

Board of Directors

Roanoke Higher Education Center, Roanoke, VA
Friday, February 15, 2008

Minutes

I. Call to Order

Board Chair **Bill Jones** called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

II. Roll Call and Introductions

Sherry Dean called the roll. Members present:

Bill Jones, HomeTown Bank
Joyce Kessinger, Boxley Materials Company
Joe Brinley, JATC/NECA, IBEW Local 26
Paul Paradzinski, Craig County
Jane Conlin, Roanoke City Department of Human & Social Services
Richard Teaff, Dabney S. Lancaster Community College
Carroll Gentry, Virginia Western Community College
Roger Johnson, Roanoke County Schools

Members absent:

Walter L. Harper, Harper's Plumbing Co
Barbara Winstead, Five Star Chef Service
Rob Ledger, Roanoke Valley Economic Partnership
Tim Tobin, Alleghany Regional Hospital
Wayne Flippen, John C. Nordt
Melody Stovall, Roanoke Redevelopment & Housing Authority
Kathy Hodges, Franklin County Workforce Development Consortium
Bruce Johannessen, Virginia Employment Commission, Roanoke
Lew Bishop, National College of Business & Technology
Robert Glenn, The Issues Management Group

Staff present:

Doloris Vest, president
Sherry Dean, accountant/office administrator

Visitors present:

Jerry Barnett, Virginia Employment Commission, Roanoke
Clay Stein, Goodwill Industries of the Valleys

A quorum was present.

III. Youth Council Report

Youth Council Chair **Paul Paradzinski** reported Franklin County had created a Career Council similar to the one established several years ago in Alleghany County. The Franklin County Career Council is interested in working with businesses to provide a truancy watch in that area. The youth council is working with the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) to create a more inviting environment, at the workforce centers, for youth. There is a need for more business people to serve on the youth council.

IV. Approval of Consent Agenda

Mr. Teaff moved to accept the consent agenda

- **Minutes from the December 7, 2007 meeting**
- **Budget Report December 31, 2007**

Mr. Paradzinski seconded. The motion was passed on a voice vote.

V. Staff Report

Ms. Vest reported on the following:

- 1. Roanoke Center Relocation:** The Virginia Department of General Services has asked for further board's commitment before continuing with the Crossroads Mall location as a workforce center site. The real estate company has estimated the cost would fall between \$18.50 to \$20.00 per square foot but there are add on costs for common areas to the base square footage cost. Partners cannot be given a definite cost at this point. The VEC is reluctant to give notice on their current site. There is a long list of what is required to be included in a workforce center and that planning cannot be done unless it is known who will be occupying the site. If a major partner will not be in the site, then the site cannot be designated as a comprehensive center. **Mr. Gentry** requested Ms. Vest's recommendation which is to let the planning team to continue to plot out what is needed for a workforce center and determine the square footage required. Once these items are determined the board should be able to decide if the cost and location are a good fit for a Roanoke area workforce center. **Mr. Teaff motioned to send a letter to the state reporting square footage needed by the workforce center and requesting a cost determination by the state for the amount of square footage needed, Mr. Gentry seconded, the motion was passed on a voice vote.**
- 2. PY2006 Monitoring Report:** Two items were noted in the state monitor's report. One item, which was listed as an administrative concern was that the board had not received a waiver, from the state, to downsize and the other item reported that the board membership had not been certified, by the state workforce council. The state requested the board send paperwork previously sent, for board member certification, and have the Consortium of Locally Elected Officials (CLEO) to re-sign nomination forms for board members. Many across the state do not feel this is appropriate because board members are in the middle of terms and should not have to be recertified by an elected official that was not in office when the original certification was done. Additionally, there is nothing in the law that requires a board to receive a waiver, from the state, in order to downsize.
- 3. Request For Proposal (RFP):** The RFP was issued January 25, 2008. It is based on the RFP issued in prior years, but requires a single proposal to operate the workforce centers and administer all three programs. An optional bidders' conference was held February 6, 2008 and was attended by Goodwill and TAP. The RFP deadline is February 29, 2008. It has been requested the RFP be submitted electronically and by hard copy. The electronic copy will be easier for the RFP committee to review. Each section of the RFP has a point system by which to grade the RFP. Staff will complete a technical review prior to the review by the RFP Committee, which will submit its recommendation to the board for a final vote at the April meeting. The RFP is for the contract starting July 1, 2008. The RFP committee and youth council will make recommendations to the executive committee in March. Volunteers are needed to review the RFP. The youth council will review the youth portion at their March meeting. **Ms. Kessinger, Mr. Paradzinski and Mr. Gentry** volunteered to review the RFP.
- 4. General Assembly Legislation:** Items that will affect workforce development are included in Executive Order 61 and are as follows:
 - move Workforce Investment Act (WIA) operations to the community college system,
 - Wagner-Peyser administration to stay with the VEC,
 - require boards to certify five percent of participants with Career Readiness Certificate,
 - require VEC offices to be located within workforce centers,
 - closing VECs to be based on low unemployment rates

Mr. Paradzinski noted the Roanoke VEC is losing eleven employees due to downsizing. **Mr. Barnett** reported that, after the downsizing, the VEC will only have nine employees to serve the public. Ms. Vest noted that as the SHARE project demonstrated, there seems to be a huge disconnect between what Mr. LaBlanc's office, at the state level, believes can be accomplished by the limited staff at the local levels. Mr. Paradzinski noted the youth council, at their last meeting, had partners agree to share time, at the VEC, to work with youth.

5. **Incentive Grant:** Based on performance, for the PY06 program year, Area III has been given the opportunity to apply for incentive grant funds for that year. The maximum grant award will be for \$10,000 and the board has applied for that amount. A portion of the funding, if awarded, will be used to enhance youth participation in the one-stop system. A promotions campaign consisting of open houses at the centers, media promotions and training for center staff on handling youth issues have been included in the incentive funding budget plan.
6. **Website:** An example of the new website page was handed out. The new website will contain the current information well as additional information for individuals searching for employment and employers. Individuals looking for employment will find a section to take them through what is needed to look for a job. Employer information will tie to the items the economic development committee is working on. The new website will be a one-stop website for workforce in Area III of Virginia.

VI. Unfinished Business

1. **Career and Technical Education Committee (CTE) report:** **Mr. Johnson** reported the CTE committee is trying to zero in on a target group. One group identified may be those who have started college and dropped out but don't have specific skills. Ms. Vest noted that, since the CTE committee met, schools in region six are coming together to form an area-wide task force to look at CTE and have asked Ms. Vest to join that group.
2. **Dabney S. Lancaster Community College Commercial Drivers Learners permit:** Ms. Kessinger recognized Dabney S. Lancaster Community College for their classes offered at the Greenfield Training Center. Dabney is offering computer classes and a commercial driver instructional program that costs less than \$80, can be completed in three Saturdays and offers a commercial drivers learners permit upon completion. Boxley Materials is sending individuals to the training; Boxley also has three individuals in the computer training at Greenfield. Ms. Kessinger became aware of the Dabney programs through a flyer in the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce newsletter.
3. **Economic Development Committee (EDC):** Ms. Vest reported committee chair **Rob Ledger** would like to see the board focus on providing workforce information to businesses via the workforce board's website. Currently there is not a central access point where businesses can go to locate information, on the Roanoke area workforce. Companies search for future business locations before cities or areas even know they are being looked at. The board can work with economic development staff in municipalities to determine what information businesses need access to and provide this information on the board's website. Ms. Vest also believes there is a need for a regular meeting with the Economic Development Partnership. Former Board member **Beth Doughty** has been named the executive director of the Roanoke Valley Economic Development Partnership.

Mr. Teaff discussed the disconnect between economic development in the Alleghany Highlands as that area does not bring the workforce board into their discussions. Ms. Vest reviewed the structure of the Coalition for Economic Development which includes the executive directors from the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission, Roanoke Valley Economic Development Partnership, Roanoke Regional Chamber, Salem-Roanoke County Chamber, the Roanoke Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau and the workforce board. These individuals, as staff, know what is taking place between the various groups but their boards are not aware. Mr. Gentry believes there is a disconnect between the economic development partnership which concentrates on marketing the area whereas Mr. Teaff's group tends to be more hands on of working with businesses once a company is interested in the area. Mr. Gentry also sees cities and counties having their own groups

that are trying to entice companies to locate to their areas. **Ms. Conlin** believes there is competition among the various economic development groups. Mr. Gentry believes Dell Computer was lost to North Carolina because of the various number of "splinter" groups dealing with Dell and no collective effort being made to obtain that company. Ms. Vest noted now is a good time to add economic development information to the website as the website is being redesigned. Focusing more on economic development leads to the work of the fundraising committee as they will be researching how to structure funding or seek out additional funding so Ms. Vest can focus on economic development side of the workforce. **Ms. Hodges** is heading up the fund raising committee.

VII. New Business

- 1. Funding Rescission:** Ms. Vest reported the federal government has rescinded, from all states, more than \$250 million of unspent PY06 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) grant funds. Virginia's share of the rescission is \$4.7 million. If PY06 funding has been spent, the law requires the funds to be taken from the PY08 allocation. It is estimated Area III could lose between \$65,000 and \$100,000 of funding, from the PY08 allocation. For Area III, if funds are taken from PY07 funding, it would wipe out the funding carryover for this year, but if funds are taken from the PY08 funding the board will have time to adjust. CLEO members sent letters to officials but the rescission was rolled over into a larger bill and passed
- 2. Roanoke County Adult Education:** Mr. Johnson reported Roanoke County has greatly expanded its adult General Education Development (GED) program as it is now offered at 12 sites, days, nights and weekends. A class will also be opening, at Virginia Western Community College. Additionally, an on-line GED program was started in November 2007 and there are 30 contracts for this class. The program has expanded from one site two years ago to 15. **Mr. Jones** would like to see the board do press release on this. Ms. Vest noted the state council is really pushing GED obtainment and the state is going to have a day they promote GEDs.
- 3. Board Membership:** Ms. Vest reported that, with terms expiring, the board staff will send a letter to members to determine who would like to be reappointed. A business representative is needed from Covington. The board should think of who might be a good business representative and make suggestions. The board can add as many business representatives as needed. It has been noted that having a business representative from the Roanoke Times or Carilion is desired. Mr. Teaff suggested that a business representative, from Mead Westvaco, would be a good addition and Ms. Vest could call Mr. Mark George who is the plant manager there.

VIII. Announcements

Next meeting April 4, 2008 at Boxley Materials Company.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Doloris E Vest

Doloris Vest, president

Date