

Highland Community Collaboration Council  
Hybrid Meeting (Zoom and In-Person))  
Meeting Minutes  
June 13, 2022  
9:30am

The Highlands Community Collaboration Council had a hybrid meeting on June 13, 2022

Welcome and Introductions

Chris opened the meeting at 9:30 and members introduced themselves. Chris asked for additions or corrections to the agenda. There were 8 members in attendance today.

- Review and approval of May 9, 2022 meeting. Matt motioned and Felisha seconded the motion. All in favor. The minutes are approved.

Guest Speakers:

- Tim Williams: Workforce Development Specialist (Bland Correctional Center):

Q&A with Inmate Shannon Miller # 1246145 (releasing to his uncle in Big Stone Gap).

1. Miller is in need of construction work clothes, carpentry tools, and eventually his own housing.

Released to BSG but plans to live in Abingdon. Felisha with OEI has a thrift store in Lebanon and Linda has thrift store in Abingdon. Needs construction clothing (boots, hard hat, etc.). Thinks it will be easier to find a job in Abingdon. Many employers are currently hiring. Linda is with Hands and Feet as well as ASAC. They can help with clothing. Housing in Abingdon is scarce at this point. May want to consider the outskirts of town. Chris can help with housing and can put him up in a hotel for a few days if he needs it. Releasing to Norton, but he can request a transfer to Abingdon. Linda shared her phone number. Jimmy provided the contact information for the Pounding Mill office. Can assist with employment (equipment, tools, etc.). Must have a job offer to qualify. Would need to start the process quickly. The release date has not been set but sometime around July 5<sup>th</sup>. Says he shouldn't have any trouble finding employment. Lost everything but feels better after talking to us. Angel with Ballard has a second chance employment program. They can also help with housing. She provided her contact information. Hopefully will be released first week in July. Has lost everything but the will to work.

Richard also provided the number for the office in Norton. He can call either office. He can get started at the office closest to him when he is released. Can easily transfer to Abingdon. There is no probation upon release for Mr. Miller. Richard provided the number to the Norton office as well as his number in Abingdon. Matt offered to help with anything that he may need once released. Ask for contact information for the re-entry council. Was sweating it but feels much better after speaking with the council. Matt's contact information was provided. Mr. Miller said he would be willing to work with him if he has a job to offer. Linda says she appreciates that he is appreciative of the offers.

- Seekumarie Hawkins: Workforce Development Specialist (Pocahontas State Correctional Center):

The following is a series of questions from inmates at Pocahontas State Correctional Center who are scheduled to be released:

1. Mr. Huff, releasing to Kingsport, TN: Would like to know of any housing assistance, specifically low-income housing.
2. Mr. Justice, releasing to Oakwood, VA: 1. Are there any type of assistance to help pay to get a driver's license back?; 2. How do I get help with getting my own place whenever I get out, also will they pay a month or two in rent for me?;3. Who could I contact to get some clothes for work? Also, I need clothes to wear to do job interviews? 4. Is there anyone I could contact to help me get my CDL, someone who would help pay for the training?
3. Mr. Bussey, releasing to Bristol, TN: 2. Would like to know of any housing assistance in Bristol, VA. 2. Any assistance with getting a phone?
4. Mr. Matthes, releasing to Saltville, VA: 1. Do I have to take the whole test or do I just have to pay a fee to get my license back?; 2. How old do you have to be to get supplement, security income, where do I go to apply? 3. Need assistance with basic needs including food and clothing; 4. Looking for a school to do welding; 5. Would like assistance with rental assistance; 6., Food stamps, how long does it take to get food stamps?; 7. Medical Insurance, can I get medical help to pay for bills if needed?
5. Mr. Tiller, releasing to Abingdon or Bristol, VA: 1. Would like information about basic needs, food, clothing, driver's license and food stamps.

6. Mr. Johnson, releasing to Richlands: 1. Would like to know what benefits are available; 2. Who can I get assistance from to complete social security paperwork?
7. Mr. Barton, releasing to Honaker, VA. 1. Will I be able to get help with clothing; 2. Going to need transportation, is there any way to get help buying a car?; 3. I need dental service, what kind of help can I get?; 4. What will I have to do to sign up for social security or disability?; 5. Can I get medical insurance?; 6. What kind of housing resources can be available to me? 7. Is there some way to help me buy tools?
8. Mr. Moore, releasing to Tennessee. 1. Would like to get assistance with food stamps, social security insurance and phone.

There were some connectivity issues at Pocahontas. Chris asks that members replay via email to answer the questions. Some are going to Tennessee so Linda will reach out to the re-entry council in Tennessee and pass along any information that is provided.

### New Business

#### July 11, 2022 Council Presentations:

- **Presenters NEEDED.** Chris will reach out to Ms. Hawkins about next month.

### 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

Linda says Chris Snipes with People, Inc.'s Virginia Cares program funds are depleted but should be reloaded July 1.

Richard says members were able to provide services to several of the inmates who requested services last month.

Angel says ASAC's resource fair was great. There were 45 vendors. Did numerous Narcan trainings. Asks that we refer any clients who need employment related services. They are doing well with employers but could use more employee referrals.

Jennifer mentioned the senior resource/health fair in Wytheville. Can email her for more information.

Matt mentioned that we probably need to begin tracking the clients we have helped through the council. Capturing the data could be beneficial for future grant applications. It would also be good to know how many of these have been helped and any success that have had. Linda and Felisha has helped 5 of the inmates upon release. Linda has been working with a female that has recently been released. She knew to reach out because she received a gift basket at Christmas.

#### Local Coalition Updates

None

#### Questions/Concerns/Comments/Announcements:

- Angel goes to Southwest Regional and meets with those who are 60 and 30-days out.

**Next meeting –July 11th: 2<sup>rd</sup> Monday**

<http://www.highlandseccc.org>

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**The meeting adjourned at 10:18am.**

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.

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Respectfully submitted,

Chris Austin  
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