

New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area Joint Board Meeting Minutes May 20, 2026

Call to Order & Welcome of Guests

Chair Miller and Chair Biggs, respectively, called to order the Joint meeting of the NRMW Workforce Development Board and the Consortium Board at 10:10 am on May 20, 2026, 2025 in person at the Wytheville Meeting Center and online via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Reflection – Chair Biggs lead the Boards in the Pledge of Allegiance and in a moment of reflection.

Roll Call

Ms. Renee Sturgill conducted roll call. The following persons were present and online:

Consortium Board

Montgomery - Chair Mary Biggs
Bland - Cameron Burton
Galax – Sharon Ritchie
Grayson – Michael Hash
Smyth – Shawn Utt (Alt)
Washington – Charlie Hargis

Foundation Board

Michael Miller
Mary Biggs
Cameron Burton
Vicky Collins

Workforce Board

Chair Michael Miller
Christi Altizer
Christy Lowe
Cindy Robertson
Jake Leonard
Jeff Dunnick
Katie Boswell
Vicky Collins
Jennifer McKenzie (Alt)
Patricia Dover-Bedwell (Alt)
Thad Austin (Virtual)
Bryan Phipps (Virtual)
Ginny Ayers (Virtual)

Staff

Jenny Bolte
Marty Holliday
Angi Chandler
Kathy Pickel
Renee Sturgill
Della Wheeler
John Bebbler

Guests

Ashley Crouse
Beth Carico
Brenda Rigney
Elli Travis
Holly Kobia
Matt Herron
Phyllis Conner

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda was previously distributed with the meeting packet.

- **Workforce Development Board – February 18, 2026 Meeting Minutes**
Ms. Vicky Collins made the motion to approve the February 18, 2026 Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes. Ms. Mary Biggs seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously by all those voting.
- **Consortium Board – March 18, 2026 Meeting Minutes**
Mr. Cameron Burton made the motion to approve the March 18, 2026 Consortium Board meeting minutes. Mr. Charlie Hargis seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously by all those voting.
- **Financial Summary**

Mr. Cameron Burton made the motion to approve the Financial Summary. Mr. Charlie Hargis seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously by all those voting.

- **Operational Summary**

Mr. Charlie Hargis made the motion to approve the Operational Summary. Mr. Cameron Burton seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously by all those voting.

- **WDB Appointments, Reappointments, and Vacancies – Consortium Board**

Mr. Charlie Hargis made the motion to approve the Workforce Development Board appointments, reappointments, and vacancies as presented. Mr. Michael Hash seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously by all those voting.

Draft PY26 Budget

Executive Director Jenny Bolte reviewed the proposed PY26 budget. The budget reflects a projected 12% reduction in WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth allocations while continuing to support participant services, business engagement, and regional workforce initiatives.

Mr. Shawn Utt made the motion to approve the proposed PY26 budget. Mr. Charlie Hargis seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously by all those voting.

PY26 Contract Funding Allocation Recommendations

The proposed PY26 contract funding allocations were reviewed, including WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funding for the Program Operator.

PY26 Fiscal Agreement

The PY26 Fiscal Agreement was reviewed. The agreement continues fiscal agent services with the New River Valley Regional Commission. No vote was taken.

ARC Ready Grant Outreach and Engagement Presentation

Holly Kobia of Kobia Consulting and Ashley Crouse of Virginia Tech's Center for Economic and Community Engagement provided an overview of the ARC READY outreach and engagement work. The project timeline includes stakeholder mapping and network analysis, interviews and strategy development, pilot implementation, feedback, and long-term planning. Kobia Consulting also reviewed work related to discovery, communications and stewardship, fundraising and engagement, and pipeline and event planning.

Executive Director Summary

Jenny Bolte's written Executive Summary was included in the meeting packet. The report highlighted strategic funding and project development, workforce system modernization, regional outreach and engagement, statewide WIOA and Equal Opportunity monitoring, and professional development activities.

WIOA Title I Programs

Beth Carico provided WIOA Title I and One-Stop System updates and highlighted the first four participants enrolled through the SPARK Energy initiative.

Board Discretionary Programs

Angi Chandler provided updates on the Board's discretionary grant programs and current program performance.

FOUNDATION REPORT – Marty Holliday

Marty Holliday provided an update on Workforce Development Foundation activities.

Business Services Team Summary

John Bebber provided an update on regional employer engagement, spring career fairs, Incumbent Worker Training, On-the-Job Training, and other work-based learning activities.

Partner Reports

- Adult Education
Patricia Dover-Bedwell provided an Adult Education update, including information related to certified maintenance employee training.
- Economic & Community Development
Katie Boswell provided an Economic & Community Development update.
- TANF Programs – Vicky Collins
Vicky Collins provided a TANF Programs update.
- Title I Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Christi Altizer provided a rehabilitation services update.
- Virginia's Employment Services
Christy Lowe provided a Virginia Employment Services update.

The Business Case for Skills-Based Hiring

Marty Holliday provided a presentation on the ARISE-funded Connect Appalachia to Skills-Based Hiring initiative. The six-module employer curriculum focuses on expanding applicant pools, reducing vacancy time, improving retention, and strengthening workforce stability through skills-based hiring and engagement with underutilized talent pools.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Chairs Michael Miller and Mary Biggs adjourned the official meeting at 11:52 am.

Other Important Items

Travel reimbursement information and the 2026 meeting schedules were available to members.

Respectfully Submitted



Kathy Pickel