

**Approved THE VIRGINIA APPRENTICESHIP COUNCIL MINUTES**

The Virginia Apprenticeship Council met on Thursday, September 22, 2022

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Dudley Harris, Chairman  
Dr. Latitia McCane  
Patrick Dean  
Doug Straley  
Mike Mays  
Michael Oakley  
Dr. Jason Williams  
Dr. Jameo Pollock  
Steve Martin  
Harold Pyon, Deputy Commissioner

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Patricia Morrison, Director  
Kathleen Eddington, Assistant Director  
Daniel Davis, Education Coordinator  
Andrew Johnson, Program Support Technician  
James Edmunds, Program Support Technician

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS:**

Chairman Dudley Harris called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and welcomed the Council and new members.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Dr. Jameo Pollock relayed that he presented holistic apprenticeship strategies at National Association of State and Territorial Apprenticeship Directors (NATSAD) and the Maryland Department of Transportation the previous week.

Last week the DOLI Registered Apprenticeship hosted a NATSAD in Norfolk event the previous week.

Background information from the two new appointees on the Council, Patrick Dean, President, ABC-VA and Doug Straley, Superintendent, Louisa County Public School.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

June 2022 meeting minutes were approved through roll call.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

None.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Discussion of the exemption from examination process continued. The Council will submit their questions and concerns to the Division. Motion to create a sub-committee to determine exemption was approved through a roll call.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Patrick Dean gave an update about the administration, saying they put out an email stating apprentices would be allowed to take their journeyman's test after two years instead of four. He relayed his concerns and the public about this statement, primarily about safety and quality.

**REPORTS:**

**Virginia Employment Commission (VEC):**

Michael Oakley reported the following:

We are averaging between 1,500 to 2,000 initial claims weekly for the last six to nine months. In addition, there are another 10,000 to 12,000 continued claims for less than 15,000 claiming unemployment.

The baby boomers (the largest population segment in the workforce) retired earlier than expected due to COVID-19.

**Virginia Community College System (VCCS):**

Dr. Jason Williams reported the following:

As part of the VDOE Steering Committee for VAVoyager, a WBL Network, Statewide School divisions totals that have signed on to participate with VAVoyager include Divisions=30, Schools=65, and Rural Divisions=14.

VCCS continues to have conversations with NECA/IBEW, Local 26 JATC, and Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) to expand VCCS's Electrical RAPs. In addition, they have completed a course crosswalk program review; students who complete the NJAT/IBEW program at 100% have the potential to earn 26 credits for prior learning (CPL), to be awarded to apprenticeship program completers who enroll at Brightpoint Community College. Other VCCS colleges are working on evaluating CPL crosswalks, as well. This updated information will be added to VCCS' Credits2Careers.org website this fall.

The pre-apprenticeship Electrical program at Mountain Empire Community College (MECC) in conjunction with Secure Futures was a success. The first summer cohort of 10 students culminated in August, based on its quality, interest, infrastructure modeling, and renewable energy initiatives, VCCS looks to replicate this Pre-apprenticeship model among other colleges next summer.

Innovative leadership is encouraging our colleges to contact their local VDOLI consultant to determine how to get started at [DOLI Contact a Consultant Today \(virginia.gov\)](https://www.virginia.gov/doli/contact-a-consultant-today) to develop and build a facilities maintenance RA Program by becoming sponsors by hiring and training their own registered apprentices. As of to date, three colleges have shown interest. (ESCC, BRCC, & NOVA)

New reporting information to the committee:

The State Apprenticeship Program Evaluation Assigned to Access and Equity Committee, a forum of the Workforce Development Director from the Office of Virginia's Secretary of Labor to form an Apprenticeship evaluation work group formed by:

The 2022 legislative session resulted in the following legislation:

Acts of Assembly Chapter 699 - That the Board of Workforce Development (the Board) shall collaborate with the Department of Labor and Industry, the Department of Education, and the Secretaries of Commerce and Trade, Education, and Labor and rely on data from the Office of Education and Labor Market Alignment in reviewing the performance of current apprenticeship programs in meeting high-demand industry needs. The Board shall prepare recommendations for creating a primary office for apprenticeship programs based on the review and high-demand industry needs. The Board shall report the recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 1, 2022. The Board should include in its report recommendations for actions leading to increased access and participation in apprenticeship programs.

Talent Pipeline Challenge/Infrastructure: to fill high-quality jobs that will help rebuild our infrastructure and supply chains by synergizing employers, education, and training providers, at the state and local levels. VCCS has responded by the formation of the Virginia Infrastructure Academy (VIA), aligning business leaders to existing training programs by addressing urgent community needs while forecasting future requirements. Business sectors: heavy construction, maintenance, tunnel construction, broadband expansion, on/offshore wind, and solar energy.

VCCS' Apprenticeship Coordinator encourages our colleges to enact RA Week activities, to which I will be available to provide resources, POC, and references.

Hire Ed Conference: Roanoke, Va. Nov. 9-11. There will be a special session on RA, panel style, and open discussion.

Fall 2022 enrollments of 77,729 are up 242 (.31%) higher compared to this time last year. Headcount of 136,159 is up 1,808 (1.35%) higher. Colleges are preparing to enroll the second half of fall students (courses scheduled for the second 8-weeks of the semester).

Enrollments in FastForward (workforce credential) programs have increased to 3,603, up 312 or 9.48% higher compared to last year.

G3 just completed its first year.

Over 11,000 students received G3 in AY22 (8,272 credit; 2,867 FastForward; 55 students enrolled in both)

- \$14.9 million awarded
- 44% Minority
- 51% Non-traditional
- 31% Age 25 – 35

- 19% Age 35+
- 62% Female

### **Division of Registered Apprenticeship (DOLI):**

Director Morrison reported the following:

The Division continues to focus on the Apprenticeship State Expansion Grant called the Commonwealth Registered Apprenticeship Future Talent (CRAFT) grant. We were able to promote the Lead Generation Specialist, Shannon Crooks, into the Grant Project Manager position. Unfortunately, the Alignment Director tendered his resignation in early August. The Team should be 3.5 individuals and is currently 1.5. The Division will work to fill the Alignment Director position that will run through the balance of the grant term, which expires June 30, 2023.

There are still vacancies in the field which are in the recruitment process. We are onboarding two new Program Support Technicians in the HQ office. Our Division has restructured to put some emphasis on different task-focused skills and to continue to modernize our processes and interactions with Employers.

One major change we will require is that our Employer/Sponsors will fully utilize the RAPIDS case-management system by having their own user credentials and managing their Apprentices at their level. We will continue to provide technical assistance as necessary, but to take on more capacity, the Employer/Sponsors, who own and are responsible for managing their programs, must continue to provide proper oversight and timely responses for their programs to be compliant with 29 PART CFR 29.

Additionally, the USDOL is on yet another review of the Virginia State Plan for the EEO 29 PART CFR 30 regulations marching us closer to finalizing those updates.

On that same note, the DARS/DOLI joint grant held by Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) called the PATHWAYS grant is entering its second year, and we are working to celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness Month, in October, with the launch of value-added service to all apprentices registered in our system and all future apprentices.

Stay tuned, and please make an effort to attend an event that will officially launch this Registered Apprenticeship/Vocational Rehabilitation braided service. (date to be determined). This service is designed to open the pipeline of potential apprentices to Employers and assist both employer and apprentice so that their apprentice journey is successful by offering services that maximize their contributions to the program. Additionally, any individual with a disability, no matter the type or scope of that disability, can reap benefits from what the DARS offers.

The most important news comes from the 72nd National Association of State and Territorial Apprenticeship Directors conference hosted by our Division of Registered Apprenticeship in Norfolk, Virginia. Because the Host state runs the Hall of Fame for that year, I was honored to nominate the former Director, Ms. Beverley Donati, and former Director of the Apprentice School and Virginia Apprenticeship Council Chair, Dr. James Hughes.

I want to thank our current Chair, Dudley Harris, who supported me and rallied resources to make the Conference a success. I also applaud him for attending the majority of the Conference, and he

demonstrated, through his nationwide relationship building, that Virginia is one of the most robust, respected State programs in the Nation.

Our Tuesday opened with the words of Norfolk Mayor Kenny Alexander. Dr. Alexander has long been an ally of our Division and has visited us during Norfolk job fairs throughout the years. On Thursday, the National Office of Apprenticeship and representatives outlined the future of investments by Congress proposed. It was offered that going forward, grants that incentivize states will not use "apprentice numbers" as success measures.

It appears that they will follow more of the demonstration grant model used by other Federal agencies with better results. States were encouraged to meet the Federal initiatives with their own resources in order to build on this capacity.

That brings us to the sharing that Commissioner Pan requested that the Division put forward a Decision package for the General Assembly's consideration, should it make it through the preliminary reviews. We are asking for four additional FTEs that will add to the quality assurance aspects of the program and the High School Work Based Learning arm of this program.

Additionally, we will need strategic, sector development Lead Generation specialists to continue our foray into new industries. We will be noting the progress of this Decision package and relaying progress to the Council.

In November, the Federal Office of Apprenticeship hosts National Apprenticeship Week (NAW) from November 14 through 20. I urge each of you to create an event, register it on the NAW website, and celebrate your successes in the RA world. Additionally, we always designate November as Virginia Apprenticeship Month. A Proclamation will be read by an elected or designated dignitary as one of the HQ events registered. Other events flow as created by our Employer/Sponsors. The whole point of NAW is Employer engagement.

Finally, as usual, our metrics track by the Federal Fiscal Year. For example, from October 1, 2021, through September 19, 2022, our numbers are as follows:

The Division of Registered Apprenticeship relies on the National Database for apprenticeship registrations - RAPIDS. The time period used is the federal fiscal year. Metrics YTD from October 1, 2021, are as follows:

Active Apprentices: 11694

Completions issued: 1459

Registered Employer/Sponsors: 2639

New Sponsors: 298

In January 2023, the Division will have its Outstanding Apprentice Awards and the State's version of Ambassador Awards, a program that started in 2019 to have DOLI RA Staff nominate advocates for RA throughout the Commonwealth.

The date and location of this event is TBD and will be shared as soon as it is finalized. All Council members are encouraged to contribute to the event's roster for NAW where possible.

### **Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI):**

Deputy Commissioner Harold Pyon Report on DOLI: Apprenticeship Council:

Governor's Executive Directive Number Three has been issued regarding the Commonwealth's teacher shortage obstacles that prevent qualified individuals from filling critical vacancies. Governor directed the Department of Labor and Industry to develop additional legislative proposals to reduce the red tape associated with teacher licensure while ensuring high standards to recruit more out-of-state teachers, retired teachers, career switchers, military veterans, and other professionals with much to offer students. Further, the Department of Labor and Industry Commissioner shall establish a registered teacher occupation apprenticeship program with school divisions and educator preparation providers to train and license new teachers, including paraprofessional educators.

To date, our VOSH Safety and Health Compliance team has handled 2,880 compliance activities, of which 38 % consisted of informal investigations traditionally referred to as "phone/fax." This requires Employers to respond within five (5) working days to the alleged safety and health hazards. On the other hand, VOSH has initiated 1,780 inspections for this federal fiscal year, and approximately 83% of those address Special Emphasis Programs (SEPs). These consist of Local Emphasis programs (LEPs), or National Emphasis Programs (NEPs), which are comprised of amputations, falls, trenches & excavations, combustible dust, Crystalline Silica as well as logging and sawmills, among others.

Additionally, during this calendar year, VOSH has investigated 31 workplace fatalities that resulted from falls, electrocutions, struck by objects/materials, asphyxiation, and being caught in/between machinery.

As current COVID-19 infections decline and vaccinations and natural immunity increase within the general population, Virginia is on a path toward normalcy. Subsequently, the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention for COVID-19 was revoked on March 23, 2022. The non-record-keeping portions of the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) COVID-19 Healthcare Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) were also withdrawn. OSHA is still working on a final standard that will protect healthcare workers from COVID-19 hazards and will do so as it also considers a broader infectious disease rule. The Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) Program has developed guidance that provides general COVID-19 recommendations that may be implemented in the workplace to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Our staff adopted the transition to onsite duty from the teleworking environment due to the Governor's mandate and the most recent slow surge of COVID-19. We were bringing the staff back into our offices. We encourage all to continue social distancing, wash their hands frequently, and employ CDC-recommended guidelines.

This fiscal year, the DOLI Office of Policy, Planning, and Public Information worked on the Virginia Overtime Wage Act, the regulation governing On-The-Job Training Programs and other Training Programs, and a COVID Guidance document after the COVID standard was repealed. In addition, the Agency collaborated with other State Agencies to work on a High School Apprenticeship Program to train Pharmacy Technicians. This year, the office staff also planned and supported the OSHSPA Fall meeting held in Roanoke, VA.

For the Fiscal year, The Boiler Safety Division of DOLI has processed (8,588) Inspections reports, resulting in (7,163) Certificates being issued. In addition, Boiler Safety issued (565) Violations and collected (\$142,860.00) in Certificate Fees. The office staff has continuously attended several meetings and offered both ideas and suggestions to help with the modernization efforts as we work towards a common goal of updating and modernizing day to day operations of the Boiler Safety Division. We also continue to work closely with insurance and Contract Fee inspection companies to maintain conformity of inspections throughout the Commonwealth, thus making Virginia a safer place for its citizens and visitors.

From January 1, 2022, until September 19, 2022, our VOSH Consultation program has conducted 261 visits and has helped employers eliminate over 800 hazards from their workplace, resulting in over 10,000 workers from exposed to these hazards. In addition, our Department has conducted outreach-mailing activities to over 39,000 Virginia employers and provided an additional 213 outreach activities reaching over 54,841 employers and employees.

The Division of Legal Support (DLS) provides legal services to agency divisions (litigation, legislation, contracts, etc.). Also it includes the Office of Research and Analysis (ORA), the Office of Policy, Planning and Public Information (OPPI), and the Office of Whistleblower Protection (OWP). ORA conducts the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) and the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) for Virginia. OPPI handles strategic planning, policy development, agency communication initiatives, and regulatory promulgation for agency divisions. OWP investigates complaints of discrimination from employees alleging retaliatory actions by employers for engaging in occupational safety and health-protected activities (e.g., raising a workplace safety or health concern with their employer).

The Labor & Employment Law Division has received 700 wage claims, collected \$351,104 in back wages, and issued Final Orders for unpaid wages of \$243,242. Youth employment has expanded this year, with more than 23,000 applications for employment certificates received and processed. In addition, the Department has responded to more than 48,000 requests from the public YTD concerning labor law matters.

Thank you and Mr. Chair. That concludes my report.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Chairman Harris announced that the next Council meeting will be Thursday, March 30, 2023.

Chairman Harris thanked the Council, Director Morrison, her staff, and all in attendance.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

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**Mr. Dudley Harris, Chairman**  
**Mr. Gary G. Pan, Secretary**