

Capital Region Workforce Partnership
Meeting Minutes for June 24, 2020

Attendance					
Member	Present	Absent	Alternates	Present	Absent
Hon. James Holland, Chair, (Chesterfield)	x		Sarah Snead	x	
Hon. Patricia Paige, Vice Chair, (New Kent)		x	Rodney Hathaway		x
Hon. Karin Carmack (Powhatan)	x		Brett Schardein		x
Hon. Patricia S. O'Bannon (Henrico)		x	Brandon Hinton	x	
Hon. Gilbert Smith (Charles City)	x		Michelle Johnson		x
Hon. Don Sharpe (Goochland) Casey Verburg		x	Todd Kilduff		x
Hon. Angela Kelly-Wiecek, (Hanover)		x	Jim Taylor		x
Hon. Michael Jones (City of Richmond)		x	Valaryee Mitchell	x	

Other Guests: Mr. Mychael Lee, ResCare; Ms. Danielle Johnson, ResCare, Ms. Earlene Jones, Ross IES.

Staff: Mr. Brian Davis, Director CRWP, Ms. Krishawn Monroe, Asst. CRWP Director, and Ms. Carla Cosby, Administrative Assistant.

- I. Call to Order and Welcome. Honorable James Holland called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. Mr. Davis read the Statement for Electronic Meetings. Mr. Davis noted that since a quorum was not present, the action items; the minutes would be deferred until a quorum is established.
- II. Public Comments. There were no persons present for public comment. Upon Honorable Gilbert Smith's arrival at 9:35 a.m., a quorum was established.
- III. Approval of the Minutes from December 13, 2019 Meeting. Mr. Holland moved to approve the minutes as presented; Mr. Smith seconded the motion. Honorable Carmack abstained from the vote. The motion carried. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Hinton, Mr. Holland, Ms. Mitchell, and Mr. Smith – 4 Ayes. Ms. Carmack – 1 Abstention.
- IV. Action Items
 - A. PY20 Budget

Some key items included:

 - Projected total new revenue is \$4.78 million
 - \$336,108 projected from non-federal sources
 - \$164,826 is Wagner-Peyser funds from the VEC through December 31, 2020 for career services
 - \$199,854 from an Economic Equity grant by VCCS
 - Miscellaneous line supports activities and provides ability to move funds as needed
 - Proposed Expenditures include rent for 3 workforce centers, special events for youth hiring event
 - \$1.9 million for adult and dislocated worker operations and services.
 - \$300,000 for One-Stop Operator
 - \$1 million for Youth services
 - \$50,000 for IT supports for the 3 workforce centers
 - Expenses \$5.1 million and a slight reserve of \$75,000.
 - Carryover amount is unknown
 - Closeout should be completed by August and an update presented with actual amounts
 - Other funding streams are known and verified
 - VEC typically manages the Wagner Peyser program, but awarded funds to local boards through December 2020 due to the unprecedented unemployment volume.

- EEI Grant is an economic independence grant awarded before COVID-19. A little more than \$200,000. These funds can be used the same as Title 1 funds. Used to increase collaboration with the 8 departments of social services.

Mr. Holland called for questions; there were none. Mr. Hinton moved to approve the budget as presented; Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Carmack, Mr. Hinton, Mr. Holland, Ms. Mitchell, Mr. Sharpe, and Mr. Smith – 6 Ayes and 0 Nays.

B. PY 19 Service Contracts

1. Adult and Dislocated Worker (ResCare). ResCare is in their 5th year under this contract. Henrico procurement requires that the contract be re-bid after the 5th year. Initial procurement processes had begun however due to the COVID-19 crisis; critical procurement activity became the priority. To maintain continuity of services, Henrico County authorized a contract extension of 6 months.

The first recommendation for consideration is renewal of the ResCare contract for a 6-month period. The extension includes Wagner-Peyser funds and delivery of basic career services. The economic equity grant funds, \$150,000, are available through March of 2021. If the funds are not expended by December, three additional months are available under the new contract to expend the funds.

Mr. Davis recommended a separate motion for each contract award.

Mr. Holland called for questions. Mr. Holland moved to approve the contract extension as recommended; Ms. Carmack seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Carmack, Mr. Hinton, Mr. Holland, Ms. Mitchell, Mr. Sharpe, and Mr. Smith – 6 Ayes and 0 Nays.

2. One-Stop Operator/ResCare Contract. This is the 3rd year of this contract and it is eligible for contract award. The recommendation is to increase the contract from \$240,000 to \$300,000. The increase, in part, supports costs associated with the new virtual environment and funds to purchase cleaning supplies (this is a new budget item).

Mr. Holland called for questions. Mr. Holland moved to approve the One Stop Operator's contract extension and increase as recommended; Ms. Carmack seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Carmack, Mr. Hinton, Mr. Holland, Ms. Mitchell, Mr. Sharpe, and Mr. Smith – 6 Ayes and 0 Nays.

3. Youth (Ross) Out of School Youth provider. This is Ross' third contract renewal. They are eligible for one additional renewal after this year. Ross has exceeded all negotiated performance targets. The contract is slightly reduced due to federal funding in the youth category; this is a proportional reduction. Mr. Holland called for questions. Mr. Smith moved to approve the contract renewal as presented; Ms. Carmack seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Carmack, Mr. Hinton, Mr. Holland, Ms. Mitchell, Mr. Sharpe, and Mr. Smith – 6 Ayes and 0 Nays.

V. Discussion and Information

A. Richmond Center Status/Relocation

The current lease expires in November, 2020. Staff was directed to pursue other options and not continue with the current lease. Parking and the high cost per square footage are an issue. The current lease is \$291,000 annually. This is offset by Richmond's sublease of a little more than 500 square feet. The State also leases space. The Richmond center has accounted for 30%-35% of total customer volume, 10,000-13,000 over the last 3 years.

The location option is the West Broad Street corridor near Willow Lawn. Consideration of a site with lower square footage was favorable. It was realized that not all spaces in the current center were utilized and there was wasted unusable space. A smaller footprint would meet service and staff needs.

Rent at Richmond is currently \$19.16 a square foot. The target cost going forward is \$20-\$22 a square foot. Mr. Davis noted that reducing the square footage is fiscally advantageous. Advantages of having a building in the city to meet the needs of the underserved. The potential site was in proximity to the bus station, has on-site parking, with little renovation needed. The current tenant decided to stay.

Concurrence from the CLEOs is needed on pursuing a new independent site or disbursing staff. The targeted square footage is 7,500. Rent is \$14 a square foot. The building is located in the Willow Lawn area. The site is close to two Pulse bus stations, has ample parking, and the owner may be willing to make upgrades.

Richmond has the highest poverty rate and unemployment rates. Under the federal formula that drives WIOA dollars, 40% of federal budget is generated by Richmond's economic conditions.

It is estimated that relocation costs may be as much as \$100,000. This includes costs for movers, network and wiring installation, etc. Current workstations will be moved to the new site. A monetary benefit, \$144,000, from the sale of the Williamsburg Road property will be used to offset costs. The CLEOs previously instructed staff to apply those funds to a one-time capital need; expenses for the new site meet that criteria. The sale proceeds must be expended within roughly 3 years of being received.

The current considered site is 7,500 square feet. Brian noted that if the rent were \$14-\$18 a square foot, with an annual rent of \$135,000, this is a significant reduction compared to the \$291,000 at Cary Street.

Staff of the City's Office of Community Wealth Building will not move to the new site; they will be absorbed by the city. State operations will move to the new site. After the state pays its portion of rent, CRWP would pay the balance of \$120,000. Ms. Valaryee Mitchell added that Richmond also serves customers at its the Marshall Street location. They also have operations at the End District Initiative and a southside location. Ms. Mitchell supports a recommendation with bus access.

Mr. Holland made a motion to authorize staff to move forward in planning to relocate Cary Street operations to a new location to serve the city; Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Conversation continued regarding possible cost offsets. The landlord may consider offsetting some costs to make the restrooms ADA compliant. A proposal from the owner will present various factors.

The question was asked about costs if no building is acquired before the lease terminates; is a month-to-month extension an option for Cary Street. The landlord informed he has another tenant.

- B. Director's Report. A brief orientation was provided to newly appointed Powhatan representative, Ms. Carmack prior to the meeting. He will also provide an orientation for Mr. Don Sharpe, newly appointed Goochland representative.

Key Unemployment Data Points. 10% unemployment rate in April.

- New unemployment claims filed since March 14 is 109,446. This represents 13% of initial claims statewide.
- Initial claims do not mean a benefit award.
- Continued claims. Filer must go on line each week and file continued claim. This number gives a better indicator of total number of claims.
- For the week ending June 13, just under 55,000 people filed claims. Numbers level with statewide number. May remain unchanged if filer becomes employed; their benefits expire, etc. Last year, there were 19,000 continued claims for the same week statewide.
- Unemployment rate is actually survey based. A random sample of people are called the week of the 12th of each month; are asked are you working or are you looking. Economists factor in other calculations and come up with a rate. This is the same formula used by the Census Bureau. Poll taker asks specific questions only and respondents are allowed to only provide answers to those questions. Virginia's rate dropped 11% to 9%. Local level rates will be available late June or early July.
- The CARES Act has provision for \$600 in additional benefit on top of states benefit of \$378. If individual gets both, their benefit may be as much as \$1,000 a week. Due to COVID, the job search

requirement is waived nor do they have to document their job search to continue their claim. Seeking employment is diminished because of the increased benefit. The \$600.00 benefit will expire July 25. Job search will become a priority.

- COVID-19 Response

Effective March 17, Level 3 response to COVID-19 was implemented and centers were closed to the public. ResCare and Ross took steps to assure they had current customer contact information. A virtual platform was purchased from Emyra, The One Flow system. The system supports encryption and electronic signature. Emyra provides information systems for workforce areas. A one-year license was purchased for \$25,000. The product is streamlined and convenient to use for customers. The product also has data sharing agreement.

Easy Virtual Fair was purchased to allow for virtual job fairs. This platform allows employers to set up booths on-line and any number of individuals can come in and talk to candidates. This nine month license expires December 31.

Cleaning services. An emergency arrangement for cleaning services for the Richmond and Chesterfield centers was coordinated. Henrico County is covering the Henrico center.

The centers are scheduled to reopen on July 6. Centers will open with a staggered and phased approach. Henrico center will open 3 days, Richmond 2, and Chesterfield 2 with alternating morning and afternoons hours. It is anticipated that the volume of people seeking unemployment services will be of high demand. Online options will be available.

Other factors considered are

- Limit building capacity. Have to consider 'wait times'. Will go to a system that allows texting individuals so they are alerted when it is their turn
- Adult and Dislocated Worker services and general employment services will be 'walk-in
- No live classes
- Most partners will work on appointment only basis
- Armed security posted at each center for 8 hours. VEC will pay for security.
- Acrylic barriers are installed. Staff and customers will be screened. Face masks will be required to enter center.
- Fast Lane services will be created. Persons needing one on one services will have up to an hour
- Will contract with cleaning services for enhanced cleaning
- Rapid Response Grant, \$201,460, for small business assistance was awarded March 25. To help businesses to remain open. Funds were divided by each jurisdiction of the region's labor market. Currently, there is a remaining balance of \$3,700. The funds are distributed in Charles City, Goochland, and Powhatan. If businesses have not submitted invoices and no longer need funds, re-advertisement that funds are available will be posted.
- GO Virginia grant in combination with VCCS is \$80,000 to develop portal to connect businesses and job seekers. The community college foundation will serve as the fiscal agent. Allows employers to do their own job postings and to scan resumes by keyword. On jobseeker side, it will allow individuals to take online assessments at home. Once the assessment is complete, users can self-progress. Access information on training and supportive services. An open use license can be purchased.
- CARES Act. There is also a Heroes Act, if passed, additional funding may be available.

VI. Ms. Sara Snead moved to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Carmack seconded the motion. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned 10:54 a.m.