

SC WORKS

UPPER SAVANNAH

Upper Savannah Workforce Development Board Meeting

Held at 430 Helix Road, Greenwood, SC or via Zoom

Monday, February 3, 2025

Meeting: 3:30 p.m.

Members Present: Scott Coleman (Chaired), Billy Morgan, Theresa Stover, Daniel Grove, Dale Cullum, Roberta Kinard, Stephen Taylor, Darron Wilson, Keli Fewox, Roy Lowe, Shelby Reed, Chad Ulmer

Members Absent: John Calhoun, Taiese Kidd, Jeannie McCallum (excused)

Staff Present: Kal Kunkel, Willie Matthews, Amber Bearden

Guest: Kimbearly Smith, Caitlin Brazel

Welcome, Call to Order and Roll Call

Scott Coleman called the meeting to order. Amber Bearden conducted roll call. Scott asked guests to make introductions. Caitlin Brazel, with SC DEW, was introduced.

Approval of Minutes for

Minutes are emailed along with the meeting agenda. They are also archived online. There was a motion by Darron Wilson and seconded by Keli Fewox to adopt as final. Passed unanimously.

Director's Report (Kal Kunkel)

1. Performance Update

Kal updated everyone with WIOA performance information. See page 8 in Board Packet. All federal performance metrics were met, apart from credential attainment. This will be discussed in more detail when we go over the Corrective Action plan. Essentially, 90% credential attainment should be met, but we were at 81%. You will also see an item, from PY22, which was our work-based learning (WEX), we did not meet the expenditure rate of 20%. Kal added this has been tracked very closely since his start with Upper Savannah and you can see on the handout that we have almost met expenditures for our PY23 year and will be soon moving into PY24 allocations; at about 32%. We are currently down staff and are looking for an One Stop Operations Manager. Currently we have Toni Belton assisting in that role but are open to any recommendations from our Board. Reach out to Kal if you have any recommendations for this position.

2. 4 Year Local & Regional Plan

Kal explained both plans had to be completed for this program year. The plans are quite lengthy with a lot of data and information. He explained that it isn't necessarily a plan that can be executed but is more of a compliance aspect. He further added that he would like to bring in a facilitator to have this individual break down that plan, into

categories, and convert to a more realistic plan that can be synthesized and executed. This would require the Board to vote in favor of hiring a facilitator. There is funding from the state that will allow for this to be paid for. He added that a meeting with the facilitator and the board could be conducted, possibly at PTC, with food provided.

Keli Fewox explained that she and PTC would be happy to host and believes the breaking down of this plan would be a great idea.

Approval to procure a facilitator: Scott called for a motion. Motion made by Billy Morgan to hire a facilitator to and seconded by Chad Ulmer. APPROVED unanimously.

4. *H1B & Careers Closeout Update*

Kal provided a brief description of these grants, adding both of these have commenced into closeout. H1B technically enters close out the end of this month, but funds have been extended completely.

5. *Revised Board Committee Meeting Schedule*

This was emailed out previously. You will see we had to change some committee meetings to Thursdays. See page 9 in Board Packet.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

Failed Credential Attainment & Work-Based Learning Expenditure Requirements (Letter & CAP) ACTION

Roberta posed a question for #2 on the CA plan (see page 11 in Board Packet)—asking if Kal had met with all staff with Eckerd regarding training. Kal explained that regular conversations and meetings had commenced with staff and program manager, Kimbearly Smith. Kimbearly Smith added that ongoing training with the current staff has continued. Kal added that many of the program participants that were included in the performance metrics were from 18 months ago; which would be during the timeframe of GLEAMNS as the program provider and when we did not have a program provider at all. Negative impacts will continue to arise in our metrics from that time period for a few more cycles. However, Willie has poured meticulously through case files and reached out to training providers trying to recover this information that GLEAMNS did not collect or record.

Roberta further added that she's had feedback from individuals explaining that enrollment seemed to have been taking months and she would like to see a written process that's in place to show the actual process to allow for management of time. Kal explained that he believes that has to do with turnover of staff, which up until recent, has been an ongoing issue—to mitigate this, he had his staff assisting, filling in gaps. Willie continued to explain that many of these numbers are a result of the turnover from when we lost long-time employees during GLEAMNS departure, that had years of case management and are having a hard time finding individuals who have the ability to handle the case management responsibilities. Roberta further added that as a partner she would like to have a written process so she can more realistically assist clients with what the WIOA process timelines are. Keli reiterated this point. Kal added he will be able to provide this to everyone.

Kal (see pages 11-15) explained all actions are being closely tracked on this report to ensure these things are applied and corrected in moving forward to allow for us to get the performance back up to what it needs to be. The plan has already been signed by our Upper Savannah COG Director and Board Chair and once discussed with the Board, will be sent to the state for approval. Keli added she would like to have a plan added to this showing how we could mitigate the possibility of these issues, such as the breakdown in documentation and turnover, from occurring again. Kal explained that more action steps will be added to the plan once it goes back up to the State for review—once it comes back to US, those specific steps can be added.

Scott called for a motion to submit letter as is. Motion made by Darron Wilson. Seconded by Billy Morgan. PASSED unanimously.

SC Works Operations & Priority Population committee ACTION

1. *Approval to convert Abbeville, Edgefield, McCormick, & Saluda County SC Works Centers from Affiliate Sites to Connections Points*

Scott turned the floor to Roy Lowe. Roy explained that this was discussed due to the traffic numbers seen at these locations as well as the cost of running these locations as is. Kal added that this needs to be voted on today as the MOU and IFA meetings are upcoming soon. He added further explanation that Affiliate Sites must be fully staffed to be open and these sites have very little to no traffic; a connection point is an area that has public access for individuals but does not need to be fully staffed. A connection point would allow for services to be provided virtually, which is a platform the state would give us access to for individuals to utilize. Monthly orientations would still take place at those sites as well as job/community fairs. However, it would give us more flexibility given our constraints with staffing.

Roberta inquired if there would be any in-person at these sites or completely virtual. Kal explained that it would be on a day-by-day basis. There could be days that staff are there; we are looking at making some of these sites on PTC campuses, which could possibly allow for in-person more regularly. Roy explained that the documented traffic in those areas does not constitute the amount of time and money it requires of staff; also, that prior to COVID those sites were not staffed.

Stephen asked if we would still be required to pay a cost to these buildings for housing a kiosk. Kal explained that those conversations would have to take place and possibilities negotiated. Roberta inquired on locations of these connection points. Kal explained this is all in the works, but it would be geographically located in an area that was comparable.

Scott called for a motion to APPROVE making the change from affiliate to connection points. Motion made by Stephen Taylor. Seconded by Darron Wilson. PASSED unanimously.

2. *Approval to review alternative location for Laurens County*

Roy explained there would be more discussion about this. He explained that the building is made from former classroom trailers that were stacked together but it would be a great idea to look for something more conducive and also believes we should move towards Clinton, adding that traffic diminished once it was move to Laurens.

Scott called for a motion to review possible new locations for Laurens Center. Motion made by Stephen Taylor. Seconded by Keli Fewox. PASSED unanimously.

Youth Committee (Shelby Reed, Chair)

Shelby provided details on the latest movements from the Youth Committee. She explained that there are lot of dates that she will provide that are for projects in the works. (These will be emailed out to the Board). The main thing that was accomplished the “Hire Summit”, which is an opportunity for seniors that are workforce ready. This is coming up in Greenwood on April 9; another in Aiken on April 22 and another for Laurens April 29th. Most recently, we have a new initiative that school districts can reach out to request and schedule: “Get the Job 101 Presentation”, which is a workshop on applying and interviewing for the job. We’ve added a new portion with the help of Willie and the Workforce Division, which is a resume prep on an individual level. Lander reached out and asked to partner. They will be offering a High School Workforce Development Day on March 11th. It’s going to focus on mock interviews—they are asking for professionals to volunteer to come and help students on those mock interview rotations.

Board Member resignations, Appointments, and Vacancies (list attached to packet) ACTION

Kal provided insight. Previously, Mike Hembree, HR Director, from Savannah Lakes Village, the largest employer in McCormick County, was brought before you as a nomination for Betty Carol’s seat replacement—he was directly

recommended by Betty as he was her replacement upon her retirement. When we went to McCormick County Council on his appointment, we did have some push back from the public. I was asked to come present and provide more information on our board and how we vet our members. Following that meeting, we did re-open for a time for more applications. We did receive an application from Toye Willis, a retired School District Administrator. After speaking with her, she currently does have ties to her daughter's hair salon, in McCormick County. I would like to remind you all this is a private sector seat. This seat is somebody who is in private sector business with policy making and hiring authority on behalf of that business. We will need to vote again on who you all believe is best suited for that seat for McCormick County. Once you all decide, I will take that back before McCormick County Council.

Keli asked if our Board voting on this would make any difference towards the decision with the McCormick County Council. Kal added that he believed that it would.

Stephen asked how recommendations are made with Roberta, adding she would like to know more about candidates before they go before council. Kal explained that once a seat is available or we have been made aware that a member will be stepping down ahead of time, steps are made reaching out to Chambers of Commerce, County Councils, Economic Development, as well as soliciting on our website. Amber added that one step in the process is seeking recommendations from the Board member that is stepping down, explaining that Mike Hembree was recommended to us by Betty Carol as he was who was assuming her position in HR.

Scott called for a motion to select Mike Hembree for the McCormick County seat. Motion made by Darron Wilson. Seconded by Stephen Taylor. PASSED unanimously.

Kal brought a nomination for the Laurens County seat. Amanda Benfield has accepted another position and has had to resign from her seat here. We received an application from Courtney Gunter with Laurens County Disabilities and Special Needs Board. She is the Nursing Director and ICF Residential Director and is responsible for hiring activity and frequently posting job postings. I recently interviewed her and believe she is a great candidate and is willing to serve and represent Laurens County. Any questions about Courtney. No questions.

Scott called for a motion to recommend Courtney for appointment. Motion made by Darron Wilson. Seconded by Keli Fewox. APPROVED unanimously.

Kal referred to our current vacancies (See pages 17-19). We are open to recommendations.

Eligible Training Providers (ETPL) – Applicants for approval ACTION

ELIGIBLE TRAINING PROVIDER APPLICATION / REQUESTS		2/3/2025	
PROVIDER (APPLICANT)	PROGRAM	RECOMMENDATION	REASON
Columbia Dental Assistant Academy	Dental Assistant	Deny	The provider is 60 plus miles away located in Irmo, SC. We have Dental Assistant on the ETPL already in Greenville and we have not sent anyone.
HRTrainingClasses.com	6-Month Evening Online HR Master Program	Deny	Online only program, not in a demand occupational area.
HRTrainingClasses.com	3-Day HR Department of One Certificate Program	Deny	Online only program, not in a demand occupational area.
HRTrainingClasses.com	5-Day Advanced Project Management Certificate Program for Human Resources	Deny	Online only program, not in a demand occupational area.

See above chart.

Columbia Dental Assistant Academy: recommendation is to deny due to distance. It is not typically practical for our region to have participants willing to commute that distance, especially with a closer option.

Scott called for a motion to not approve. Motion made by Stephen Taylor. Seconded by Darron. DENIED APPROVAL to be added, passed unanimously.

HRTrainingClasses.com: recommendation to deny for listed reasons.

Scott called for a motion to not approve ALL 3 of requested HRtraining. Motion made by Roy Lowe. Seconded by Stephen Taylor. DENIED approval to be added, passed unanimously.

PROGRAM REPORTS

Kimbearly Smith, Program Manager

Kimbearly Smith presented the program report via a PowerPoint. (Linked to website, upperscworks.com, under Workforce Systems>Board Resources>Agenda/Minutes)

Success story presented on Roydarius.

Kimbearly opened the floor for questions.

Roberta asked about the guidelines for MSGs. Kal explained that he could send the DOL technical guidance letter that explains what is a MSG and what can be counted as this. Keli asked about virtual work-based learning, how are we preparing them to be ready to go to work if that transportation is still an issue. Kimbearly explained that career coaches work hand in hand with participant and work to come up with a plan for the barrier, adding that sometimes it is an easy fix, but the participant just hasn't thought about that as an avenue. Each is a case by case basis, but it is thoroughly brainstormed together to look for an answer to whatever the barrier is.

Other Business

Roberta asked if students with disabilities are a part of the population that the SC Works and Priority Population Committee serve. Kal explained that those committees have been combined and that we

Keli shared that the Advanced Manufacturing Mobile Labs Grant was awarded to PTC for 4.1 million; actually just had the ribbon cutting ceremony for this and that lab will be in service. Another grant was applied for that will now provide a welding lab and she is hopeful this grant will be awarded as well.

Roberta asked for a running list of the Eligible Training Provider List. Amber will send that document to her.

Roy presented the job fair in Edgefield coming up February 20th. Lower Savannah is working with him on this. SC DEW hopes that it will be a large event and so far have about 40 employers registered. In the past, we've had issues with getting employers to agree to come so if you have any suggestions, please reach out. Roy also added that in April there will be a 2nd Chance/Re-Entry Event at PTC in Newberry; this too is intended to be a large event with community resources attending, too.

ADJOURN

Scott Coleman called to adjourn the meeting. A motion to adjourn made by Darron Wilson. The next Workforce Board meeting will be held on May 5, 2025 at 3:30pm.