

**DRAFT**

**THE VIRGINIA APPRENTICESHIP COUNCIL  
MINUTES**

The Virginia Apprenticeship Council (Council) met on Thursday, March 19, 2009 at New Horizons Regional Education Center. Chairman Darold Kemp called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:** Darold Kemp, Chairman  
Everett Patterson  
Lorne Seay  
Dudley Harris  
Dee Esser  
Gloria Westerman

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

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS:**

Chairman Kemp called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. He thanked Dave Taylor and Joe Johnson of New Horizons Regional Education Center for their hospitality in hosting the meeting.

Council members introduced themselves.

Chairman Kemp introduced the newest member of the Council, Dr. Gary McQuain, School Superintendent of Augusta County, although he was unable to attend the meeting. Dr. Jim Hughes was recognized in the audience.

Bev Donati of the Department of Labor and Industry introduced the Division of Registered Apprenticeship staff members present.

Jim Walker of the U.S. Department of Labor introduced his staff.

Chairman Kemp announced that the Council did not have a quorum. The Chairman made a motion to conduct business as usual, and all actions and motions would be subject to approval at the next meeting. Gloria Westerman seconded the motion which carried by roll call vote.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was no public comment.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

There were no comments offered by Council members.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The Board will vote in June to approve the December 11, 2008 minutes.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

Bev Donati read a thank-you card from Dr. Stephen Staples regarding his farewell gifts from the December meeting.

Mrs. Donati received a letter from Dr. Leber from Northrop Grumman Newport News stating that all apprentices would be kept and classroom instruction will be added on the front end of the program.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

There was no old business.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Everett Patterson described a request from M.C. Dean, one of the sponsors, which was received at the December meeting. The company alerted the Division that one of their apprentices had been killed on his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, on his way to work. The apprentice, Mr. Jordan Feltner, entered in the fall of 2005 and was an exceptional performer and maintained a perfect GPA. In December the request was referred for recommendation.

The request was taken under advisement and we recommend that the Council recognize posthumously Mr. Feltner as an Outstanding Apprentice of 2008. If approved, the Council would send M.C. Dean and his family acknowledgment of this recognition. A proclamation has been drafted. Mr. Patterson read the Proclamation and the Council approved the recommendation by roll call vote.

Due to the date-sensitive nature of the Proclamation and the desire to present it to the company and family in a timely fashion, it was voted on today.

**SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Lorne Seay reported for the Exemption from Licensing Examination Committee. The report said that 14 sponsors were approved for exemptions ending March and June of 2009. Nine of those sponsors applied for renewal. Mr. Seay indicated that after reviewing all of the paperwork

submitted, the committee recommended that the nine be granted exemption from licensing examination for the period of four years. The motion passed by roll call vote.

## **REPORTS:**

### **Virginia Apprenticeship Alumni Association (VAAA):**

Ray Louth, President of the VAAA indicated that while the Association was doing well, they are always looking for new members. He also indicated that renewals are coming up. Today is also the annual meeting and the election of new Officers. Mr. Kemp will also become the Chairman of the VAAA. Mr. Louth invited everyone to attend the business meeting.

Mr. Louth thanked the Council for all that they do for Apprenticeship and the Alumni Association.

### **Virginia Employment Commission (VEC):**

Commissioner Esser reminded the Council that in December she had to lay off 240 employees. Now with the economy scaled back, the work load has gone up. She has now had to hire 140 people and create 6 temporary offices to handle the onslaught of requests. In December 2007, 7 million dollars a week were paid out in unemployment benefits; in December 2008, 13.5 million a week was paid out and in February, 2009 it was 20 million a week. The fund goes down very rapidly and could go belly up early next year. Virginia may have to borrow from the Federal government in order to pay unemployment benefits.

She also indicated that the businesses express concern that their taxes may go up and she indicated that 2011 would be the year that it becomes an issue. She also indicated that her agency received 10 million dollars in unemployment insurance funds. Virginia has a law on its books for increasing people who qualify for unemployment insurance benefits. The fund is getting an additional 62 million dollars because of that law on the books. The Governor's office is negotiating with the General Assembly right now; one of the issues of stimulus funds is to expand those eligible for unemployment benefits.

All the Workforce Investment Boards will get funds for an aggressive summer youth program, which may be able to be tied into apprenticeship. There will be a very short amount of time to plan how to spend the money.

Gloria Westerman commented that the youth programs have changed their targeted age to 18-24 years of age and would be geared more toward career pathways.

She also indicated that in the Workforce Development areas, employers used to come to them with labor needs, now that is not happening.

Commissioner Esser noted that Virginia is a balanced economy which allows us as a state to fair a bit better than the federal picture.

### **Virginia Community College System:**

Gloria Westerman discussed how the VCCS is looking down the road for when the economy turns around. To do that, the state is using the Virginia Career Readiness Certificate which was started in 2004 under Mark Warner and continued through Governor Kaine. The business community was looking for a credential that would certify that an employee had the skill sets to take advantage of the training programs that various industries offer in the area.

Another feature of the program is that the VCCS will go into an industry and profile a job to determine what basic skills are needed for a particular job. ACT has come up with a National Career Readiness Certificate. In Virginia, 20,000 Certificates have been issued. Leadership from companies such as Northrop Grumman and Canon have helped to promote the concept and they have become companies that people want to work for.

Apprentices tend to drop out in the first year of some programs, such as the electrician program if they do not have the math skills. The CRC can help to identify where the gaps are and up-skill the apprentices for that profession. Individuals will be able to go to the one-stop centers for gap-skill training. She indicated that she, Bev Donati and Patty DeTass from INOVA Hospitals were able to sit down and address the retention issue of their clin-tech positions. VCCS provided a Work Keys Job Analysis, re-defined the job description, screened employees with the Work Keys and the CRC and initiate an apprenticeship program.

Ms. Westerman also described the Wizard which was established by a grant. It is career guidance to help students to find career interests and locate where training programs exist. It can be viewed at [www.vawizard.org](http://www.vawizard.org). It can also be found on the main website of [www.vccs.edu](http://www.vccs.edu). The program can help with financial aid, email reminders about deadlines and it is done with an interactive tool.

The Governor has introduced it. In the future, apprenticeship and adult programs will also be incorporated into this website. Ms. Westerman also indicated that the numbers of attendees at Community Colleges is swelling.

Commissioner Davenport requested information on how an employer can request the services for the Career Readiness Certificate. She indicated that the prospective employee can go to the local one-stop centers.

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

Jim Walker, Director, brought greetings from the National office and stated that Labor has a new secretary, Hilda Solis. There is no under-secretary for the Employment and Training Administration as of yet.

Office of Apprenticeship has hired 2 new employees for the national office. Some State Directors' positions have been filled. The Advisory Council on Apprenticeship has made recommendations about the future of apprenticeship.

Commissioner Esser added that the reputation of the new Secretary is that she is pro-apprenticeship.

**Division of Registered Apprenticeship:**

Ms. Bev Donati reported that she spoke with Dr. McQuain and he is looking forward to being an active member. Augusta County, where he is Superintendent, is one of the Registered Apprenticeship sponsors and has been very active in registering and compensating their staff.

Everyone is aware of the slowdown, but the representatives are making visits and serving on advisory committees. The Division is not seeing growth, but there is no wholesale loss of sponsors or apprentices. She is also working with the Green Job Alliance task force put together by the Governor's office and looking for opportunities for apprenticeship. Trish Morrison stays active with the Offender's Re-Entry partnership.

**Department of Labor and Industry:**

Commissioner Davenport provided a synopsis of the General Assembly. At the Department of Labor and Industry, there have been periodic budget reductions. They are considering a further reduction of \$268,000 to the agency.

He also indicated that Virginia's state revenues for February showed double digit declines as compared to previous years. April 8<sup>th</sup> is the beginning of the reconvened session where this will have further discussion.

There has been information about stimulus money coming to the State, with limited guidance.

He also attended the Northrop Grumman Newport News apprenticeship graduation and he commended Dr. Hughes for putting together such a smooth event. They had 194 graduates in several occupations and numerous graduates achieved advanced academic and athletic awards.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

The next meeting is scheduled for June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at a location to be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:17 a. m.

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Darold Kemp, Chairman

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C. Ray Davenport, Secretary