

## **NCWorks Commission**

### **Business Session**

**74 South at Moretz Mills**

**Hickory, NC**

**May 23, 2018**

**1:30 pm**

### **Minutes**

#### Present:

Chair Kevin Trapani, Josh Arant, Shawn Brown, Sherry Carpenter, Mel Chernoff, Tara Myers (for Secretary Mandy Cohen), Governor Roy Cooper, Napoleon Wallace (for Secretary Tony Copeland), Osceola Elliss, Jeff Frederick, Maureen Little (for President Peter Hans), Susan Jackson, John Kirkman (for Mark Johnson), Joe Magno, Marti Matthews Martin, Olalah Njenga, Mike Okun, Stephen Rosenburgh, Sergi Roura, Elk Richardson (for Secretary Machel Sanders), Stan Sherrill, Walter Siegenthaler, Ronnie Smith, Chris Watters, and Hope Williams

Absent: Nate Davis, Christopher Gergen, MaryBe McMillan, Joe Rogers, Margaret Spellings, Kim Toler, and Pam Townsend

#### **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair of the NCWorks Commission, Kevin Trapani, provided opening remarks and asked the audience which workforce organization they represented. Of those responding, a majority represented local workforce development boards (25%) followed by community colleges (20.83%), business (16.67%), Department of Commerce (16.67%), other (16.67%), and public schools (4.17%).

Chair Trapani thanked Chris Watters for his service as chair of the Education and Training committee and announced that Stan Sherrill will replace Mr. Watters as chair.

#### **OPENING BUSINESS**

Chair Trapani asked for a motion regarding the minutes of February 14, 2018. Motion was made by Shawn Brown to approve the minutes as written and seconded by Marti Matthews Martin. Motion carried.

Chair Trapani shared some results of the recent 2018 Employer Needs Survey. Overall, employers are having a harder time finding applicants compared to the 2016 Employer Needs Survey. Manufacturing and STEM industries reported the most hiring difficulties. Chair Trapani is pleased with the work of the commission, but noted there is more work to be done. Chair Trapani stressed the need for all workforce partners to align and work together. He closed by stating that "...North Carolinians want NC Job Ready to be successful...and need us to work across departments, geographies, political parties, and any other barriers there are to find success on their behalf."

Chair Trapani introduced Governor Roy Cooper, who thanked Chair Trapani for his leadership. He then recognized and thanked several workforce leaders in attendance. Governor Cooper also noted that he was excited for the appointment of Peter Hans as President of the NC Community College System.

Governor Cooper expressed his gratitude for the work in Catawba County – the Catawba Valley Community College Furniture Academy and the K-64 program. Governor Cooper highlighted the core principles of his job readiness initiative, NC Job Ready. He noted that he wants North Carolinians to be “better educated, healthier, and have more money in their pockets so that they can live more abundant, find purposeful lives.” Governor Cooper also announced that his proposed budget includes funding to help achieve the goals of NC Job Ready.

### **NCWORKS CAREER PATHWAYS CERTIFICATION**

Chair Trapani recognized Dr. Dion Clark, NCWorks Career Pathways Director who provided a brief overview of the three pathways to be certified by the commission during the meeting:

- Nursing and Allied Health (Western Piedmont) – approved for Caldwell, Alexander, Burke, and Catawba counties
- Manufacturing and Welding (High Country) – approved for Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Watauga, Yancey, Mitchell, and Wilkes counties.
- Construction Technology (Cape Fear) – approved for Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender counties. The region has the first Construction Technology pathway certified in the state.

Dr. Clark noted that 27 months ago, there were no certified pathways and now 30 career pathways have been certified to date. She thanked the commission partners around the state for their leadership. She also noted that Cape Fear opted to be recognized at the November commission meeting in Jacksonville, NC; however, they are certified as of the May commission meeting. Chair Trapani thanked Dr. Clark and certified the pathways on behalf of the commission.

### **WORK-BASED LEARNING RECOMMENDATIONS**

Chair Trapani recognized Catherine Moga Bryant, Executive Director of the NCWorks Commission, who reviewed the work-based learning recommendations developed by committees of the commission during their February 2018 meetings. The committees identified three areas of work to increase work-based learning opportunities: 1) provide meaningful support and resources for businesses, 2) develop a unified campaign, and 3) increase opportunities for students. She noted that employers are interested in work-based learning, but may need help in getting started. She stated that we need to help businesses get access to resources to learn how to set up work-based learning opportunities. Ms. Moga Bryant announced that the state is planning a work-based learning summit to be held in December 2018. More information will be forthcoming.

Ms. Moga Bryant stated that a unified campaign will help people understand the value of work-based learning and help businesses develop a talent pipeline. She noted that there will be an outreach campaign to reach out to public schools, community colleges, universities, and businesses. She concluded by saying the committees will discuss the areas of work needed to increase work-based learning and ways to expand opportunities for students and businesses.

Ms. Moga Bryant engaged with the audience with another poll question, “What tools do you need to help increase work-based learning opportunities at your organization?” A majority of the audience (33%)

selected “funding” as the tool they need to increase work-based learning opportunities at their organization. Others responded as follows: marketing/promotion of existing programs and activities (30%), partners (15%), resources on how to get started (11%), legal assistance (11%), no one selected technical assistance.

Chair Trapani discussed his challenge to commission members from the February 2018 meeting. Mr. Trapani had asked members to report what work-based learning opportunities are currently at their employers, and also challenged members to engage with others about work-based learning. Chair Trapani asked for their reports within the next two weeks, with a progress report 30 days in advance of the August 8 meeting

### **LOCAL INNOVATION**

Ms. Moga Bryant highlighted three examples of local innovation in work-based learning in the area: Work in Burke, K-64, and the Catawba Valley Furniture Academy (CVFA) which the commission members visited earlier in the day.

- Work in Burke is an awareness campaign launched in 2017 to change the perception about jobs in rural areas. Work in Burke was created to show the diverse career opportunities available in Burke so residents do not have to leave the area for a great career.
- K-64 is public-private partnership created by the Catawba County Commissioners and managed by Catawba Valley Community College to connect Catawba County to meet workforce demands by connecting students and employers throughout the educational continuum. One highlight of K-64 is that every seventh grader in Catawba County received a Chrome book. Twenty percent of students did not have a computer at home.
- Catawba Valley Furniture Academy was created in 2014 when local furniture manufacturers came together to create a new program to develop a sustainable workforce for their industry. The partnership includes more than 30 partners from the furniture industry. 100 percent of Catawba Valley Furniture Academy students who have completed the program have received a job.

Ms. Moga Bryant recognized Alan Wood from Work in Burke, Mark Story from K-64 and Dr. Garrett Henshaw, President of Catawba Valley Community College, as well as other representatives from the Catawba Valley Furniture Academy.

### **NEXT GEN SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS**

Chair Trapani discussed the North Carolina Employer Engagement State Strategy Session that was held on May 21, 2018. Representatives from various agencies of the workforce system discussed how North Carolina could better align existing programs, scale what is working, and increase employer engagement. Chair Trapani called for a motion to commit to discussing opportunities to develop a statewide employer engagement strategy. Motion was made by Hope Williams and seconded by Marti Matthews Martin. The commission voted unanimously to approve. Governor Cooper stated that the commission can count on his personal involvement.

### **COMMITTEE UPDATES**

## **Executive Committee**

Olalah Njenga, Vice Chair of the commission, announced the creation of a new series of newsletters called “Spotlight on Local Workforce Innovations.” The series will highlight innovative programs and strategies from across the state. The series will be provided at commission meetings, posted on the commission’s website, and shared widely with workforce leaders.

## **Business Engagement**

Chair Marti Matthews Martin of the Business Engagement Committee stated that the committee is currently working to update the Menu of Business Services and other marketing efforts. This work includes: working with state agencies to create cross-training videos to ensure that all business services staff is knowledgeable about all the workforce services available to businesses; exploring the possibility of a website and 1-800 number for businesses to call with questions; and developing marketing tools for all workforce programs to use. The committee is also continuing the soft skills research by using existing data from ONET and Commerce’s Labor and Economic Analysis Division (LEAD). Finally, the committee is working with LEAD to finalize the 2018 Employer Needs Survey. The committee confirmed their support for sector partnerships.

## **Performance and Accountability**

Chair Mel Chernoff gave an update on the Performance and Accountability Committee. The committee is continuing its work on the local workforce development board performance measures. Geographic Solutions, Inc. will develop a custom report that includes all of these measures in NCWorks.gov allowing staff to produce reports locally. The deadline currently set for this project is June 30, 2018. LEAD recently submitted the data for the Fifth Annual Workforce Development System Performance Report and the committee plans to report on the findings in August. Finally, the committee will report on the 2018 Annual Workforce Development Program survey results once the data is collected over the next few months.

## **Education and Training**

Stan Sherrill, Chair of the Education and Training Committee, noted the committee is working with data provided by LEAD to identify mismatches between education and training opportunities and employer needs; and better understanding the leaky pipeline (i.e., where are individuals exiting our talent pipeline and how we can re-engage them). The committee is interested in working with workforce system partners to explore opportunities to change the public perception of the wide range of educational options available to students that can lead to in-demand occupations. Finally, the committee will explore opportunities to enhance efforts to assist veterans and members of the military transitioning into civilian life.

Chair Sherrill polled the audience asking, “What do you see as the most important workforce needs in serving our veterans and their families?” A majority (37%) of those who responded selected “helping veterans transition into the civilian workforce.” Others responded as follows: awarding credit for prior military service (25%), improving access for veterans to get additional education and training (21%),

retaining the veteran workforce in the state and local communities (11%), and supporting military spouses and families (7%).

### **Governance and System Alignment**

Chair Susan Jackson stated that the Governance and System Alignment Committee will stay connected to the WIOA State Steering Council to align core programs and begin working on the 2020 Unified State Plan next year. The committee plans to convene an ad-hoc committee, led by Jeff Frederick, with local workforce system representation to discuss the future of NCWorks Career Centers. The group will look at current barriers and opportunities to serve the next generation of customers through technology and other innovative solutions. The committee will also be working with the governor's office and other workforce system partners to align efforts and pursue common goals under the NC Job Ready initiative.

### **NCWORKS CAREER CENTERS CERTIFICATION**

Chair Jackson introduced Mical McFarland, staff to the NCWorks Commission, who provided an overview of the NCWorks Career Center system, the commission's role in overseeing the system in partnership with the local workforce development boards, and the center certification process.

Chair Jackson then recognized career centers in the Western Piedmont local workforce area for meeting the criteria established by the commission for all career centers across the state. The criteria includes requirements around: accessibility, partnerships, service delivery, staff training, performance and customer satisfaction.

The commission certified the NCWorks Career Centers of the Western Piedmont region (including Caldwell, Alexander, Burke, and Catawba counties) presenting certificates to each center and the board.

### **HOMETOWN STRONG**

Chair Trapani introduced Pryor Gibson, Director of Hometown Strong. Hometown Strong is an initiative of Governor Cooper to support local economies, improve infrastructure, and strengthen rural communities. Mr. Gibson discussed the mission and core principles of Hometown Strong. Mr. Gibson noted that Hometown Strong has four core principles:

- Use existing data and programs
- Led by local priorities
- Share templates for success
- Build on strengths and assets

The common themes of Hometown Strong are revitalizing local economies, infrastructure, connectivity, and workforce training. Hometown Strong has only existed for 100 days, but Mr. Gibson noted that rural communities are eager to begin working. Mr. Gibson noted that we need to find a better way to help rural North Carolina and asked everyone to come to table and work together.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Trapani invited the audience to participate in the public comment period. There were no public comments. Chair Trapani also reminded the audience that they can submit comments via email.

## **WORKFORCE UPDATES**

Ms. Moga Bryant noted that the Partnership Conference will be October 10-12, 2018 in Greensboro and recognized commission staff, Callie Womble, for completing her Ph.D. and having her dissertation selected by university staff as Dissertation of the Year.

Commission members Stephen Rosenburgh and Jeff Fredrick provided an update on the National Association of Workforce Board forum in Washington, D.C. Mr. Rosenburgh noted that the forum was an opportunity to learn about best practices and activities at the national level. Both Mr. Rosenburgh and Mr. Frederick encouraged other commission members to attend similar events.

Commission member Joe Magno reported on a meeting he attended with executives in the bio manufacturing industry. The attendees conveyed their need for more employees (4,000 – 5,000) in the coming years.

Commission member Hope Williams provided an update on efforts for sector partnerships in higher education that included Lenoir-Rhyne University's partnership with community colleges allowing rising juniors to transfer to Lenoir-Rhyne seamlessly. She also noted the availability of grants to reduce the cost of tuition. Chair Trapani noted that private colleges are essential to the education system citing that 92% of physician assistant degrees are awarded by private colleges.

Chair Trapani asked the audience a final polling question, "What do you consider to be the greatest workforce development challenge?" Of those responding, (42%) identified a shortage of people with employability or soft skills; followed by a shortage of people with technical skills at (33%); an aging workforce at (17%); and keeping up with technical changes at (8%). Chair Trapani noted that there will be an exponential change in technology and we need to understand what is going on.

## **WRAP UP AND NEXT STEPS**

Chair Trapani provided closing remarks and asked for any new business. There being none, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'LH', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Lynn Hayes

Approved August 8, 2018