

**Santee-Lynches Workforce Investment Board
Youth Council Meeting
Tuesday, February 1, 2011 - 4:00 PM
Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments
36 West Liberty Street, Sumter, SC 29150**

Minutes

Youth Council Members Present:

Beverly Moberg, Chair, Tavita Herriott for Rita Beard, Barbara Brown, Ed Garrison, John Huggins, Ramona Lies, Daphne Sanders, Sharon Teigue

Staff Present:

James T. Darby, Jr., Executive Director, SLRCOG
Brenda Golden, Workforce Development Youth Director
Donna Thames, Workforce Development Administrative Assistant
Hope Turner, Workforce Development Finance Coordinator
Becky Thomas, Workforce Development Finance Assistant

I. Welcome:

Workforce Development Youth Director, Ms. Brenda Golden, called the Santee-Lynches Workforce Investment Board's Youth Council meeting to order at 4:03 PM.

II. Approval of Minutes:

Chairman Moberg entertained a Motion to approve the Youth Council Meeting Minutes of January 4, 2011. **The Motion was made by Ms. Sharon Teigue and seconded by Ms. Ramona Lies to approve the minutes from the January 4, 2011 Youth Council Meeting.** Chairman Moberg asked if there was any discussion. There being no discussions, Chairman Moberg called for a vote. **All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

III. Business:

A. Previous Youth Provider Issues

Ms. Brenda Golden reminded the Youth Council that Paxen Learning's contract as youth provider ended on December 31, 2010. Since then, a potential problem has been discovered in their testing methodology that could result in disallowed costs. Ms. Golden explained that the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) is given to each WIA enrollee to assess their academic level. The "locator" test determines which level TABE test to administer, and then the participant takes a particular level TABE test. However, there is a Survey form of the TABE and a Complete Battery. The previous youth provider tested with a TABE survey, or shortened. While the maker of the test acknowledges its validity, adult education professionals are required to administer

the full battery and there was indication that the state either recommended or required the full test for WIA participants.

Mr. Jim Darby, Executive Director of the Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments, explained the State Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) office has been notified there is a potential problem with the administration of the TABE, and he has requested a technical assistance visit to review the previous provider's records to determine whether the methodology meets requirements. He informed the Youth Council Members that they will be notified as soon as a report is received from SCDEW. Mr. Darby further explained that this situation may have to be turned over to legal counsel if it results in disallowed costs, but it is the intent to move it to a positive resolution. There was discussion on how this issue could result with a positive resolution. Mr. Darby responded that would occur if SC DEW's response finds that the TABE Survey process does not rise to the level of disallowed cost.

Council Chairman Beverly questioned if there is a problem now since all of the files have been turned over to the new Youth provider, Palmetto Youth Connections (PYC). Mr. Darby responded that the problem has been contained. Ms. Barbara Brown asked if there has been any positive outcome with the Youth participants. Mr. Darby responded that there has been minimum, but that PYC is verifying now to see if any of the participants can become positive outcomes. Mr. John Huggins asked what the specific issues are with the testing. Ms. Golden explained that approximately seventy-five (75%) percent of the participants received the short version (survey) of the TABE test. Ms. Sharon Teigue stated that post testing is very important. The question was asked if Paxen's contract was cancelled because of this potential problem. Ms. Golden stated that Paxen's contract was cancelled because they were not performance measures, while the potential problem with the TABE testing was just recently discovered. Mr. John Huggins asked if there is any damage control from the past issues. Ms. Golden informed the Youth Council that the files were monitored and the TABE test results were in the files. She stated that the new youth provider is now working with Adult Ed to administer the TABE and GED testing. Mr. Darby reminded Youth Council Members that they need to move forward with the Youth Program, and he will address the TABE issue with Paxen if necessary upon review of the files by SCDEW. He ended by stating that this problem may be an isolated problem in our region only.

B. New Youth Provider Report

A Youth Report, prepared by the Palmetto Youth Connections Staff, was reviewed by Ms. Golden. It was noted that the staff was attending the 2011 Workforce Symposium. Ms. Golden reviewed highlights of the report and stated that PYC is up and running with the WIA Youth program.

C. ARRA Funds for Youth

Ms. Hope Turner reported to the Youth Council that there is \$262,265 in Youth ARRA funds (stimulus funds) that must be spent by June 30th, 2011. She proposed paying PYC using these expiring funds first and then using WIA funds to complete their contract in the amount of \$400,000.

Because the stimulus funds were originally to be used for work experience and the Paxen Group struggled using all of the available funds, a decision had to be made by SCDEW on how the remaining funds could be used. Ms. Turner further explained that a decision had just recently been received from SCDEW on how these funds could be used. Since we do not want to return any funds, we are now allowed to use these stimulus funds. A question was asked if there are any "strings attached"? Ms.

Turner stated that these funds must be used by June 30th but no longer must be used for work experience.

Ms. Sharon Teigue questioned why the Youth Council had not been notified of this money earlier. Ms. Turner responded that Paxen had been given this money and was unable to spend all of the funds in the short time allotted (October 2009 thru March 2010). This problem was not just in our region, she said, and since the State did not want to return funds to the Department of Labor, the state just revised the restrictions on this money. This is why the issue did not come up prior to today's meeting.

It was further explained by Ms. Turner that the WIA money has a two year life that runs from July 1st thru June 30th. She noted that a financial update will be provided to the Youth Council at each meeting.

C. Strategic Plan Follow-up Discussion

The Youth Strategic Plan has been approved by the Youth Council and was divided into four (4) subgroups. The Committee members were asked to volunteer to work on one of the four groups.

- (1)** Alignment between Business Needs and Curriculum:
Chair: Troy Santoscoy

- (2)** Network Development Between Business, Parents and Education:
Chair: Sharon Teigue

- (3)** Connections Between Education and Parents:
Chair: Barbara Brown
Ramona Lies

- (4)** Campaign for Valuing Education:
Chair:
Barbara Brown will assist...
Ms. Barbara Brown suggested that Mr. Napoleon Bradford be contacted and asked to serve on this committee.

Another resource – Core Institute

IV. Other Business:

The "Center for Excellence" handout was information from Ms. Ginny Dority. Additional handouts were provided by Ms. Golden on job shadowing and Personal Pathways to Success month.

Ms. Golden also presented a report from the Regional Education Center portion of her position reflecting the career cluster choices students in the region are making. As info, she informed the Youth Council that students in grades 8 through 11 choose a career cluster based on their interest assessments and skills. Every School District must provide a minimum selection of career clusters. A question was asked about how districts offer clusters. To offer a cluster, Ms. Golden said, the School Districts must offer a certain number of elective courses to support the cluster. Career specialists are required to have

parental involvement in the student's Individualized Graduation Plan that outlines the student's career choice. Mr. Darby asked Ms. Golden what her role was in balancing the cluster desires versus the hot jobs. Ms. Golden works with Career Specialists in the schools; the career specialists work directly with students and parents in assisting with their career cluster decisions. Ms. Golden provides professional development and labor market information to these career specialists as well. Mr. Ed Garrison stated that his district reviews courses annually and shifts courses as needed.

V. Chair's Comments:

Council Chair Moberg asked if there was any other business. Ms. Ramona Lies asked if there is a checklist of items to be used when monitoring. Ms. Golden replied that WIA staff does have a checklist when monitoring. In November, the Youth files were monitored and Paxen was given a list of items that needed corrections.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the Santee-Lynches Workforce Investment Youth Council Meeting was adjourned at 5:18 PM.