

Small Business Council/Membership Committee Joint Meeting

Meeting Minutes

June 25, 2015

Small Business Council members present: Ted Cligrow, Mary Henry, Yvette Jefferson, John Sawyer, Todd Setzer, Bernita Platt.

Small Business Council members absent: Lynn Bastian, Peter Gasca, Susie McCaskill, John Rickard, Jamie Saunders, Lee Zulanch.

Membership Committee members present: Kimberly Causey-Gomez, Eric Hunt, O'Neil McCoy, Jackie Neal, Mark Ousley, Bobbei Ruswinckel.

Membership Committee members absent: Blake Arp, Charlie Belissary, Matt Carson, Brian Ferguson, Radha Herring, Collier Schettig, Robert Stinnett, Brigitte Wilson, Jennifer Dellinger.

Staff Present: Diana Greene, Cindy Gettig, Kori Hippe, Amanda Blomquist.

Todd Setzer called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

NB – Due to the joint committee meeting, minutes for the April 9 meeting were not included for approval and will be presented at the Sept. 24 meeting.

I. Welcome and introductions.

II. Membership & Renewals Update

Cindy Gettig said the division is in renewal mode and is at 65% of our goal for the year. We are tracking about \$30,000 ahead of this time last year. We really feel like the two staycation packages that we offered as incentives to renew as well as our advertising packages have really spurred people along to renew by the end of June. Our ambassadors have been really helpful. In August we'll do two phoneathons with ambassadors and chamber staff. We set up the phones in the boardroom and get on the phone and try to get those renewals in. We'll do that a little earlier this year. Hopefully by the next meeting I can tell you 100 percent renewed.

III. Presentations:

a. Rusty Gaskins – Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. We are a federally funded program located nationwide, here to help train the local workforce. Sometimes that means sending someone to school – we partner with Miller Motte Technical College and Horry Georgetown Technical College. We can pay for their training, their books if they need it, mileage reimbursement, and childcare expense reimbursements.

We try to meet with businesses out there and economic development to see what programs and services are offered and what jobs are out there. Some things that are really popular right now are welding. We don't have enough welders so we're sending a lot of people to school for that. We represent Horry, Georgetown and Williamsburg counties.

We assist adults 18 & over that are unemployed or underemployed, dislocated workers, youth and local businesses. We offer soft skills training, how to write a resume, how to

interview, how to dress for interviews, financial literacy, career assessments and word keys testing, classroom training for certifications or associates degrees, on the job training opportunities. The same services are offered to dislocated workers who have been laid off due to no fault of their own.

When you're looking for someone, reach out to us. We can see who we have in our program. You interview them just like you would anyone else. If you want to hire them, I can reimburse you a percent of those wages. It doesn't last forever, usually about 10 weeks, but it typically gets you over that training period.

Students – typically high school juniors and seniors up to 24-years-old with significant barriers to employment. We typically help them with employment in the summer. We pay them the entire summer all you have to do is train them.

Businesses, what we can do for you is help you find employees. About once a year, we get money where we can help you train employees. Last year we didn't spend it all and only five employers took advantage of it. On average we can award \$10,000 for that. One company had someone come in and teach staff. We can't pay for travel expenses, but the actual teaching we might be able to help you. If you're interested in that, keep in touch with me, that will be coming up soon. We also have rapid response funding. If you're in danger of shutting down, we might be able to help you.

b. Kimberly Burke – SC Works

Not everybody is eligible for WIOA. That's where SC Works and the DEW comes in. We have a team of staff that engage and educate businesses about what we have to offer. We offer free job postings on SCWorks.com. We have a matchmaking service in the system that can generate referrals for you. We offer in house space for hiring events. We can do targeted resume searches for you and help you find qualified employees. We partner with WIOA. My goal is to match you with a WIOA person who's going to have incentives that could be up to a 90 percent wage reimbursement for the first 10 weeks their there. We search our veteran group who also have incentives.

One of the things we're trying to get the word out on is with hospitality employers. As they come up on the fall they lay off employees, they come to us for unemployment insurance we give it to them and then the employer's tax rate goes through the roof. We're trying to help them circumvent that process so their tax rates stay manageable.

c. Teri Luther – Apprenticeship South Carolina

We are actually part of the technical college system. We work with employers to educate them and establish apprenticeship programs. We register it with the Department of Labor. I take the burden off the businesses and I do all the paperwork for them. I work as a liaison and listen to what the businesses need. Because I am a state employee, my service is free of charge. We work with IT, health care, transportation, hospitality and skilled trades like HVAC, electricians and plumbing.

Apprenticeship programs develop a highly-skilled workforce, reduce turnover, standardized skills and lead to increase productivity. There are tax credits which are as much as \$1,000 per apprentice per year up to four years. We do student apprenticeships. Employers must have on the job training that will be customized to the business and coupled with job related education and a scalable wage.

IV. **Workforce Project**

Kori Hippe: We have our job connection page that's been up a while. It ranks fourth on our page views. This site is frequently promoted in the Horry County Business Journal and our social media. We've updated it to add an employment resource guide. We have an employment and training services area which has a lot of the information we've been talking about today so jobseekers can find those services. What we're really excited to show you is the employer's site. We've added resources for employers based off feedback you gave us. It's got information to help you fill your job openings.

Diana Greene asked the council if they had suggestions for promoting this page even more.

Kimberly Causey Gomez asked about putting it in the welcome packets. Bobbei Ruswinckel said this is a great tool for ambassadors, we'd love to share this information for you.

Diana Greene asked if this would make a good education class.

Kimberly Causey Gomez suggested holding that class somewhere else, where people wouldn't have to travel as far.

Mark Ousley suggested these resources be available in a booth at afterhours events or the expo.

Yvette Jefferson suggested the presenters present again to the MBACC BOD.

V. **Business Resiliency Planning**

Kori Hippe: We've always had a hurricane/emergency planning page, but we've added to it. Now we have resources to plan for a business interruption. We have very detailed guides and templates and others that are just overviews. We've also added a list of member businesses that can help you after you've had a major business interruption and we'll add to that list.

Todd Setzer said it seems like the biggest problem is getting the word out. Hurricanes don't happen every year but there are small disasters that can happen to their immediate place of business. These things happen every day and people aren't prepared for it. I think this is very important for our community to see what it really means to have your business interrupted.

Diana Greene said we used to call this disaster planning, but we changed it over to business interruption planning because that seemed to be the language people were understanding. There've been a ton of great sessions about disaster planning, but nobody attends. Maybe from this business interruption slant it will speak to these businesses more and we can get them to come out.

Yvette Jefferson suggested putting a tear sheet of the basic template in the Grand Strander so they could fill that out and use it.

VI. **Small Business Saturday**

Kori Hippe: We will again be encouraging people to shop our members and shop local this holiday season. We hope to be partnering with American Express again, you have to go online and fill out a form and if you get selected they bring you boxes and boxes of fun stuff that we share with members. Last year we asked members to send in discounts that we posted on shopourmembers.com. Those were promoted on our social media and the Horry County Business Journal. If shoppers brought in receipts they were entered to win gift cards. Last year we had 1050 entries. The year before we had 660 and we thought that was mind blowing.

This year we're adding a Shop Small Selfie contest. We'll pick a winning photo. Bobbei Ruswinckel asked if we share that list of businesses with discounts. Kori Hippe said yes.

Diana Greene asked the council to think about ideas for promoting Small Business Saturday this fall.

VII. **US Chamber Small Business Summit**

Yvette Jefferson told the council about a trip she took with Diana Greene to the US Chamber. We accepted an award for Careteam+ which was our small business of the year. We were really happy to be there for that and excited to see Myrtle Beach on the map. The US Chamber focused on preparing for the future. Some of those initiatives that stood out for me were for the youth and diversity in the leadership. I'd like to see more businesses doing more mentoring, more internships. I'd love to see a junior Leadership Grand Strand. You can imagine with LGS does for us. If you could have some high school students go through that, imagine the takeaways. I just wanted to plant that seed for everyone to look for opportunities to embrace our youth.

Diana Greene said it was an interesting thing we were invited to. It had some of the best education sessions I've attended in a long time. Then it was really interesting because they asked us how they could better work with us and how they could help us. It was neat to be invited to that and to be able to do for them what you as a council do for us all the time.

VIII. **Other input from committee**

Todd Setzer asked the council to remember to share the resources they learned about today with others and reminded those present about the upcoming LGS application deadline. He thanked the Membership Committee for their attendance and thanked the presenters.

The meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.