

Capital Region Workforce Partnership

History

The Capital Region Workforce Partnership began in 1974 as the Henrico-Chesterfield-Hanover CETA Consortium. CETA, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, Public Law 93-203 of 1973, allowed local areas to form workforce service delivery areas, known as “prime sponsors” to receive federal funds to provide those with low incomes and those experiencing long term unemployment access to training services, assistance in finding suitable employment and up to two years of subsidized paid work in public and private non-profit agencies to build skills that would provide opportunities to find unsubsidized jobs. In addition to the services for adults (persons ages 21 and over), the Henrico-Chesterfield-Hanover CETA Consortium was also funded to provide summer jobs to high school aged youth who were considered economically disadvantaged as defined by income and family size in the CETA regulations.

The Road to formation of the Henrico-Chesterfield-Hanover CETA Consortium actually began in 1972 when the USDOL made planning grants available to local areas to consider how they might structure and implement manpower service delivery. CETA was a local government driven system and funds were awarded directly to the localities from the USDOL. There was no state involvement.

In 1972, the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, issued a report entitled “*Manpower Planning and Programming: The Search for A Focal Point*” which was endorsed by the Henrico County Board of Supervisors at its July 26, 1972 Board meeting. This same report was shared with other jurisdictions in the region as consideration was being given to how best to structure the accountability and delivery of Manpower Training Programs in the Richmond area.

On September 26, 1973, the Board of Supervisors authorized the submission of the Manpower Operational Training Grant to USDOL and on January 23, 1974, the Board authorized the submittal of a request to the USDOL to have Henrico County designated as a “*Prime Sponsor*” to receive and administer manpower employment and training funds as authorized by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973. Henrico was designated as a Prime Sponsor and on April 10, 1974, the Board of Supervisors authorized the County Manager to apply for a Manpower Services Grant and to enter into a consortium with Chesterfield and Hanover Counties. Services were to be delivered through the County of Henrico Planning Office. The consortium of local governments became known as the Henrico-Chesterfield-Hanover CETA Consortium. The initial funds awarded from USDOL were \$35,100 for the Public Employment Program, also known as the Public Service Employment Program (PSEP) and \$470,501 for CETA Title I Programs which were the comprehensive employment assistance and training program activities. Supplemental funding was also awarded in the amounts of \$4,000 for PSEP, and \$50,000 for CETA Title I programs.

The original organization was staffed by five positions, four County Planner II positions and a clerk Stenographer under the heading Manpower Development and Training. By June 12, 1974, the County submitted its first request for full CETA funding to the USDOL. The staff was housed in rental space at the BYRD Center in the East End of Henrico. The first Summer Youth program for economically disadvantaged youth was funded by USDOL at a total of \$60,181.

The Consortium's first Director was Sonny Marks.

Since the inception of the Henrico-Chesterfield-Hanover CETA Consortium, Henrico County has served as the fiscal agent and administrative arm of the manpower, now employment and training, system. The system grew as the federal legislation changed and more federal funds were made available. The Henrico-Chesterfield-Hanover Consortium expanded its service delivery locations to include a trailer in Hanover County near the Courthouse and a trailer on the Chesterfield County grounds. After a major storm hit the region, the trailers were abandoned. The Chesterfield trailer was replaced by an office eventually at 7321 Whitepine Road. No new site was established in Hanover. In 1977, then President Carter, faced with unemployment levels in excess of 7.5%, expanded the CETA program to increase the opportunities for Public Service Employment. This initiative, approved by Congress, also allowed the Consortium to increase its staff and the number of locations through which services were provided in the Consortium area. The Consortium added more than 15 new staff members to its complement under the PSEP program. Those employees went on to become permanent County Employees under prior to the repeal of CETA and went on to staff the Job Training Partnership Act. The growth of CETA also brought Walt Coleman in as the second Director of the Consortium.

In October, 1982, under the Reagan Administration, Congress enacted new legislation, the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Public Law 97-300.

JTPA established a nationwide system of job training programs administered jointly by state and local governments and the private sector. This legislation established a strong role for states, and gave business and equal voice with local governments in the planning and delivery of workforce services. JTPA also created Private Industry Councils as the vehicle for business and local government planning and service delivery, and funds were awarded from USDOL to the states who were then obligated by a codified formula to provide funds to the Local "*Service Delivery Areas*", previously Prime Sponsors. An additional impact of JTPA on the Henrico-Chesterfield-Hanover CETA Consortium was a provision in the new law that required all jurisdictions in a Service Delivery Area to have contiguous boundaries. Until October 1982, the counties of Charles City, Goochland, New Kent and Powhatan, had been a part of the City of Richmond's Prime Sponsor Area. Under JTPA, the lack of contiguous boundaries forced them to consider joining the Henrico-Chesterfield-Hanover Consortium, which they did willingly. This structural change brought about an agreement between the seven counties to operate as a consortium again designating Henrico County as the fiscal agent and administrative arm. The City of Richmond became its own Service

Delivery Area and operated independently until JTPA was repealed by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Public Law 105-220. Walt Coleman passed the Directorship under JTPA to Madeline Guerrin who passed the job on to Herbert T. Sink who remained until 1987.

Under JTPA, the newly structured consortium of local governments adopted the name, Capital Area Training Consortium. As the Capital Area Training Consortium, its then director, Herbert T. Sink, moved the administrative staff moved from the BYRD Center in East Henrico, to 5410 Williamsburg Road, in East Henrico, where it has remained. The Williamsburg Road location was purchased with excess CETA funds at the conclusion of the CETA Legislation.

JTPA not only ushered in a new structure for the delivery system and for the expanded partnerships among the seven counties surrounding the City of Richmond, it also brought in a 1987, a new director, Rosalyn Key-Tiller. JTPA provided services through Henrico County staff to economically disadvantaged adults, youth and provided the states the ability to identify and provide services to dislocated workers for the first time.

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), brought about additional changes to the workforce delivery system and to the structure of the Consortium. The Act required the appointment of Workforce Investment Boards that must be 51% business membership, and Business was identified as the driver of services to Adults, Youth and Dislocated Workers. In addition to the Board change, the staff of the Consortium could no longer operate as a single entity. WIA required a separation of policy and service delivery. This caused the policy arm to become a part of the Community Services Portfolio and the Service Delivery Arm to become a part of the Administrative Services Portfolio. The policy arm also served as the fiscal agent and staff to the Workforce Investment Board (WIB), the Consortium Board, and the Youth Council as required by legislative mandates.

In October, 2008, under the leadership of the Governor's Office and in response to concerns from the businesses in the region, the Capital Area Training Consortium was again restructured, this time adding the City of Richmond as a member of what is now known as the Capital Region Workforce Investment Area under an elected official's consortium known as the Capital Region Workforce Partnership. The consortium includes representation from each of the eight jurisdictions. This new consortium body, appointed a brand new workforce investment board which was officially seated in June of 2009.

The newly formed Workforce Investment Board for the new regional organization, quickly eliminated the service delivery arm of the Consortium and the City of Richmond's service provider, Goodwill in favor of a for profit service provider. The Administrative arm of the Capital Region remained intact was led by Rosalyn Key-Tiller, its Director. The Administrative Staff remained at 5410 Williamsburg Road. The Workforce Investment Board oversaw delivery of services through 3 locations in the region, 7333 Whitepine Road, 6301 Midlothian Turnpike, and 5410 Williamsburg Road.

The Midlothian Turnpike and Williamsburg Road locations have since been replaced by centers at 203 East Cary in downtown Richmond and 121 Cedar Fork Road in eastern Henrico. They join 7333 Whitepine Road in Chesterfield as the three comprehensive workforce centers, along with a satellite location in Goochland County. After 26 years of service, Rosalyn Key-Tiller stepped down as Director and was replaced by Brian Davis in April of 2014.

Effective July 1, 2015, the federal enabling legislation and funding source for the Capital Region Workforce Partnership changed to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. At the writing of this document, the local area is awaiting state certification of its new Workforce Development Board so that it may begin the conduct of its duties.

Over the years of its existence, the agency has been responsible for annual budgets that have ranged from \$1.0 Million to upwards of \$7.0 Million and has provided employment and training services to more than 100,000 individuals across the region.