

APPROVED

THE VIRGINIA APPRENTICESHIP COUNCIL MINUTES

The Virginia Apprenticeship Council met on Thursday, March 30, 2023

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dudley Harris, Chairman
Dr. Latitia McCane
Patrick Dean
Doug Straley
Dr. Jason Williams
Carrie Roth
Steve Martin
Grant Shmelzer

STAFF PRESENT:

Kathleen Eddington, Assistant Director
Shannon Crooks, Grant Project Manager
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 member Grant Shmelzer from Independent Electrical Contractors - Chesapeake Chapter.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Laura Duckworth – University of Virginia Apprenticeship Program:

What does the Department of Labor and the Commissioners role going to be with the new department when it comes to the Apprenticeship Program and making sure there is a continued focus on safety and health?

This is one of the main reasons the new agency is under the Secretary of Labor. The new agency head will work closely with agency heads from Department of Labor and Industry, Virginia Occupations Safety and Health, and Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety. Commissioner will continue to report out in the council meeting about safety and health.

What is the status of the exemption from DPOR testing for the licensed trades?

Commissioner Pan (and the Department of Labor and Industry) have taken steps regarding conducting research in collaboration with DPOR as well as consulting with the Office of the

Attorney General. Goal is to minimize the amount of abrupt change right now while we get the footing of the new agency up and running.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

None:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

September 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:

Bryan Slater – Secretary of Labor:

Two identical bills (House Bill 2195 and Senate Bill 1470), which consolidates statewide workforce program evaluation and data sharing under the department, passed the Senate 40-0 and the House 96-1. These bills take effect on July 1, 2023, and the Governor has already officially signed the bills. There will be a public ceremonial bill signing in the future. We are currently working with Deloitte Consulting, who has been the consulting firm helping us put all of this together. The timetable we are shooting for implementation and consolidation is between June and September of 2024. One of the key points we are focusing on right now is getting input on how to do this the right way. This includes input from Stakeholders and from staff. The new agency will first be transferred virtually, meaning we will put the agency together virtually and have a chain of command developed before a physical move. All regulations that are in place right now will stay in place until new regulations are written.

CRAFT Grant report

Shannon Crooks reported the following:

Virginia department of Labor and Industry, Division of Registered Apprenticeship was awarded the US DOL ETA Apprenticeship State Expansion grant July 1, 2019, Titled Commonwealth Registered Apprenticeship Future Talent Project Grant.

Total Award of 1.6 million dollars with a goal of expanding to 830 apprentices and 200 new registered apprenticeship programs.

As of our last reporting period, CRAFT Project grant has enrolled 848 participant apprentices and registered over 600 new Registered Apprenticeship programs- this number includes grant and program staff efforts. CRAFT staff has expended over \$930,000 which includes staff salaries, Employee travel, supplies, and employer incentives.

CRAFT staff will be accepting Eligible Employer Reimbursements Request for OJT or RTI until May 31 to review and approve any applications to prepare for June 30, 2023, end.

The Virginia Apprenticeship Council selected a new Vice Chair (previously vacant). Patrick Dean was nominated and confirmed through role call.

REPORTS:

Virginia Employment Commission (VEC):

Commissioner Roth reported the following:

Each year, the US Department of Labor, the Bureau of Labor Statistics does a re-benchmarking at the beginning of the year of the employment situation. This year, the re-benchmarking was of historic nature (by Bureau of Labor Statistics), there has not been such a significant variance of benchmarking as they did this year. This new benchmark included new census data, which include a million more people than the previous year. Additionally, the NAICS codes were re-benchmarked, which changes where people fell in the industry. The focus for this year is the labor force participation rate. 66% is the goal, and in February of 2023, the labor force participation rate was 65.6%. This number is almost back at the pre-pandemic rate. The unemployment rate is currently at 3.2%, which is .3% above February of 2022. The number of job openings still exceed the number of available individuals for the number of jobs that are open. Regarding unemployment, there are about 1600-1800 initial claims each week and that has been the number for about the last year.

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

Dr. Jason Williams, (VCCS) reported on the behalf of Dr. Angela Lawhorne (VCCS)

The following was reported:

In VCCS’ continued collaborations with Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) to expand VCCS’s Electrical RAPs, after a completed course crosswalk program review; we are pleased to report that Brightpoint Community College and Reynolds Community College (CCWA) has established our first Electrical RAP.

As a member of the Career Champions Module Workgroup initiative for SCHEV/VTOP, this advisory group is critical to the success of preparing and shaping Internships programs. The workgroup began in March and will continue until June.

The VCCS’ A&WBL Quarterly Newsletter has reached it’s one anniversary, the newsletter is designed to provide news, updated, related information, and guidance to all things A&WBL to our 23 colleges. Each quarterly Newsletter is also accompanied by a meeting hereby guest speakers,

presenters, and A&WBL subject matter experts can delivery important information which is intended for the growth and expansion of the VCCS' A&WBL programs.

In partnership with DOE and the Hampton Roads Workforce Council, I represented the VCCS' at the 757 Virginia Internship Summit. The purpose was to connect students with employers and explore an array of internship opportunities in a face-to-face modality.

As a leading member of the G3 Innovation State Grant Funding Committee formed from [Item 487.50, Chapter 2, 2022 Acts of Assembly, Special Session 1](#), I assisted in approving and appropriating, \$8,000,000 from the general fund designated for G3 Innovation Grants, Awarded grants went to 21 community colleges to increase the capacity and responsiveness to meet regional labor market needs of employers, unemployed and underemployed workers, and incumbent workers. Most grants awarded had an A&WBL component to begin, expand, or grow Internship and Apprenticeship programs. Roughly 80 individual programs will be impacted with innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to instruction, hyflex and online, implementation of virtual reality and diverse simulators, and lab and building renovations allowing for much needed capacity building.

As a VCCS A&WBL Business and Outreach Initiative, many colleges have increased their hosting's of Job Fairs, Career Fairs, and Employer engagement, which will increase internships, apprenticeships, and student employment.

With the newly approved and launched Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program, I am working with Tamson Six in conjunction with Kristina Peck, Director of Clinical Experiences and Partnerships College of Education from the University of Mary Washington, as well our colleges to provide the RTI and explore this as a valuable option to fulfill the teacher shortage.

New Horizons Conference: Roanoke, Va. March 29th- March 31st.

MARCH 2023 VCCS UPDATES

FTE enrollments of 71,038 are 296 (0.42 %) higher, and today's headcount of 133,524 is 2,098 (1.60 %) higher than this time last year.

Dual Enrollment FTEs have increased from 12,717 to 13,716 (this time last year), with headcount increasing from 35,142 to 39,033 (compared to this time last year).

Over \$16 million in G3 funding has been awarded to 8,315 academic students so far for FY23. 6,058 students had been awarded G3 by this time last year. In addition, 3,107 workforce students received over \$2.7 million in G3 funds for FastForward credentials.

The Virginia Community Colleges System's new chancellor, Dr. David Doré (coming from Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona), starts on April 3rd and will conduct a tour of the complete system, all 23 colleges, in his first days. Dr. Doré will succeed Interim Chancellor Sharon Morrissey, who has served in the post since last July.

ONGOING INITIATIVES

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, and tunnel construction, broadband expansion, on/offshore wind, and solar energy.

Innovative leadership is consistently 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) to develop and build a facilities maintenance RA Program by becoming sponsors by hiring and training their own registered apprentices.

Division of Registered Apprenticeship (DOLI):

Kathleen Eddington, Assistant Director reported on behalf of Director Patricia Morrison. The following was reported:

The Division entering our last quarter of the Apprenticeship State Expansion grant. It will wrap up on June 30, 2023, and will be in the close-out phase. Thanks to the effort of CRAFT and RA staff we have been able to reach and surpass our CRAFT participant goal of 830 with 848 participant apprentices enrolled. Continued efforts to engage industry leaders and partners has proven to be a successful strategy in expanding Registered Apprenticeship in the Commonwealth.

We have just started the process of applying for the newest of the USDOL ETA Expansion grants. This is the State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula grant FOA-ETA-23-09. It requires a 5-year plan and a year-by-year award, to be applied for each year that is to be more of the formula methodology of funding rather than strictly competitive grant awards.

The January Outstanding Apprentice Awards was very successful, and we enjoyed seeing many of you there as well. That event kicked off our job platform – va.workhands.com as well as the 2023 Virginia Registered Apprenticeship Challenge. This is a monthly outreach plan to invite more individuals into the RA family. A series of different outreach efforts are targeting new entities.

New legislation will be creating a transition for the RA program. Commissioner Pan will speak more on that.

Finally, as usual, our metrics track by the Federal Fiscal Year. From October 1, 2022, through March 27, 2023, our numbers are as follows:

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

Active Apprentices:	11568
Completions issued:	489
Registered Employer/Sponsors:	1705
New Sponsors:	99

We contacted many sponsors to determine their level of participation in the RA program. Approximately 400 Employer/Sponsors have closed shop or have downsized the business due to post-COVID conditions.

1585 New apprentices have been brought on since October 1, but there appears to be a bit of a contraction.

Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI):

Commissioner Pan reported the following:

In December, the Secretary of Labor, Bryan Slater addressed this Council virtually to share the Governor’s initiative to create a new workforce development agency. During the 2023 General Assembly, this proposal was introduced in both houses. There was much discussion during Committee meetings as well as with various stakeholders. The legislation was modified and improved because of these outreach activities and concluded with a single piece of legislation that had overwhelming bipartisan support. Secretary Slater deserves much credit for listening to concerns and leading to a well thought out bill that will create an agency that brings together many disparate aspects of work force development with the purpose of making workforce development more efficient and effective.

As part of this consolidation, the Registered Apprenticeships program will become part of the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement. Although the legislation is effective July 1st, it is expected that the full transition could take up to a year. During this time, DOLI is firmly committed to continue growing and supporting Registered Apprenticeship to ensure smooth transition.

We recently hosted the Virginia Registered Apprenticeship conference at Bright Point Community College. Recognition for Outstanding Apprentices, Employer and Community Advocates and Ambassadors, and Employers for decades of Registered Apprenticeship participation.

DOLI celebrated the signing of a partnership with the Virginia Department of Education on a program to promote Teacher Apprenticeship.

DOLI recently launched our 2023 Virginia Registered Apprenticeship Challenge to elevate engagement with the business community, membership organizations, economic developers, Chambers of Commerce, and service providers and cultivate employer sponsorships and talent expansion.

- January – Outstanding Apprentice Awards/VRAC Announcement
- February – Business Member Associations and Suppliers
- March – Mayors and Main Street
- April – All Chambers – State and Local
- May – Workforce Development Board and Centers
- June – Higher Education Partners
- July – Youth Association/Service Partners
- August – Economic Development Partners (State, Regional and Local)
- September – Youth Registered Apprenticeship – Back to School!!

October – National Disability Employment Awareness Month

November – National Apprenticeship Week, Virginia

Apprenticeship Month, Focus on Veterans, Military Spouses, Dependents, V3

December – 2023 Outstanding Apprentice Awards, Virginia

Registered Apprenticeship Challenge Results

DOLI is following up with HITT, a large privately held General contractor to build out a Registered Apprenticeship ecosystem within their stable of 2,000 subcontractors. We have engaged MC Dean, one of HITT's major electrical subcontractors that has over 300 Apprentices to serve as a program mentor.

DOLI has taken the lead in partnering with the Department of the Army and the Department of Veterans Services to explore how COV companies can bring on Transitions Services Members (TSMs) can for jobs in Virginia.

Since your last meeting there has been a couple of personnel changes of note. Deputy Commissioner Harold Pyon has moved over to the Office of the Attorney General as a Special Assistant to the Attorney General. His last day was this past Friday. Assistant Commissioner Bill Burge has retired, and his last official day is tomorrow, March 31. We wish both well wishes for their new paths.

In December, DOLI completed its Strategic Plan and I encourage you to review it on the Department of Planning and Budget's website. This plan is oriented to having measurable goals for all the agency programs including Registered Apprenticeship. These goals are aggressive and project out through 2025.

In recent times, the Agency has had challenges attracting and retaining good employees, One of the primary obstacles has been the salaries that we could offer. The Agency had retained a consultant which made some recommendations that included some salary enhancements for many of the staff. We went through an exhaustive internal review of the recommendations and then sought and received the needed endorsements from the Administration, the Department of Human Resource Management, and the Department of Accounts to implement the DOLI recommended salary adjustments. Effective March 24, we have begun a phased in approach to these salary adjustments. We will now be moving forward to bring on more agency staff to enhance its service to the Commonwealth.

Our Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) staff are focused on making Virginia a safer place to work. VOSH has investigated three fatalities this year and has conducted 799 inspections since October 1, 2022. Right now, the 25th VOSH conference is going on in Newport News that serves to educate and facilitate collaboration with employers on best safety and health practices. The conference provides a cost-effective opportunity for employers and employees to learn from experts in many of the fields that make up the occupational safety and health community. I am pleased to share that we have well over 300 conference participants and that the feedback has been extremely positive from industry.

Beyond the conference, we are in the initial stages of setting up a training facility to not only train our staff but also to take on the road to help educate the community on best practices to reach our goal of 100% compliance with VOSH standards.

The Agency is embarking on several projects to utilize technology to enhance our mission. We are embarking on having our paper files digitized to free up space and make our records more accessible. We have started with the Boiler Division and will next move to our Labor Law Division. DOLI is the lead agency for the Executive branch to transition to a new Web platform that will be utilized by all state agencies. Additionally, we are modernizing many of our systems and are in the midst of building out Customer Relationship Management systems for many of our programs. Finally, we are quickly moving to Microsoft Dynamics for all our financial transactions which again should make our internal agency transactions more efficient.

Throughout DOLI, we are setting our sights on the future of and seek input from stakeholders and staff on how we can improve on delivering our services to the Commonwealth. Please include yourselves as valued interested parties as we move ahead. I look forward to the next meeting when I can report on our continued efforts to serve the public.

In closing, I want to thank you for your service and support to Virginia's Apprenticeship Council and Registered Apprenticeship.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Chairman Harris announced that the next Council meeting will be June 29, 2023. For Dr. Lawhorne

Chairman Harris thanked the Council, and all in attendance.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.

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