

# Business Engagement Committee |MINUTES

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Meeting date *12/10/2020 3:30 PM* | Meeting location *Virtual*

Meeting called by Jim Monroe, Chair

**Members Present:**

Monroe, Jim – Chair

Bradford, Fran

Caldwell, Ernie

Lufkin, Dan

Martin, Keith

Melvin, Deborah

Murphy, Kathleen

Sawyer, Becky

Warner, Brian

Staff: Dittmar, Jane

Jacobs, Julie

**Others present:**

Healy, Dr. Megan

Pierce, Linda PMG  
Group

Galvin, Nick

## **AGENDA:**

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**Agenda topic** *Call to Order* | **Presenter** *Jim Monroe*

Call to order: 3:32 p.m.

Introduction of Committee Members

Roll Call: 3:35 p.m.

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**Agenda topic** *Review of Minutes* | **Presenter** *Jim Monroe* |

**Discussion:**

No corrections or edits to the minutes.

**Conclusion:**

Delegate Kathleen Murphey presented a motion to approve the minutes and Dan Lufkin seconded the motion. Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

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**Agenda topic** *Strategic Plan discussion* | **Presenter** *Group discussion* |  
**Reference** *Strategic Goal #1 discussion*

**Discussion:**

The Business Engagement committee was tasked to further examine Goal #1 of the draft strategic plan and provide tasks and timelines for implementation to the VBWD. Chair, Jim Monroe led the discussion.

**GOAL # 1:** Identify short and long-term workforce strategies for businesses and workers in response to changing economic conditions

A. Ascertain business and worker needs as economic conditions change

B. Evaluate existing Virginia workforce policies and programs to determine effectiveness

Strategy A

- Data collected for the surveys should be timely and relevant. Next step: Determine data sources across workforce systems. Look for strategic alignment between data sets to inform decision making.
- Continued discussion regarding VA Ready to help collect data for Strategy A.
  - VA Ready has identified the competencies needed by employers.
  - VA Ready has the newest data available and has cross industry data.
- Data needs to be mined to obtain specific skills and competencies needed by employers so education and training programs can be designed to meet those needs.
- Once data is collected to ascertain business and worker needs, the information needs to be presented in a meaningful way. Need to determine where the data will reside--should it be presented on a dashboard, website, etc.
- Examine short term strategies: Business needs for short term economic issues (COVID and recovery) and job seeker needs.
- Look to Build Virginia model as a standard for data collection and utilization
- SHEV/VDEP new office in creation that will look at data in a more holistic, actionable way. This new office may be able to provide resources for this strategy.

Strategy B

- Evaluate existing VA policies for effectiveness—determine how we can strengthen policies based on data.
  - Chair, Jim Monroe read letter to committee from Ben Bowman, Executive Director of Central Virginia Workforce Board. Expressed concerns regarding current VEC Workforce Connection platform as not being business friendly. Missing key available jobs due to system difficulties.

Dr. Healy commented that current platform meets needs of federal reporting requirements and, it is understood there are challenges for the business community. This is under review for potential adjustments.

- How can committee inform the potential disconnect between the workforce system and the business community? More qualitative data is needed from a reliable source.
- Evaluate the Workforce Portal program, specifically the data analytics from this program.
- Best programs develop from industry or industry collaboration. Industry supports curriculum and is invested in what is delivered.
- Expand capacity of programs
  - Via marketing. How can we support this more robustly?
    - How do we reach the non-traditional worker– need to use non-traditional outreach methods such as billboards, social media, Facebook?
  - Can we leverage technology for more accessibility?
  - Engage regional Chamber of Commerce in the discussion/leveraging resources.
  - Equity lens: How do we make this (workforce programs) equitable for all Virginians? Is access a barrier (technology) given COVID and remote learning environments? Discussion continued about market
  - VCU is conducting an equity policy analysis. Chairman would like for this information to be shared at a future meeting.
  - Workers often can't take time to learn new skills because they can't stop working in order to engage. Needs to be paid internships/apprenticeship. How can businesses fund this effort?

### **Action items:**

- **Action item:** Sub-groups should be formed to look deeper at data sourcing, business surveys, apprenticeship and equity.
- **Action item:** Workforce Council/WIB Executive Director to speak to group about regional efforts/evaluation sources currently available. (Shawn Avery?)
- **Action item:** Board Staff to find all current business surveys available. Jane Ditmar will review archived minutes for past efforts
- **Action item:** Determine current efforts for assessing business needs related to workforce - pre/post COVID should be considered
- **Action item:** Engage in discussion regarding existing Workforce Connections site. Currently ineffective as a platform for businesses.
- **Action item:** Engage dialogue with equity and inclusion focused groups to understand perspective and needs related to workforce/business services

Committee staff will develop plan to accomplish action items in coordination with Chair, Jim Monroe.

Chair Jim Monroe requests to membership that committee move from discussion/investigation phase into actionable outcome oriented 'on the ground' work. More will be discussed in March meeting

### **Conclusion:**

Committee Chair will present committee feedback to the VBWD on 12/11/2020. Committee will continue discussion on strategies and tasks at the next Business Engagement Committee meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 4:44pm

