

## **High Country Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes July 15, 2015**

**Members Present:** Rhonda Herman, Sam L. Ray, Justin Ray, Jason Carlton, Mike Birkmire, Tom Hughes, Jane Blackburn, Keith Deveraux, Debbie Woodard, Veronica (Ronne) L. Grantham, Melissa Soto, Bryan Peterson, Sallie Woodring, and Dan Little.

**Staff Present:** Adrian Tait, Rebecca Bloomquist, Misty Bishop-Price, Don Sherrill, and Tanna Greathouse.

**Guests:** Cathy Barr, Ginger Shaffer, Janice Ivey, Phil Trew, Melody Moss, Anita Lowe, Pam Wilson, Jennie Harpold, Kim Cashatt, and John Greene.

### **Call to Order**

Chair Rhonda Herman called the meeting to order.

### **Approval of March 12, 2015 Minutes**

Motion for approval was made by Justin Ray and seconded by Bryan Peterson. Motion passed.

### **New Board Member Oaths of Office**

Ronne Grantham, Regional Director, NW Prosperity Zone, Department of Commerce DWS; Debbie Woodard, Dean, College Readiness, Wilkes Community College; Jane Blackburn, Director, Appalachian Regional Library System; Keith Deveraux, Apprenticeship Consultant, NCWorks Apprenticeship; and Melissa Soto, Director, WAMY Community Action, Inc.

### **Introduction of Members and Guests**

Each board member and guest introduced themselves and stated the organization they work for.

### **Election of Officers**

Chair Herman stated Workforce Director Adrian Tait had emailed board members with a list of eligible candidates to fill the roles of Chair and Vice Chair for PY2015. Chair Herman asked Director Tait to share the results.

Director Tait announced Sallie Woodring for Chair and Justin Ray for Vice Chair as the most recommended candidates. Chair Herman requested a motion to elect board officers for PY2015. Jason Carlton made a motion to elect Sallie Woodring as Chair and Justin Ray as Vice Chair. Bryan Peterson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

### **Adoption of High Country Workforce Development Board By-Laws**

Chair Herman stated the By-Laws were distributed to members in advance. Revisions were made to be compliant with the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) that took effect July 1, 2015. All seven (7) counties in the High Country have adopted resolutions establishing the High Country Workforce Consortium and Workforce Development Board.

Director Tait stated the Workforce Development Board that was in place for seventeen (17) years under the Workforce Innovation Act no longer exists now that the new legislation (WIOA) has taken effect. The High Country Workforce Development Board has received its official designation as a Workforce Development Local Area under WIOA from Governor McCrory's office.

Chair Herman requested a motion to adopt the High Country Workforce Development Board By-Laws. Dan Little made the motion. Tom Hughes seconded. Motion passed.

### **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update and Look Ahead**

Chair Herman announced the HCWDB serves as a Strategy Committee to assist HCCOG staff in developing the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Chair Herman introduced High Country Council of Governments' (HCCOG) Planning Director Phil Trew to present the report.

Mr. Trew stated the HCCOG was designated as an Economic Development District (EDD) and that designation requires a CEDS report that meets Economic Development Administration (EDA) criteria. The CEDS serves as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, developing and implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying investment priorities and funding sources.

Mr. Trew summarized the goals outlined in the CEDS report. Mr. Trew stated EDA rules had changed that no longer required a board made up of mostly private sector members to serve as the Strategy Committee, but that the Strategy Committee did have to represent the main economic interest in the region. Based on these changes, Mr. Trew stated the HCWDB no longer had to serve as the Strategy Committee but that it was still a great fit based on the new guidelines. Chair Herman asked for feedback from the board about continuing as the Strategy Committee in the development of the CEDS report. Members expressed a desire to continue this important role. Mr. Trew requested a formal motion be made by the board to continue as the Strategy Committee by January 2016.

The EDA also changed the rules guiding the content of the CEDS. These changes will provide an opportunity for the CEDS report to be more focused with clearer priorities that best serve the region. The next full CEDS update is planned for 2016.

Mr. Trew requested a motion be made to recommend approval of the CEDS 2015 Performance Report by the HCCOG Executive Board in August. Jane Blackburn made a motion to recommend approval of the CEDS report. Sallie Woodring seconded the motion. Motion passed.

### **Welcome New Members and Discussion**

New public sector members to the HCWDB introduced themselves and described their roles with their respective organizations.

### **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Update**

Director Tait [presented the latest developments with WIOA and the Local Plan](#) (link to Prezi).

### **Public Comment Period**

Chair Herman opened the floor for public comment. Jason Carlton suggested the Vice Chair position should automatically roll into the Chair position. Director Tait mentioned our PY2014 Vice Chair Dwight Simmons stepped down from the HCWDB this week; otherwise Mr. Simmons would have gone on to fill the role of Chair.

Mr. Carlton stated the HCWDB is lacking in micro-business representation and encouraged reaching out to these types of representatives when filling out current board vacancies.

Anita Lowe announced a Hiring Expo on August 20, 2015 in Boone, NC. Ms. Lowe asked members to contact her if they knew of businesses interested in participating.

### **Adjournment**

Jason Carlton made a motion to adjourn. Justin Ray seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:55pm.