

APPROVED

**THE VIRGINIA APPRENTICESHIP COUNCIL
MINUTES**

The Virginia Apprenticeship Council (Council) met on Thursday, March 20, 2008 at Confederate Hills Recreation Center at 302 Lee Avenue, Highland Springs, Virginia. Chairman Dr. Steven R. Staples called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Steven R. Staples, Chairman
Delores Esser
Everett Patterson
Lorne Seay
Darold Kemp
Gloria Westerman for Dr. Glen Dubois
Dudley Harris
Earl Dickerson

STAFF PRESENT: C. Ray Davenport, Commissioner, DOLI
Beverley Donati, Division Director
Patricia Morrison, Assistant Division Director
Reba O'Connor, Policy & Planning Specialist

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Dr. Staples called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Council members introduced themselves.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

There were no comments offered by Council members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

On proper motion and second the minutes for the Council meeting held on December 13, 2007 were approved unanimously by Council members.

CORRESPONDENCE:

There was no correspondence to the Council.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ms. O'Connor, Regulatory Coordinator for the Department of Labor and Industry, reported that the regulation, 16 VAC 20-20, had been moved on to its final stage of approval. It was published in the Virginia Register on January 7, 2008. Public Comment ended on March 7, 2008. After the comment period, the Final Stage of the regulation was submitted again to the Department of Planning and Budget. It must also be approved by the Secretary, and then by the Governor. Following the Governor's approval, it will be submitted for publication in the Virginia Register with a final 30-day Comment Period

Federal Proposed Regulations Update

Apprenticeship Division Director Bev Donati recapped the history of the proposed changes to CFR 29.29. At the December 13, 2007 meeting, Office of Apprenticeship State Director Jim Walker handed out the proposed regulation changes that were posted on www.regulations.gov. There was a 60 day public comment period. A backlash of negative comments from stakeholders regarding the short comment period resulted in an extension to March 12, 2008.

The preamble of the briefing stated that the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship, a federally appointed committee, had been consulted for sections one through eleven. However, Sections 12-14 were not discussed with stakeholders, particularly the National Association of State and Territorial Apprenticeship Directors.

An example of a proposal that was unacceptable included the requirement that state changes be submitted to the Office of Apprenticeship for approval before being implemented; no funding is accompanying any of these proposed changes. The question of why these proposals were pushed through without all of the sections being revealed during review and advisory functions remains unanswered. Other items at issue were interim credentialing and competency based credentialing.

Chairman Staples asked the Ad Hoc sub-committee to review. State Director Walker did not attend this meeting. Packets that the Council members have today contain samples of letters from various groups in Virginia which are available for viewing on www.regulations.gov.

Commissioner Davenport added that the windstorm of opposition made him hopeful that all the comments will offer pause to the Office of Apprenticeship and will encourage them to provide an extension to the public comment period. He thanked Dudley Harris, Dr. Staples, Gloria Westerman and all others who provided comments.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Darold Kemp, chairman of the Ad-Hoc subcommittee reported that a meeting was held on February 22, 2008 consisting of Bev Donati, Dudley Harris, Gloria Westerman, Lorne Seay and Darold Kemp

to discuss the proposal amendment. The subcommittee authorized Dr. Staples to write a letter to the Office of Apprenticeship to express their concerns. Gloria Westerman added that the language of the proposed regulations could have far-reaching implications, potentially creating the ability of the Federal government to oversee the funding of programs at the State level.

Exemption from Examination Sub-committee:

Earl Dickerson reported that sponsor number 2008-01 had met all of the requirements for exemption from examination. Mr. Kemp seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

REPORTS:

Virginia Apprenticeship Alumni Association (VAAA):

No report.

Virginia Employment Commission (VEC):

Commissioner Esser reported that the VEC had conducted 157 staff layoffs and would not be filling 80 positions. Commissioner Esser also reported that the Workforce Investment Act funding would move to the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) on July 1, 2008 with the youth program funding move to occur on April 1, 2008. The VEC served 260,000 workers in the past year, while the WIA served 15,000.

Virginia Community College System:

Gloria Westerman reported that her staff had been working diligently in developing apprenticeship. They are also doing audits of related instruction providers to seek continuity and consistency. The review process is to look at curriculums and to have seamless transfers between programs and transfers into Associate Degrees and four-year degrees.

U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship:

John McDowell provided the program for State Director Jim Walker who was not able to attend. Greetings from the National Office were conveyed. The new USDOL Director is John Ladd.

Division of Registered Apprenticeship:

Bev Donati reported that long-time Apprenticeship Representative Jim Davis would be retiring May 1, 2008. Ms. Donati also reported Fiscal Year 2008 statistics to date: 14,075 apprentices and 2,318 active sponsors. Completion statistics showed 1,385 certificates awarded.

Reports from sponsors indicate that apprentices are being laid off, particularly in Northern Virginia and current sponsors are not bringing on new apprentices as much as in past years. The Apprenticeship Representatives are aggressively building relationships with the One-Stop Centers. Their role is to make the introduction between the employers and the one-stops.

A grant for employers in the Shenandoah Valley was re-awarded as a Community Based Job Training. 69 Registered Apprenticeship sponsors participated and 279 apprentices over the first three years. Employers realized a savings of \$125,983 due to the grant.

Department of Labor and Industry:

Commissioner Davenport reported that there were still contentious issues in the budget due to declining revenue cycles. The agency is required to submit a plan that shows a 3% reduction. State agencies continue to be asked to do more with less.

There have had to be no layoffs in the Apprenticeship Division, although the two supervisor positions vacant due to retirements will not be filled. Part of the funding issue comes from the federal funding of VOSH going from a 50% share of the funding to its current range of 35-38% share. The agency will work through additional cuts.

The Division has been made aware of a variety of different industries with renewed interest in apprenticeship. One example is the printing industry.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Gary Duff announced that the VAAA annual Golf Tournament would once again be held in September at the Hollows. He asked for support in recruiting golfers and for suggestions on who to name the tournament after.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 19th, 2008 at New Horizons Regional Educational Center located in Hampton, Virginia.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a. m.

Dr. Steven R. Staples

C. Ray Davenport, Secretary