

MINUTES
HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
OCTOBER 9, 2018

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Board of Service Delivery Region 9 met Tuesday, October 9, 2018, Chatters Restaurant, Vidalia, Georgia.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dan Bennett	Keith Carter
James Frank Cray	Russell Davidson
Kim Edge	Wayne Hall
Brian Hamilton	Tim Herrington
Dr. Margaret Hightower	Dr. Hank Hobbs
Michelle Johnson	Mac Jordan
Martha McBride	Clay Reid
Nolan Thigpen	Tamra Wells
Ted Buford	Bobby Cox
Doug Rooks	Meddy Settles
Ramona Thurman	Billy Trapnell
John R. Turner	Dr. Barry Dotson
Dr. Paul Scott	Debbie Dyal
Alfonza Hall	George Milligan
Bobby Peacock	Ryan Waldrep
Alfred Wheeler	

MEMBERS ABSENT

Roger Branch	Carolyn Blackshear
Rochelle Culver	Desse Davis
Janice O'Brien	Joe Sikes
Marshall Smith	Linda Hunter
Roy Selph	Jason Whitlow
Roy Williams	
Guy Singletary	

GUEST

April McDuffie, Wiregrass Technical College
Robin Cone, Georgia Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
Janice Davis, Georgia Department of Labor
Kelly Peacock, Coastal Pines Technical College
Susan Cross, Southeastern Technical College
Chris Stanford, Emanuel County
Dell Keith, State Workforce Development Board Member, Wayne County

STAFF

Keith Dixon
Sandy Bunton
Alexis Eason
Shane Braly

Brett Manning
Janice Jones
Alex Clements
Delores Kesler

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order. The WDB had a quorum of 31 members present. Each guest introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Wayne Hall made a motion, seconded by Bobby Cox, to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2018, Workforce Development Board Meeting. Motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Keith Dixon stated that the Department of Labor has funds set aside for Rapid Response if counties are affected by the approaching storm. Funds were allocated for the past storm but these funds were slow in getting to the counties. He asked for the members to let him know if their county needs help with equipment rental and extra workers to get the storm debris cleaned up. There may be funds available to help.

Keith stated that the transition from Economic Development to the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) continues to move forward. Our current contracts are in place, but we do have requests at the state for additional funds. He stated that he received an email from TCSG for further clarification on these additional funds request and hopefully, once the questions are answered, the funds will be allocated.

ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE

Wayne Hall thanked the WDB members for their attendance today, and he stated that he appreciates everyone for taking the time to attend.

BUDGET AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Dr. Paul Scott referred the WDB members to the Expenditure Report. He stated that the expenditures are current. Chair Jordan stated that the expenditures are allocated throughout seventeen counties.

ONE-STOP COMMITTEE

Billy Trapnell referred the WDB members to the Customer Completing Survey Cards report. He stated that this report reflects the comments of the customers completing the survey and all the comments are favorable.

Billy referred the WDB members to the One-Stop Report. He stated that this report reflects the total number of visitors to the One-Stop sites and it appears there is a decline in most areas. The decline in One-Stop visits may be due to people finding jobs.

PLAN AND PROGRAM REVIEW

Tim Herrington stated that the Plan and Program Review Committee read and reviewed the updated Heart of Georgia Altamaha Unified Regional Plan. Tim stated that nothing could happen in workforce development unless there is a plan, and this document reflects what is going on in our region. He stated that anyone wanting to read the 213- page document could request a copy and staff will get the document to you. Tim stated that the committee approved the document with a few revisions, and the committee is recommending that the WDB members approve the Unified Regional Plan Modification for the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region. Meddy Settles, seconded. Motion carried. Keith stated that the plan would be posted on the website for 30 days for public comment. If there are no public comments, the plan will be submitted to the state for approval.

Tim referred the WDB members to the Customer Counts Report. Tim stated that he compared the current report with last years report. The current number of customers served is 18,418, and last year the total number of customers served was 14,185 for an increase of 4,233 in customers served. This is a positive trend. He stated that the report is divided into training services and business services. The current number of customers served through training services is 1,085, and the number of customers served last year is 1,044. The current number of business customers served is 17,333, and the number of customers served last year was 13,141. He said that his compliments go to the staff working hard to help the citizens in the region, and this is a great report. Tim asked if the number of staff increased to be able to serve the additional customers. Keith stated that the number of staff has not changed.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Meddy Settles stated that the Public Awareness Committee is recommending to the WDB members to update the current website. Tamara Wells seconded. Keith stated that the updates are to give the website a modern look. The website is www.worksourceheartofgeorgia.org. Keith explained that WorkSource is the state branding name for WIOA so it will be recognized across the state of Georgia. Motion carried.

Meddy stated that staff has been providing information about our services through job fairs, at technical colleges, and other organizations. He stated that WIOA staff are doing an excellent job getting information to the citizens in our seventeen-county area.

Meddy also stated that an open house is being held October 19, 2018, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Southeastern Carpenters Training Facility located at 40 Telfair Place in Savannah, Georgia. The open house is to showcase the training services offered at the facility. He stated that the training facility provides an opportunity for people who do not want to attend college.

RETREAT/NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Ted Buford stated that the WDB Retreat went very well and was well attended with only nine board members being absent. Chair Jordan stated that the retreat is very beneficial for educating our members and for orienting new members.

UNEMPLOYMENT REPORT

Debbie Dyal referred the WDB members to the August 2018, Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment for Georgia handout. She stated that several of our counties are in the top 25 highest unemployment rates for the state of Georgia. These counties are Wheeler – 6.4%, Telfair – 6.3%, Emanuel 5.9%, Bleckley – 5.6%, Montgomery – 5.6%, Toombs – 5.6% and Treutlen County – 5.6%.

Ryan Waldrep stated that Husqvarna announced they were shifting directions with their production worldwide, and part of these plans include closing the McRae plant due to no longer producing the product they are currently producing in McRae. The McRae plant will honor their current commitments and will be hiring 400 people through late Spring 2019 to be able to keep their commitments. The plant currently produces walk behind lawn mowers and snow blowers. Ryan stated that they are looking to sell the facility to another company. He stated that a resource roundtable would be held next Friday with partnering agencies including WIOA to discuss the different resources available to the employees.

RC REPORT

Brett Manning stated that every year, counties are required to submit comprehensive plans to the state. This year, Wilcox County, Tattnall County, and Johnson County were required to submit comprehensive plans. All three plans were submitted ahead of schedule and have been approved by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). DCA was impressed with the plans and stated they were going to use these plans as a model for other county plans. He stated that work is also being done on the RC Comprehensive Regional Plan. A steering committee meeting would be held October 24, 2019, at the Vidalia Municipal Annex and everyone is invited to attend.

OTHER BUSINESS

Dell Keith, State Board Workforce Development Board member from Wayne County, stated that at the state level, they are committed to making sure funding continues for our area. This region is known for the services provided, and he appreciates what our area is doing. He stated that he was in the banking business for 32 years, and he has worked in economic development in Wayne County for the past three years. He stated that he understands the challenges of the workforce and that we have to continue to increase the transition from school to the workforce. He also stated that he wanted to introduce himself to the WDB members and that he will be glad to answer any questions. He stated that he looks forward to working with the WDB. Chair Jordan stated that our WDB has had a quorum present since the year 2000. Mr. Keith stated that this region is known for its organization, and the staff does an excellent job. He stated that his responsibility as a state board member is to make sure the funding continues to be provided for the region.

There being no further business, John Raymond Turner made a motion for the meeting to adjourn, Martha McBride, seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Bunton
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