers, and no major concerns have been reported, as providers have the same goal of program completion and certification attainment from participants. This change would add an additional administrative step when enrolling participants in to training programs but has no other expected impacts. This type of process has been adopted by other localities across the state and has been supported by the state.

Stephanie asked how the payment plan will work for training programs that include a bundle of independent courses. Leah shared that the payment plan will be calculated using the whole “bundle” as one program.

Abby asked about the protocol for participants that drop out of their program before completing their training. Leah shared that the final payment (s) wouldn’t be made to the training provider in the circumstance that a participant withdraws from the program. Some training providers make alternate arrangements with participants for payment in the event of leftover tuition costs, but any leftover balance would not be paid under the payment plan without completion of the program. All training providers have read and agreed to the proposed payment plan and understand the circumstances of final payment.

Kim asked for clarification on credential incentives, and Leah shared that incentives directly to participants for obtaining their credential still exist, but that this new proposed plan will attempt to come at the statistic from both the participant side and the training provider side.

Abby asked for clarification on conditions for training providers for students that drop out of training. Leah shared that those conditions are independent for each training provider.

Karen asked if there was an estimated timeline for this plan to go in to effect. Leah shared that there was an initial goal of a July 1 launch, but it has been postponed to allow this committee to discuss.

Kim asked for clarification on why this plan was introduced. Leah shared that the low participant credential rates among program participants initialized this plan. This plan, in combination with the direct-to-participant credential incentive, hopes to increase the credential rate, and decrease the rate of non-completion among participants. Leah also shared that it is not in policy to refrain from re-enrolling a participant that has previously dropped out of a training program, but that generally WIOA staff will not fund the same training twice for the same participant, if they did not complete their training program.

Program Oversight Committee Action: A motion was made to approve the ETPL Payment Plan as outlined by Joe Brinley. Karen Michalski Karney seconded the motion. The motion was carried by a vote. Stephanie Hoer abstained.

Academies for Program Services

Leah shared a new concept for marketing job seeker services, by creating “academies” as career pathways and service bundles for participants. The academies would be grouped as high-demand industries (like Construction or Healthcare as examples), and each academy would have a bundle of related career services and outlined career pathways within that industry. Leah shared the [Employ Prince George](#)

Industry Bridges as examples. These academies would create a singular area of focus for participants, while still offering all the same existing career services. Leah also shared that participants would not be permanently locked in to one academy, but if their interests change, they are able to shift to a different academy at any time.

Abby asked for clarification on the groupings. Leah shared that the academies would be based on career pathways and credentials relevant to that industry, and that the different academies would include the high demand industries under the WIOA program but would also include at least one generalized academy to help catch specific career areas that might not fit within other academies. Leah also shared that there is no formal timeline for implementation of academies, but that it should be a relatively quick process as the services already exist, it would just involve a marketing shift.

Basic Skills Deficient Definition

Leah shared the difficulty that the GRWDB has with the current state mandated process for qualifying participants as basic skills deficient. Currently, the only state approved process are TABE or CASAS tests, which are long and difficult to get participants to complete, staff are unable to use any alternate scores or education metrics. This process has created a barrier for participants, as many participants don't want to or are unable to complete the test. Basic skills tests aren't required for every participant, but it is beneficial for GRWDB staff to qualify as many people as possible that have barriers to employment, including basic skills deficient, as it contributes to serving hard to reach populations. Leah asked for group input to request alternate qualifying options from the Department of Education and shared that any request of VDOE would be partnered with other Workforce Development Boards across the state.

Karen recommended bringing the request to the Secretary of Labor, in order to facilitate a direct line of communication between them and the Secretary of Education with the support of all participating Workforce Development Boards across the state. Stephanie added the importance of identifying this problem as a barrier to program services.

WIOA Title I Program Operations

Elizabeth shared preliminary performance for the end of the last fiscal year. WIOA staff have had the opportunity to review the data and make corrections. Credentials continue to be an area of concern that the team is hoping to correct with the certification incentive and proposed ETPL Payment Plan discussed earlier. Additionally, Q2 employment rate and MSG in the DLW population are other areas of concern, primarily linked to difficulty in qualifying participants for the DLW program.

Leah added that the state staff are currently switching from being staff of the community college system to being staff of the DWDA system, creating a service interruption in the IT systems during the transition.

Leah also shared that Elizabeth Manns is leaving the GRWDB effective Monday, August 26th.

Upcoming Meetings

Joint GRWDB and CLEO Meeting – September 26, 2024, 11am, Hotel Roanoke, Roanoke, VA

Program Oversight Committee Meeting – November 13, 2024, In Person, Location TBD

Adjournment

Abby Hamilton adjourned the meeting at 2:11.