

Highland Community Collaboration Council  
Via In Person and Zoom  
Meeting Minutes  
August 9, 2021  
9:30am

The Highlands Community Collaboration Council had an in person and virtual meeting via Zoom on August 9, 2021.

Welcome and Introductions

Chris opened the meeting at 9:30 and members introduced themselves. He asked for additions or corrections to the agenda. A sign-in sheet was passed around the room and is on record. Kim Coe, Phillip Cyrus, Susan Smith and Kathy Fugate attended via Zoom.

- Review and approval of July 12, 2021 meeting minutes.

Matt motioned and Felisha seconded the motion. All in favor. The minutes are approved

Guest Speakers:

- **Kimberly Coe (Counselor @ Pocahontas Correctional Center)**

Question & Answer Session with Pocahontas Correctional Center inmates:

Here is a list of the questions:

What is the main office address for the Virginia Dept of SSI/SSD? Online. Ssa.gov

It is better to do a Food Stamp application before or upon my release? You will need an address to get the food stamps. It would be best to wait until you have a physical address.

Where can I go to get Food Vouchers? A network of food pantries is available in each locality.

Where can I go to get Clothing Vouchers? Several thrift stores, Hands and Feet and OEI. When is an upcoming Job Fair? Need help finding a job. Virginia Career Works website and Facebook page is a great resource. Almost every business is seeking employees at this time. It is a great time to be looking for a job.

Is there transportation for job interviews, employment, and medical appointments? OEI does this in several areas. Primarily for VIEW clients. They also have a CARS program to assist in obtaining a vehicle. The Mountain Lynx is a transportation resource.

Inmate Demographics: Two are going to Tazewell and one to Wythe.

Is there help with tools, boots, uniforms, etc. for employment? OEI has a thrift store in Lebanon. They also have work clothes. People Inc. (Virginia Cares) and DSS can help with work clothing. DARS is available if you have a history of drug use or mental illness. (276) 963-1028 in Richlands.

Is there assistance with housing, low income apartments? People, Inc. Andy Kegley at HOPE, Inc. can assist with homelessness. There are very few homeless shelters. Largest is in Norton. (276) 706-7025 Matt Sackwitz and (276) 356-6547 for Linda Austin. BLR is a resource for those with substance use history for housing. You can do a phone assessment at (276) 821-8030. C-COR in Lebanon or a hotel for short term. Can contact counselor prior to release to make arrangements. Oxford House in Pulaski for addiction and one opening soon in Wytheville. You can go to the website for information and availability.

Is there assistance with Mental Health counseling and medication? CSB's. Mount Rogers for Wythe. They can establish case management. It is Cumberland Mountain in Tazewell County. The health departments can also do testing. Appalachian Drop in Center in Marion. The DOC has mental health clinicians to assist in linking to resources. Each probation officer is aware of the contact person.

Is there assistance with marriage counseling and parental assistance? CSB's have Project Link. Must have history of substance use. If not, just regular adult services. Mount Rogers or Cumberland Mountain.

Do I automatically receive Medicare if I receive food stamps? No. You would need to complete an application for each program.

What do I need to check on my driver's license? Restricted license for working and medical appointments?

Where can I take trade classes? Adult trade classes? The local community colleges offer these classes. Fast Forward programs are available. Everything is free as of now.

How do I set up to take beginner classes at SWCC? Do I qualify for financial aid or a PELL grant? Do I qualify for FASFA? They will need to contact the community college. Most are free tuition as of now. You will still need to complete the FAFSA. Some of the colleges also offer free or low cost programs.

Information on Restoration of Rights? You must have a physical address in the system. They will mail the document to you. If you have questions, please contact Legal Aid. Go to the Secretary of the Commonwealth website. They can provide you with a document that will list the infraction and expected date of restoration. (276) 783-8300 is the local Legal Aid number.

How do I get a driver license restored? Contact Legal Aid. Depending on the circumstances, they can get the matter before a judge and has the authority to grant permission to drive to work. They can request a compliance summary to see where they stand with the DMV. Denise Leftwich with OEI can pull this report. It states what the infractions are and what date you are eligible for reinstatement. Legal Aid can work to get a court ordered license. The ID form from the probation officer can visit the home to verify residence and help you work toward getting a driver license. DARS and DSS may be able to assist with fees.

Can I be placed in a HalfWay house after being released, instead of becoming homeless? The casework counselors at the institution will get them started on that. Linda Austin can also assist with this. There are several faith based programs. Faith Ministries. Hands and Feet can assist with fees.

Can I leave the state? That is something that is worked out in court. Work with your probation officer.

Is there a way to receive assistance with work related items? DARS can assist. They help with construction, mechanics and general work materials. Work with your probation officer to get a referral to DARS.

If I need equipment to open a landscaping business, is there any resources for that? I also do electrical and plumbing odd jobs. Destiny Outreach Ministries (Steve Branch) has a history of helping people get re-established in Bluefield.

Assistance with receiving mental health medication? Medicaid. Go through your primary care physician to get a referral other than through the CSB. There is a faith based group in Bland that will help with a sliding scale. Bland Ministry Center.

I have Medicaid. Will I be able to get all my medications? Once you are released, medical gives you a 30-day supply of your medications. You can get with your CSB or case management coordinator.

District III is also a resource that is available.

### New Business

- Refer to committee members:
- Thoughts? Everyone in attendance was thankful for the experience.

### September 2021 Council Presentations:

Presenters Needed

BLR can do a virtual tour for us in September.

Sub-Committee Reports

*Housing Committee/ Service Integration Committee/ Grants/Finance Committee*  
(Matt, Emma, Andy, Felisha, and Linda)

*Employment Committee:* (Jimmy with DARS, Mike with VEC)  
None

*Mentoring Committee/ Substance Abuse Committee:* (Ruth, Teresa, Chris, Chuck)  
None

*Public Relations Committee:* (Manuel)  
None

*Executive Committee:* (Chris, Richard, Felisha and Chris).  
None

Re-entry Updates

None

Local Coalition Updates

Questions/Concerns/Comments/Announcements:

None

**Next meeting –September 13: 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday**

**We meet the second Monday of each month.**

<http://www.highlandsgov.org>

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**The meeting adjourned at 10:58am.**

If there is someone you would like for us to invite to a future meeting as either a guest or member, please let one of us know.

[christopher.shortt@vadoc.virginia.gov](mailto:christopher.shortt@vadoc.virginia.gov)

[manuelstreet14@gmail.com](mailto:manuelstreet14@gmail.com)

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Austin  
Secretary