

**Southern Maryland Workforce Development Board Meeting**  
**Via Microsoft TEAMS Meeting**  
**June 13, 2024**

**Minutes**

**Members Present:** Cindy Rauner, Kelly Williams, Laura Askins, Marcia Chase, Robin Cullers, Kathy Guzman, William “BJ” Hall, Christy Lombardi, Heidi Lybarger, Brian Miller, Tami Radisch, Mike Scott, Chrisitan Sorochty, Michelle Stewart, Katherine Stormont, Stephanie Witte, Alexis Zoss

**Members Absent:** Carrie Akins, Stacey Cook, Alan Crawley, Dr. Yolanda S. Wilson, Michael Young

**Staff Present:** Ruthy Davis, Melinda Bowling, Belinda Denton, Sandy Faucheux, Patricia Meszaros, Ashley Raley, Yvette Turner

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 am by Cindy Rauner, Chair.

**WELCOME AND ROLL CALL**

Cindy Rauner opened the meeting with a warm welcome and introduction of attendees.

**MISSION MOMENT**

Yvette Turner provided the Mission Moment which included a report on the recently held 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Hiring Event and 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Family Resource Day. The events were held simultaneously on May 15<sup>th</sup> at the Graces Event Center and were a great success.

Details of 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Hiring Event:

- 54 hiring businesses registered and attended.
- 579 jobseekers were in attendance.
- 2 jobseekers were hired at the event.
- 79 jobseekers were in the hiring process including:
  - 10 by St. Mary’s Sheriff’s Office
  - 4 by Reliable Contractors
  - 9 by Bob Hall
- Of the jobseekers who completed surveys on why they were at the event:
  - 53% are unemployed.
  - 30% are looking for full-time employment.
  - 17% are currently part-time looking for full-time employment.
- Businesses were impressed with the influx of job seekers and the quality of talent coming through.
- Jobseekers appreciated being able to set up interviews at the time of the event.

Details of the Family Resource Day:

- 25 Resource Partners attended.
- 226 residents attended.
- Giveaways to the residents from the partners included 12 gas cards, 3 grocery gift cards and various cards from other local businesses.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Hiring Event and 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Family Resource Day are already in the works for Spring 2025.

## **BUSINESS**

- A quorum was established.
- A motion to approve the minutes from the March 14, 2024, Workforce Development Board meeting was made by Stephanie Witte, seconded by Chris Sorochty, and carried.
- A motion to approve the consent agenda documents was made by Laura Askins, seconded by Kathy Guzman, and carried.

## **FUNDING UPDATE**

Melinda Bowling provided a funding update to the Board. PY24/FY25 funding from the US Department of Labor passed on through the Maryland Department of Labor is down significantly in all areas, including Southern Maryland. She provided a chart outlining the historical funding and current funding. Formula funds are down \$170k, which is an 11% decrease and more than anticipated. Discretionary funds include ARPA which we will expend by June of 2025.

## **YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT AJC CLOSING**

Ruthy Davis informed the Board that today is the last day staff will be in the Waldorf Youth and Young Adult AJC office. The decision was made to close the office partly as a budgetary consideration but also due to the fact that walk in traffic and office appointments have significantly decreased since the onset of COVID. Staff from the office will be relocating to the St. Mary's AJC, and Youth Program Staff are formulating plans to meet young people where they are in the community.

## **2024 SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM**

Ruthy Davis provided information on the upcoming Summer Youth Program. Current funding from the Governor's Youth Connection Funds of \$43,000, which will enable us to provide placement of:

- 15 on-site youth opportunities for Calvert
- 15 on-site youth opportunities for Charles
- 5 on-site youth opportunities for St. Mary's with an additional 10 virtual paid opportunities.

This is a 6-week program running from July 8, 2024-Aug 16, 2024. Over 200 youth have registered, most of which have barriers. The participants will receive minimum wage of \$15 per hour for a 35-hour work week. This program serves as a learning experience for the participants, ideally in the career field of their choice and is a resume builder. Some participants end up being hired by the employer after the program is over.

## **NEW START GRANT UPDATE**

Ashley Raley provided an update on the program for Briana Capuano who was unable to attend the meeting. Currently, Southern Maryland is the only area in Maryland to have received this grant from State funds allocated through the legislature. This grant provides entrepreneurship training to the re-entry population, both in and outside of the walls. The first two cohorts, both in Calvert County, were recently completed. One cohort was for recently released individuals working with the Small Business Development Center at CSM and the other was behind the walls at the detention center.

The SBDC Cohort ended up with 4 participants after the vetting process was complete. This was an 8-week course, entirely facilitated 100% by the SBDC. Two participants are currently moving forward with business loans, both for food truck businesses. The 2 other participants will continue to receive services in order to successfully complete their business plans,

The next cohort for SBDC will begin October 1<sup>st</sup> and already has 10 interested individuals with a class size slated for 15 participants. All interest has been word of mouth, so no advertising was warranted for the program.

There were 6 participants in the detention center cohort with participation selection vetted by the detention center. Five participants were able to complete the course. This was a 10-week course with various facilitators teaching entrepreneurial and business courses. Last week a “Shark Tank” event was held where the participants presented their business plans to judges, including the State Program Monitor. All were impressed by how prepared the participants were and how much knowledge they gained over the 10-week program. The detention center is interested in expanding services with us and is excited to start another 10-week course in 3 approximately weeks.

Alexis Zoss asked Ashley to share a description of the program with her. Re-entry is part of DSS’s annual plan, and they would like to be able to show a connection with the program.

Kathy Guzman would like to talk with Ashley offline to involve the Chamber in this program as well as assisting individuals with integrating back into the community.

Laura Askins asked what detention center this was held at. Patti Meszaros explained that she reached out to all 3 detention centers and Calvert County was the only one interested in participating.

### **TCCSMD WORKFORCE REORGANIZATION**

Ruthy provided information on the recent TCCSMD Reorganization. Due to ARPA funding ending and the decrease in formula funding, there was a need to reorganize the team to best leverage resources. Ruthy shared the current reorganization chart and reviewed the changes.

### **ONE STOP OPERATOR PROCUREMENT**

Ruthy informed the members procurement was to happen again this year, however, there is a clause in the agreement that this can be extended for a year. Therefore, the procurement will take place in the spring of 2025.

### **BOARD MEMBERS-WHERE DO YOU FIT?**

Ruthy introduced the segment to the board members to find out where they fit in on the board and engagement in the committees. Part of the reason the board is made up of at least 51% private industry is because business is our customer and without them thriving in our community, there’s no use working with job seekers. We need our businesses to thrive and need their input on this board and board committees to understand the best ways to utilize our funds to create the pipeline of skilled employees that local businesses need to succeed and thrive. Each board member has the ability to guide us and the obligation to be an advocate for what we do and to get the word out to the community. We wanted to take a moment today to find out what the board members’ ideal fit is on the board and the committees.

Board members provided detailed introductions of themselves, the organizations they represent and where they best fit on the board with some interested in serving on committees. Those interested in continuing to serve or interested in joining committees included:

| <b>Committee</b>    | <b>Name</b>        | <b>Notes</b>                                     |
|---------------------|--------------------|--|
| Business Engagement | Christian Sorochty | New member.                                      |
| Business Engagement | Kathy Guzman       | New Member, interested in being Committee Chair. |
| Quality Assurance   | Christy Lombardi   | Will continue as member.                         |
| Quality Assurance   | Robin Cullers      | Will continue as member.                         |
| Quality Assurance   | Stephanie Whitte   | Will continue as member.                         |
| Special Populations | Alexis Zoss        | New member.                                      |
| Special Populations | Michelle Stewart   | Will continue as member.                         |
| Youth               | Michelle Stewart   | Will continue as member.                         |

### **STANDING COMMITTEES**

Ruthy spoke of the current bylaws which were created in March of 2018. The staff would like to revise the bylaws and combine two committees, the Special Population and Youth and Young Adult committees, to better align with the reorganization. We will discuss it further and obtain board approval at our next meeting. Combining of the two committees will leave 4 standing committees:

1. Executive Committee
2. Business Engagement Committee
3. Quality Assurance Committee
4. The combined Special Populations and Youth & Young Adult Committee

Information of the committees was provided by TCCSMD staff that support those committees. The board was reminded that committee membership is not only for board members and individuals outside of the board are encouraged to become members as well.

Belinda provided details for the Business Engagement Committee. The committee is to guide business engagement activities in the region. The committee recently established a front-line facing group. This group meets quarterly about such things as best practices, events, referrals and learning opportunities with guest speakers. The goal of the committee is to enhance business participation, bridge skills gaps, and strengthen partnerships. The committee welcomes additional members.

Ashley provided details on the Quality Assurance Committee. This committee focuses on data, dashboards, process improvement, analyzing customer service and performance measures. They meet to work on problem solving and improving operations. There are currently five members, and they welcome more.

Ashley provided details on the Special Populations Committee. This committee focuses on advocacy and service delivery for veterans, individuals with disabilities, migrant farm workers, ex-offenders, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and other marginalized groups. Mr. B. J. Hall recently stepped up as Chair of that committee and his commitment is appreciated. There are currently 9 members on the committee.

The Youth & Young Adult Committee will be combined with the Special Populations Committee.

**Public Comment & Announcements:** None

**Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn was made by Laura Askins, seconded by Christian Sorochty, and carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:24 am.