

APPROVED

THE VIRGINIA APPRENTICESHIP COUNCIL MINUTES

The Virginia Apprenticeship Council met on Thursday, March 20, 2025

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dudley Harris, Chair
Nicole Overly, (Secretary of the Council)
Patrick Dean, (Virtually)
Dr. Jameo Pollock
Dr. Jason Williams
Gary Pan
Grant Shmelzer
Douglas Straley
Meghan Hurt
Doris Crouse-Mays
Michelle Ramaker
William Dunn
Bo Bundrick
David Johnson, (Designee)
Marjorie King, (Designee)

STAFF PRESENT:

Angela Kelly-Wiecek, Chief Deputy Commissioner
Michael Peterson, Chief Information Officer
Miguel Granillo, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
James Edmunds, Program Support Technician
Cierra Morgan, Program Support Technician
Jennifer Hynson, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Andrew Johnson, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Tereza Edwards, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Claudia Williams, RTI Education Specialist
Regina White-Kee, SAEF Grant Specialist
Jane Harrington, Grant Partner Alignment Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Chair Dudley Harris called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed the council and new members.

Angela Kelly-Wiecek recommended amending the agenda as follows: Item 7b (Report for Registered Apprenticeship) moved to before “Old Business” and after “Approval of Minutes,” and adding Item 5b which is an update on the reciprocity work group and Item 6a which is a

presentation by Michael Peterson for the new Registered Apprenticeship Council. A motion was made by William Dunn and seconded by Grant Shmelzer.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

December 2024 meeting minutes were approved through a motion by Grant Shmelzer and seconded by William Dunn.

REPORT - Division of Registered Apprenticeship (Virginia Works):

Angela Kelly-Wiecek, Chief Deputy Commissioner of Virginia Works, gave the following report on behalf of Registered Apprenticeship:

Policy Updates:

Revised Minimum Standards were submitted to the VAC back in the December 2024 meeting. There has been one minor correction. “Item 20. Number of Apprentices to be Trained in the Program” needs correcting. This item originally cited Regulation 16VAC20-21-50 items B8 and B9 (this in relation to ratio of Journeyworkers to Apprentices). The revised Minimum Standards only cited B9 instead of Item B in its entirety.

The Reciprocity Workgroup has been established and things are moving quickly thanks to members of the Virginia Apprenticeship Council as well as Registered Apprenticeship Consultant (RAC) Miguel Granillo. The first meeting for this workgroup has been established.

Program Operations:

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek informed the Council that Donna Carvana is no longer with Virginia Works. She also informed the Council that our Registered Apprenticeship Field Managers (Diana Lyons and Faith Clayton) now report up through Virginia Work’s Director of Service Delivery, Dr Rob Walker, to better help align the functions of Virginia Works across the board. Instead of having specific silos for each individual program, Registered Apprenticeship is looking at the full-service delivery to our dual customers – both employers and job seekers. The Registered Apprenticeship Consultants are currently becoming embedded into the workforce centers throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Registered Apprenticeship Grant and Policy Team at Holland Tower are also reporting to Acting Commissioner for Operations, David Mitchell.

As of March 1st, Registered Apprenticeship has adopted an all-digital process. Registered Apprenticeship reached out to the Federal DOL and confirmed they had implemented this some time ago. This has already been showing benefits in a better turn around time for all documents as well as better record keeping. All forms are submitted digitally, and all completions are done through RAPIDS (including the uploading of Red Stamped AAFs). Registered Apprenticeship is still going to continue to mail out Certificates and Journeyworker cards. Going forward, Registered Apprenticeship is going to offer “Sponsor Office Hours.” This will be a time for Sponsors to call

in if they have questions or if they want to learn how they can better utilize RAPIDS and the self-service features that it offers.

Growth Strategy:

Governor Glenn Youngkin set a goal for Registered Apprenticeship to reach 20,000 active apprentices in Virginia by the end of 2025. Registered Apprenticeship currently has over 14,000 active apprentices. There are strategies in place to allow Registered Apprenticeship to scale and add apprentices. The SAEF Grant 2 will also allow for expansion.

The SAEF Grant 2 is a set of employer focused incentives that allowed our business in certain categories to receive funding for either adding a new Registered Apprenticeship program, a new occupation, or if they had a registered program already, net new apprentices or occupations. The applicants were allowed to apply for up to \$4000 in training and education costs or costs associated with setting up those opportunities. Applicants were also allowed to apply for up to \$2000 in supportive service (uniforms, tools, other items that an apprentice may need). The application deadline was March 17th, 2025, awardees will be notified by April 1st, 2025, and employers will have until June 30th, 2025, to incur expenses for reimbursement. The total allotment for this program was \$283,000. When the application closed, there were over 92 business that submitted applications with well over 120 potential new apprentices (which exceeds the amount of money available). The applications are currently being evaluated.

OLD BUSINESS:

The revised Minimum Standards were approved through a motion by David Johnson and seconded by Grant Shmelzer.

Dr. Jameo Pollock updated the Council on the Reciprocity Workgroup. The first meeting of this workgroup was held on February 6th, 2025. The members of the workgroup include Dr. Jameo Pollock, William Dunn, David Johnson, Marjorie King, Michelle Ramaker, and Miguel Granillo. The workgroup reviewed reciprocity agreements from other states to identify best practices. The goal of the subcommittee meeting is creating a reciprocity agreement program/guideline. The workgroup recommends calling it a policy for other states to follow when seeking approval and acceptance of their Registered Apprenticeship programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Dr. Jameo Pollock mentioned that Grant Shmelzer highlighted the fact that Maryland requires approval from the Maryland Council due to regulations and laws surrounding prevailing wages. Dr. Jameo brought five areas of challenges and concerns to the Council regarding reciprocity:

1. What is the scope of this reciprocity agreement
 - a. The workgroup started working with states with occupations already having licensure reciprocity agreements with DPOR. This is what prompted adding Marjorie King to the subcommittee.
2. The minimum wage differences
 - a. Out of state sponsors must comply with Virginia's minimum wage (\$12.41 as of 1/1/25). There are concerns about lower wage states negatively impacting Virginia apprentices. One of the solutions would be to have sponsors sign the minimum standards of apprenticeship as a conditional reciprocity.
3. The verification of Related Technical Instruction hours

- a. Some states may not meet Virginia's stricter hour requirements. It is recommended that these sponsors sign the minimum standards which states that the company agrees to comply with Virginia's minimum hours.
4. The mentor to apprentice compliance
 - a. Working only with states that have existing licensure reciprocity agreements, a solution is to get those sponsors to sign Virginia's minimum standards of apprenticeship.
5. The use of RAPIDS
 - a. There is concern about sponsors being able to modify the wage data without verification.

Dr. Jameo Pollock also brought three requests to the attention of the Council:

1. The workgroup recommends labeling the reciprocity process as a policy instead of a guideline. The group is not sure who needs to approve the name of the process.
2. The workgroup requested a DPOR representative – specifically from the licensing department. This request was satisfied by adding Marjorie King to the subcommittee.
3. To obtain a list of States and licensure occupation with DPOR reciprocity agreements. This has been completed by the subcommittee and they have a list of these states and occupations in a shared folder.

The next meeting for the Reciprocity Workgroup is April 16th, 2025, from 10am – 11:30am.

NEW BUSINESS:

Michael Peterson, Chief Information Officer, gave the following update on the new Registered Apprenticeship Dashboard to the Council:

Virginia Works just recently launched a new website, VirginiaHasJobs.com. Under each regional page, there is a dedicated section for both training and apprenticeship opportunities. In alignment with all services that Dr. Walker is responsible for as the Director of Service Delivery, Virginia Works is in the process of integrating the Registered Apprenticeship module within the Virginia Workforce Connection System. This is an initial step to help modernize the case management system. Virginia Works is also in the process of configuring a comprehensive intuitive website (VirginiaWorks.gov) as all Registered Apprenticeships content currently resides on the Department of Labor and Industry's website. The plan is to have all Registered Apprenticeship's content transferred over by the end of April.

Michael Peterson presented a slide show with the draft of the Registered Apprenticeship Dashboard. The dashboard is slated to be fully released on March 31st, 2025. The dashboard includes Active Apprentice Demographics, Age Analysis, Geospatial Analysis, Apprenticeship Details (active apprentice count by occupation, employer/sponsor, and program type), and Weekly Report Metrics.

REPORTS:

Virginia Works:

Nicole Overly, Commissioner of Virginia Works, gave the following report to the Virginia Apprenticeship Council on behalf of Virginia Works:

As the programs for Virginia Works have come together and as the programs learn to operate as in integrated team, some gaps and areas for improvement have been identified. Virginia Works has been working in an agile and sprint-based way to address a lot of the issues. Commissioner Overly pointed out that there were several Virginia Works members that are not apart of Registered Apprenticeship attending this meeting and that is testament that Virginia Works is trying to bring the functional areas of the Agency (Policy, Operations, Technology, and Data) to each of the programs that need support. Many of the things that were presented to the Council are result of a lot of intense sprint efforts. The Hired Apprenticeship Fund was a highly cross functional sprint to get the website up, get materials out, and prepare to intake applications. This is one of many examples of how a sprint can be highly effective.

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulations (DPOR):

Marjorie King, Executive Director for DPOR, gave the following report to the Virginia Apprenticeship Council on behalf of DPOR:

Marjorie King provided each council member with two handouts: a pathway to licensure pamphlet with steps to attain certain licenses through DPOR (a snapshot of licensure) and a booklet that contains information that is needed to obtain an individual license and certification (this becomes active as of April 1st, 2025).

The Department of Professional and Occupational Regulations (DPOR) regulations are being amended effective April 28th, 2025, to allow for the hearing aid specialist Apprenticeship. Regarding tattooing and body piercing Apprenticeship, DPOR is still overseeing this apprenticeship. DPOR is working closely with individuals at Virginia Works to hopefully transition that in the near future.

Virginia Community College System (VCCS):

Dr. Jason M. Williams Sr., the Coordinator of Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning programs at VCCS in the Workforce and Academic Division provided the following written report to the council:

Wytheville Community College (WCC): USDA Grant: WCC received a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development grant for \$538,728 grant which will support the deployment of distance learning technology and equipment to neighboring counties.

Community College Workforce Alliance (CCWA): Alliance for Building Better Medicine: Reynolds and Brightpoint Community Colleges, and industry leaders received almost a \$4 million in federal grant funds to set up 228 technician-level jobs in the advanced pharmaceutical manufacturing and biotech sectors.

Central Virginia Community College (CVCC): Received a \$1.5M grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Strengthening Community Colleges (SCC) Training Grant, aimed to

increase access to affordable, high-quality training, advanced manufacturing, semiconductors, and biotechnology industries.

Work-based Learning Tracking System (WTS) Last week the VCCS held our kick-off meeting. Information shared was the Projects: vision, mission, goals, responsibilities, and implementation timeline. The WTS will align the VCCS to a one system approach by inputting, tracking, and the ability to create and share reports on the VCCS' WBL experiences and opportunities.

Action Item: VCCS requests to have a designated person from VA Works to be a part of the WTS Advisory group to gather external resources and information related to state reporting and information sharing.

Department of Education (DOE):

The Department of Education did not have a representative or designee present at the meeting.

Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI):

Gary Pan, Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industry, and David Johnson, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industry gave the following report to the Virginia Apprenticeship Council on behalf of DOLI:

Commissioner Pan is pleased to be here on behalf of the Department of Labor and Industry in our efforts to continue our support for the Virginia Works Apprenticeship program.

Commissioner Pan wanted to share that he is the President of the National Association of Government Labor Officials. There is going to be a conference from September 28th to October 1st in Newport News and would love the opportunity to highlight Registered Apprenticeship.

The Department of Labor and Industry has started a new initiative called “**What IF**” which is to encourage employers and employees to have a goal of safe workplaces which yield injury free careers for Virginia’s workforce. Apprenticeship training is a strong component of achieving that goal and DOLI is and will be working to advance the vision of careers that are injury free. It should be noted that because of our confidence in the apprenticeship training’s impact on safety, our child labor law section has worked with DPOR and the Department of Education to allow minor workers to participate in some workplaces if they are in a Registered Apprenticeship program.

The Registered Apprenticeship website is still tied to DOLI’s website and this needs to migrate to the Virginia Works website. DOLI still gets inquiries on RA by virtue of this listing. The Virginia.gov website also has RA tied to DOLI website. If DOLI could help facilitate this action, please contact Barbara Layman, Assistant Commissioner. DOLI also receives communication every day from people needed assistance with Registered Apprenticeship. It is hoped that that content migration from the DOLI website to the Virginia Works website will fix this issue.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Doris Crouse-Mays pointed out to the Council that a motion and second were made for the changed of the Minimum Standards, but a vote was never held. A vote was held and the changes to the Minimum Standards were approved.

Doris Crous-Mays also requests that all future documents have page numbers at the bottom for the benefit of all.

Chair Harris informed the Council that there are five members up for reappointment. If someone wants to get reappointed, they will need to go to the Secretary of Commonwealth's website because members are not automatically reappointed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Chair Harris and the VAC voted on the Vice Chair. Pat Dean was nominated and selected as the Vice Chair of the Virginia Apprenticeship Council.

The next meeting Virginia Apprenticeship Council Meeting is on Thursday, June 26, 2025.

Chair Harris announced that all 2025 meetings will take place at Virginia Works HQ – Holland Tower – 2221 Edward Holland Dr, Suite 500, Richmond, VA 23230 from 10am – 12pm.

Chair Harris thanked the Council, and all in attendance.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 am.

Dudley Harris, Chair
Nicole Overly, Commissioner and Secretary