

SC WORKS

UPPER SAVANNAH

**Upper Savannah Workforce Development Board Meeting
Via In Person, Virtual and Conference Call
Upper Savannah Council of Governments, 430 Helix Road, Greenwood
Monday, September 12, 2022
Meeting: 4:00 PM**

Members Present: Taiese Kidd, John Calhoun, Candi Lalonde, Theresa Stover, Keli Fewox, Shunna V. Jeter, Roberta Kinard, Stephen Taylor, Darron Wilson, Roy Lowe, Chad Ulmer, and Matt Wiggins

Members Absent: Scott Coleman, Debbie Walling, Ann Blanton, Julie Bagwell, Dale Callum, Betty Carol Jones, Mashanda Ashton, and Kevin Crouch

Staff Present: Ann Skinner, Erin Nodine, Toni Belton, Linda Lagroon

Guest: Katie Craven and Ursula McFadden, GLEAMNS; Diana Goldwire, Melissa Rodgers, Karen Lawson, SC Department of Employment and Workforce; Sam Leaman, Upper Savannah Council of Governments; and Stacie Smith, Apprenticeship Carolina

Welcome, Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Taiese Kidd welcomed members and guests. She asked attendees to introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes for June 6, 2022: <https://upperscworks.com/workforce-system/board-minutes/>

Chair Taiese Kidd reminded members that minutes are emailed along with the meeting agenda. They are also archived on-line. There was a motion by Darron Wilson, seconded by Stephen Taylor, to approve the minutes. The minutes were adopted unanimously as submitted.

The meeting roll call was omitted since everyone had already introduced themselves.

Introduction of New Member and New Staff

New attendees were allowed to further Introduce themselves.

- Dr. Keli Fewox, new Board member, is the Vice President of Academic Affair at Piedmont Technical College. She has been employed with Piedmont Tech since 2019.

- Toni Belton, new staff, retired from SC Department of Employment and Workforce after more than 5 years of employment, and military service. She also worked as a recruiter for Payne College. Ms. Belton now works at Upper Savannah part-time as a recruiter of dislocated workers.

Workforce Development Month

Frontline Employee of the Year: Roy Lowe

Roy Lowe introduced Karen Lawson of Laurens County. Ms. Lawson works at the Laurens SC Works Center and has been employed with SC Department of Employment and Workforce for 35 years. She started as a temporary employee and has been a permanent employee for 31 years. She believes in treating people with the upmost respect and like she would want to be treated. She likes helping people and helping customers prepare for their search for employment.

Roy Lowe added that Ms. Lawson deserves the Frontline Employee of the Year designation. She works with, assists employers and refer job seekers. Employers compliment her services and assistance. She stays with an issue until it is resolved no matter how long it may take. Chair Taiese Kidd presented Ms. Lawson with a token of appreciation.

Career Showcase September 15 – Erin Nodine

Erin Nodine spoke about the upcoming Career Showcase to be held on September 15, 2022, at Piedmont Technical College for about 1,600 eighth grade students. About 30 businesses have agreed to participate. Students will have an opportunity to be exposed to information about different businesses prior to having to create their high school employment plans. The Be Pro Be Proud bus is supposed to be present for students and teachers.

Laurens County Direct Connect

Diana Goldwire, SCDEW, explained that the new Laurens County Direct Connect project looks for those that were employed during 2019, who filed for unemployment in 2020, and who are not working now. Staff want to offer them services and connect them with resources available in Laurens County. Job matching is a priority. The database has identified a little over one thousand potential clients. The project has reached out to local nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and community based-organizations to see if they know of any individuals who need help. Upper Savannah and DEW staff will be assisting with this project. If you are interested in assisting, email LaurensDirectConnect@DEW.sc.gov or Diana Goldwire (DGGoldwire@DEW.sc.gov) and you will be matched up.

Ann Skinner added that Toni Belton will be Upper Savannah's lead staff member on the project.

Hiring Events and Dislocation Report – Erin Nodine

On August 29, Generac laid off 200 employees that were part of their weekend shifts. The last few weeks have been working DEW staff to get these employees the assistance they need. This coming Wednesday there will be a Job Fair in Edgefield from 10am to 12 Noon for which 14 employers have agreed to participate.

SCDEW will be hosting a Job Fair for Michelin in Saluda on Thursday from 10 am to 2pm.

October 6, 2022 – Regional Job Fair to be held at Piedmont Technical College Greenwood Campus from 10 am to 1pm. About 75 employers will be in attendance. Registration for employers will be online.

Strategic Plan

K-12 and PTC Training Priorities – Erin Nodine

There was a handout showing occupations and employment projections through 2028. Highlighted are the areas which Upper Savannah has determined to be priorities based on average annual wage and number of jobs available. The jobs will make an impact in our area and will need people to be trained and prepared to go into these different occupations. Upper Savannah's focus is to make sure there are people trained and ready to meet those projected employment goals in the next several years.

Upper Savannah Approved Training – Linda Lagroon

The Upper Savannah Eligible Training Providers and Programs handout was briefly discussed. It is a listing of the currently eligible training providers and trainings available for scholarships for which eligible participants may select trainings.

Ann Skinner added that the training listing has been reduced over the years. Currently, most state technical colleges have free tuition and there is a lot of paperwork involved for providers to be on the eligible providers list; therefore, many people are attending training without WIOA funds, but WIOA can assist in other ways such as by sponsoring transportation, childcare, and supplies. Generally, Upper Savannah is committed to support manufacturing, healthcare. It has branched out to skilled trades, and working with small businesses with on-the-job training. This will be the start of the Upper Savannah strategic plan that will need to be in place by January 2023. DEW updates the list annually, therefore some items expired on June 30 and will work on adding some things back to the list.

Executive Summary of Strategic Plan – Ann Skinner

The Executive Summary was emailed along with the meeting notification. The last Strategic Plan was completed prior to COVID, and a lot of things have changed, therefore a lot of the Upper Savannah processes need to also change. The summary is just a thought as to where Upper Savannah needs to go from here. The following items were briefly explained:

- Expanding free basic career services with virtual and in-person options
- Increasing awareness of opportunities for high wage jobs
- Expanding Labor Force by increasing base and reducing barriers
- Communicating Soft Skills Expectations
- Operational Efficiency/Resources

2022 Budget and Funding Recommendations – Ann Skinner

Expenditure Concerns

At June meeting, Upper Savannah was concerned about the Dislocated Worker expenditures. Each year Local Workforce Areas are to spend 70% of available funding and as of the June meeting Upper Savannah had spent 48.9% of available dislocated worker funding. It was thought that it was possible to reach the 70% expenditure rate goal because had transferred some funds to the adult program, but at this time it doesn't look like the expenditure goal was met. This is concerning because it will be the second year in a row that Upper Savannah has not met the dislocated worker expenditure rate. The State Workforce Board is going to require submission of a corrective action of what will be done to locate and train dislocated workers. The Generac layoff means there are more potential dislocated workers to connect and work with. Another challenge will be to find dislocated workers that were not part of a plant closure.

The following was not shared at the June meeting, but it was a concern. The Career Dislocated Worker grant has a training budget of more than \$500,000 for the Upper Savannah Region. As of end of July had spent only \$43,000 of the training budget. Again, the issue is locating dislocated workers. It is expected that staff need to enroll and train at least five dislocated workers per month to reach goals by August 2023. One positive thing is that Upper Savannah has been informed that the eligibility criteria for this grant will be expanded to include long term unemployed.

As of the June meeting, only 1.64% (\$2,700) of the available funds of the Youth Resiliency Grant had been spent. As of August, the area is now averaging \$10,000 per month and is on track of spending out before the grant year ends.

Recommendation for Soliciting Service Provider for New Agreement Starting January 1, 2023

There was a meeting of the Executive Committee at the beginning of August to review the expenditure of funds and other issues. The board could extend the GLEAMNS contract through June 30, 2023. Because GLEAMNS has met part of the goals, the committee voted to recommend that the contract be extended six months through the end of December 2022. Upper Savannah will go out for bids. GLEAMNS will be eligible to submit a proposal, resetting the contract process. Knowing that some of the priorities have changed with the new strategic plan starting January 2023, the thought is to get new contracts in place as of January 1, 2023, and that will allow the area to start with a new contractor or if GLEAMNS continues to be the contractor, to adjust the GLEAMNS Statement of Work and adjust the budget to what they think they need to meet the goals. It would be a fresh start. This is also an opportunity for a new provider to propose to offer services. The handout is a summary of the Request for Proposal process. Upper Savannah has identified about \$2 million in funding which will be available for an 18-month period. The RFP will be to serve economically disadvantaged adults, dislocated workers, youth and include funds for One-Stop Operator. The time would be January 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. Transitional costs would be included. A year ago, the Board voted to authorize GLEAMNS staff bonuses of \$1,000 per person, but they did not meet all the requirements for the bonuses. It is recommended that severance be offered if another provider is awarded the contract. The criteria for severance is that staff assist with the transferring of files. If there is a transition, there may need a budget for IT assistance and GLEAMNS may need funds to do the bookkeeping to complete closeout reports to close out the grant.

Upper Savannah has thought a lot about what the Board needs for staff to be successful. The scoring criteria is very similar to what has been in the past, looking at the same things. One change is to have an in-person presentation. The scoring of proposals has always been

conducted by the Executive Committee by reading, reviewing, and meeting to score the stack of proposals received. An in-person presentation of the two top proposals would include the entire Board and would count 15% of the scoring criteria. The 20-minute presentation would be on the proposed implementation plan of how the proposed provider would

- How the offeror would establish high performing team which is able to help job seekers prepare for high paying careers
- How the offeror would provide technology to support center customers and staff
- How the offeror would communicate the benefits of using career services and exploring training options.

The chair called for a motion on the including the following:

- Executive Committee recommendation that GLEAMNS have a six-month contract extension, which means would have to have procurement so that would have the possibility of new contract starting January 1, 2023. Would have to issue RFP within the next two weeks in order to receive, review, and prepare for a November 14 meeting.
- To follow the Request For Proposal process and scoring criteria with the addition of the 20-minute in-person Implementation Presentation.

The motion was made by Matt Wiggins, seconded by Keli Fewox, and passed unanimously. Shunna Jeter abstained from the vote.

Search Committee Report – Taiese Kidd

Chair Taiese Kidd announced that nominating committee recommended Scott Coleman as the Upper Savannah Workforce Development Board Vice Chair. The nominating committee consisted of Chair Taiese Kidd and the past Chair Ann Blanton. A motion was made by Stephen Taylor, seconded by Darron Wilson, to accept the recommendation for the nominating committee for Vice Chair. The motion was approved.

Adjourn

Chair Taiese Kidd called the meeting to conclusion.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is set for November 14, 2022.

Respectfully submitted by



Ann Skinner
Workforce Development Director

