

MINUTES
HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
December 13, 2022

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Board of Service Delivery Region 9 met Tuesday, December 13, 2022, at The Economic Development Center, Vidalia, Georgia.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dan Bennett	Carolyn Blackshear
Rochelle Culver	Kim Edge
Sharon Flanagan	Ashley Googe
Brian Hamilton	Tim Herrington
Dr. Margaret Hightower	Dr. Hank Hobbs
Michelle Johnson	Mac Jordan
Martha McBride	Mel Powell
Clay Reid	Marshall Smith
Nolan Thigpen	Tamra Wells
Ted Buford	Bobby Cox
Lisa Livingston	Doug Rooks
Roy Selph	Meddy Settles
Billy Trapnell	Jason Whitlow
Dr. Barry Dotson	Lee Radney
Dr. Paul Scott	Hugh Darnley

MEMBERS ABSENT

Roger Branch	Cason DeVane
Joe Sikes	Guy Singletary
Debbie Dyal	John R. Turner
Gabriela Munoz	Ryan Waldrep
Alfred Wheeler	

GUEST

Jamie Jackson, Coca-Cola Bottling Company United
Dennis Key, Coca-Cola Bottling Company United
Tracy Bulharowski, Department of Human Services

STAFF

Keith Dixon	Brett Manning
Sandy Bunton	Alex Clements
Allie Williams	Delores Kesler
Alexis Eason	Carla Mills
Heather Ernst	

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order. The WDB had a quorum of 30 members present. Dan Bennett introduced the guest: Tracy Bulharowski with DHS, Dennis Key and Jamie Jackson with Coca-Cola Bottling Company United of Statesboro.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meddy Settles made a motion seconded by Rochelle Culver to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2022, Workforce Development Board meeting with the amendment of a keying error. Motion carried.

GUEST SPEAKER

Dan Bennett introduced Dennis Key, Sales Center Manager at Statesboro Coca-Cola. Dennis stated that he is with Coca-Cola Bottling Company United which was founded in 1902 by Crawford Johnson. Today, the fifth generation Johnson Family still owns and operates and manages the business. Statesboro Coca-Cola is the second largest privately held Coca-Cola Bottling Company in North America and the third largest Coca-Cola bottler in the United States. They have a Board of Directors instead of stockholders and distribute across seven states across the southeastern United States. Notable markets consist of Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Birmingham, Florida Panhandle, Georgia-Atlanta markets, and Chattanooga, Tennessee. They are engaged in the marketing, sales, and distribution of a diverse portfolio of sparkling brands which include Coca-Cola, Diet Coke, Coke Zero Sugar, Sprite, Fanta, Smart Water, Dasani, Powerade, Gold Peak, Minute Maid, and Monster Energy. They are founded on the principals of excellence, respect, integrity, and quality. They live out these values for the benefit of the associates, consumers, customers, communities, and owners.

Dennis Key introduced Jamie Jackson, CDL instructor for Coca-Cola in Statesboro. He stated that the plant has two instructors for the CDL Program at Coca-Cola. The program has been developed within the last two years and went live in Statesboro in April of 2022. Coke made this program to secure employment. Three facilities in Georgia have this program which includes Statesboro, South Metro, and Lawrenceville. Coca-Cola completed the process of registration with the Federal Motor Carrier Administrative Association to receive a TPR (Training Provider Registry) number. On February 7, 2022, the law was changed making it a requirement to receive certified training hours before receiving a CDL. Coca-Cola is registered to train employees for this credential. When an employee is hired at the Coca-Cola plant, they will go through a 90-day probation period which will conclude with their supervisor recommending the program if they see fit. Coca-Cola invests in their employees by allowing their supervisor to recommend them to the training and allowing them to move up within the company. They receive a three-part curriculum which includes training (behind the wheel, night and day driving, parallel parking, hills, weather, etc.). Once the program is complete, they will take the final test at Ogeechee Technical College. With the training being at Coca-Cola they can accommodate to the employees needs by showing them what will be expected of their job at Coca-Cola. They also

have an AP program that is a three-day course that helps associates get their learners permit with 20 associates enrolled. The year-to-date number of employees completing the program in the Georgia Plant is 75 associates. Seventeen students are currently enrolled in the program and 13 associates are preparing for the program for the upcoming year.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Keith stated that the WDB Retreat will be held in March 2023. He stated that he was collaborating with Brett on the upcoming changes with Wagner-Peyser, and Rapid Response. Keith stated he is not sure where the State and TCSG will place the funding for these changes. He stated that based on information we receive about these changes, will determine if we need to host the February or April meeting due to the WDB retreat taking place in March.

Keith stated that the state monitoring was held in November. A few issues were found but were resolved. The final report will be sent once everything is complete. Keith stated that the region has applied for two additional grants which includes a Reentry Grant with the Detention Center in Evans County to help inmates get back into the workforce and the Quest Grant that will allow the region to serve more participants.

ATTENDANCE/ BOARD ORIENTATION

Dr. Hank Hobbs thanked the WDB members for their attendance and stated a quorum was present.

BUDGET AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Mac Jordan stated that the Budget and Evaluation Committee would like to recommend adding the Cosmetology Diploma Program to the Eligible Training Provider List for Ogeechee Technical College. The Cosmetology Diploma Program is a sequence of courses that prepares students in the field of Cosmetology. Seconded by Meddy Settles. Motion carried.

ONE-STOP COMMITTEE

Billy Trapnell referred the WDB members to the One-Stop Report. He stated that One-Stops are located within the 17 County Region that allows customers to look for jobs. He stated that there was an increase in the number of visits to the One-Stop.

PLAN AND PROGRAM REVIEW

Tim Herrington referred the WDB members to the Customer Counts Report. The report is divided into two sections, Training Services, and Business Services. He compared the Training services from the previous meeting which shows a loss of 11 participants. A few of the counties do not have participants in some of the funding categories, but with these being smaller counties the number of participants served will fluctuate and balance out at the end of the year. He compared the Business Services from the previous WDB meeting which had a 33% increase. The two largest increases were in Evans and Toombs County. The total number for all services provided is 6,505 which is a 31% increase from the last meeting. He stated that each WDB member could view the total number of customers served within their county. He stated that everything looked good and commended the staff.

PUBLIC AWARENESS/ EMPLOYER

Meddy Settles stated that the JTU staff had attended meetings by person or by zoom at 15 different locations. He stated that the outreach has reached over 6,000 people according to the Customer Count Report. He commended the staff for their outreach.

RETREAT/NOMINATING

Ted Buford stated that the WDB Retreat will be March 10, 2023- March 12, 2023, at the King and Prince Resort. He encouraged the WDB members to complete the RSVP form and to let the staff know if a WDB member will not be able to attend.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Keith stated that Georgia's unemployment rate is 3%, and the Heart of Georgia area is one of the highest in the state with 3.6%.

RC REPORT

Brett stated that the Regional Commission collaborated with AARP to make the region the fourth region in the state to become an AARP age friendly community that will enable the region to prepare for rapid aging of its citizens. By 2030, it is estimated that one in five people will be of age 65 or older. He also stated that the five-member panel that oversees the TSPLOST Program in the region met to solidify the end of the year report. It was mentioned in the panel meeting that there will be an estimated 20 million of revenue left over from TSPLOST which will be distributed based on the discretionary formula to the local governments starting in the middle of next year. This will be a one-time payment in addition to their regular discretionary amounts.

OTHER BUSINESS

Meddy Settles stated Jenkins County will have several upcoming jobs for a large solar panel project that will cover over 3,000 acres. The entry level position will have a starting salary at \$18.50 an hour.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Allie Williams