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WPCOG - Newsletter

March 2018

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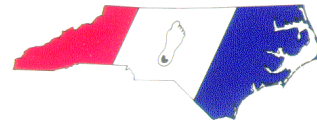
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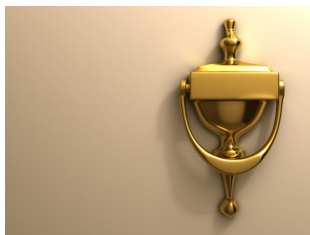
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Regional Housing Authority Housing Partnership Network Informational Seminar

The HPN seminar will be held Thursday May 3, 2018, at 2:00 p.m. at the RHA office located at 1880 2nd Ave NW | Hickory, NC 28601.

The RHA created the HPN Seminar for agencies working with individuals with housing needs.

This seminar will address the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher process including:

- Steps applicants must take to become tenants
- Opportunities available to participants through the Section 8 Program/Special Programs including Family-Self Sufficiency, Family Unification and Homeownership
- Regulations/policies
- Local Resources
- How to assist clients in securing and maintaining decent, safe and sanitary housing

As an agency with housing opportunities and resources, the RHA has a shared vision and want to encourage our mutual clients. The RHA feels confident this will provide your agency with knowledge to help facilitate their housing search and efforts in navigating the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

The RHA welcomes ideas on how to streamline access to available resources necessary to give our mutual clients every chance to secure housing.

What to Bring:

- Questions you have regarding the Section 8 program/process
- Information about your agency, resources and services you provide

If a representative from your agency would like to attend, RSVP to Kala Guido at kala.guido@wpcog.org or 828.485.4282.



Western Piedmont
Council of Governments
Regional Housing Authority



REGIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY
HOUSING PARTNERSHIP NETWORK
INFORMATIONAL SEMINAR

WHEN: THURSDAY, MAY 3, 2018
TIME: 2:00 PM
LOCATION: WPCOG – RHA OFFICE
1880 2ND AVE NW | HICKORY, NC 28601

Discussion will include:

- How the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program works
- Opportunities available to Section 8 participants
- Housing options in Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties
- Guest speakers from Partners Behavioral Health Management, Safe harbor, Salvation Army and others.

The HPN is for housing agencies and individuals working with families with housing needs. We encourage participation from any agency involved in housing families throughout Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties.

Interested in sharing your Housing options? Please sign-up to present.

For more information, sign-up to present, or to RSVP, please contact:

Kala Guido, RHA Housing Specialist
kala.guido@wpcog.org
828.485.4282

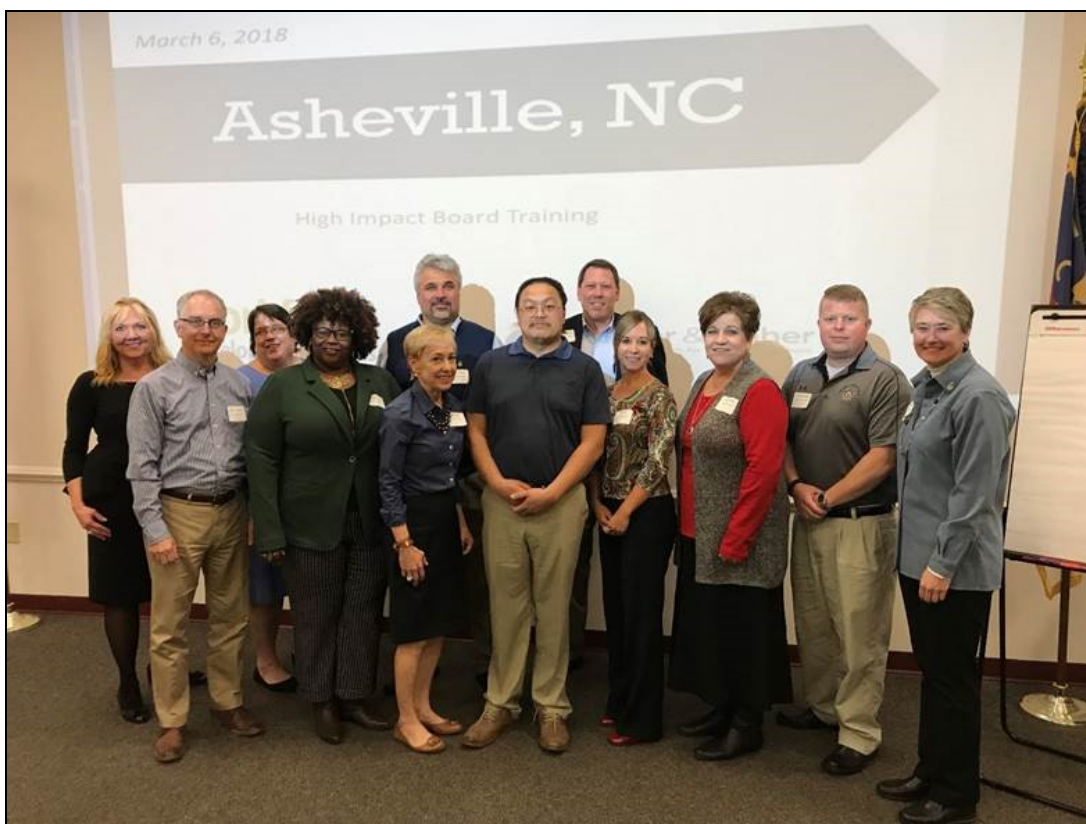


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Article by Kala Guido

Workforce Development Board

US Department of Labor Brings Workforce Development Board Training to North Carolina



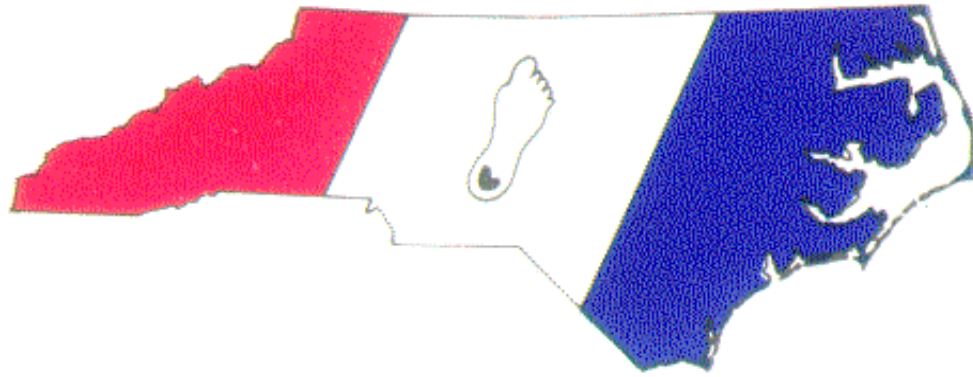
On March 6, 2018 several Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board members and staff, as well as workforce board members from Mountain Area, High Country, Region C, and Southwest were able to attend training on the complex requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for building the boards' capacity to carry out its statutory functions. The project's framework is designed to cultivate the knowledge of boards, including use of labor market information and trends to engage communities and businesses and focus on sector initiatives, while also providing the right approach to build the board capacity to advance implementation of WIOA.

The following topics were covered: cultivating knowledge of boards, including roles and responsibilities of local Boards; development of high-impact Boards, including information on labor market issues and trends in local regions and in key sectors and the use of this intelligence to engage community and private sector partners in solving workforce issues; utilizing forums for peer-to-peer learning, strategic vs. tactical Boards and system building and accountability. Representatives from [Maher and Maher](#) administered the training: Beth Brinly, Vice President, Workforce Innovation and Terri Lonowski, Senior Consultant.

This educational opportunity was sponsored by the US Department of Labor-Region 3, the Division of Workforce Solutions and the [NC Association of Workforce Development Boards](#).

Article by Wendy Johnson

Area Agency on Aging
North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature



The North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature was created by the North Carolina General Assembly with the passage of Senate Bill 479 in July of 1993. This year the NC STHL will celebrate 25 years of service to senior citizens of North Carolina.

The Senior Tar Heel Legislature was created to:

- Provide information to senior citizens on the legislative process and matters being considered by the North Carolina General Assembly.
- Promote citizen involvement and advocacy concerning aging issues before the North Carolina General Assembly.
- Assess the legislative needs of older citizens by convening a forum modeled after the North Carolina General Assembly.

Each of the 100 North Carolina counties is entitled to one delegate to the Senior Tar Heel Legislature. Most counties also have an alternate delegate. Delegates and alternates must be age 60 or older. The North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services provides staff support for the Senior Tar Heel Legislature in cooperation with the 16 Area Agencies on Aging, which are responsible for conducting the selection of delegates and alternates.

The 2018 STHL Priorities are:

Increase HCCBG Funding

The North Carolina Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) is vital to assuring the availability of cost effective home and community-based services to the elderly, the malnourished, the homebound, the dependent and those who are socially and economically needy. Approximately 10,500 seniors are on the HCCBG waiting list for services and 1.2 million more are expected to turn 60 years of age by the year 2034. This rapidly increasing older adult population of North Carolina places an increased pressure on the service delivery system, which is insufficient to meet the current needs of those seeking services. The North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature requests the General Assembly increase the Home and Community Care Block Grant funding by \$7 million dollars in recurring funds.

Increase Funding for Senior Centers

Increase funding for Senior Centers by an additional \$300,000 in recurring funds. There are 164 Senior Centers in 97 counties that provide programs and services to enhance the health and wellness of older adults. These services are of significant benefit to help elders remain independent, thus delaying their potential for costlier services or housing options. Senior Center General Purpose money is vital to support critical center operations. To maintain operation, senior centers must leverage resources from a variety of sources that include federal, state and local governments, special events, participant contributions, and grants and volunteer hours. Funding for senior centers has not met the needs of the increasing aging baby boomer's generation who now constitute more than two-thirds of the 50 plus population. It is recommended that the General Assembly increase funding for Senior Centers to continue to meet the vital needs of North Carolina's growing population of older adults.

Sustain and Expand Project C.A.R.E.

Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternative to Running on Empty) was designed and tested in North Carolina. It has become a national best practice model for providing respite services to family members who are caring at home for a relative with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. The number of North Carolinians affected with these dementias now approximates 160,000, and is expected to exceed 210,000 by 2025. North Carolina must develop methods to both encourage and support families to assist their aging family members and relatives to

remain at home. Resulting savings in public funds are substantial. We recommend that the General Assembly increase recurring funding for Project C.A.R.E. in 2018-2019 by ten percent annually and thereafter to meet the expected growth, statewide.

Strengthen and Fund North Carolina's Adult Protective Services Program (APS)

North Carolina's APS Program must be strengthened and funded in order to respond to the accelerated growth in the State's aging population, some of whom may be at risk of becoming victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation. The State of North Carolina has not provided any funding for the APS Program since the 2010-2012 State budget. The only funding for the APS Program is provided by county governments and a decreasing federal Social Services Block Grant. We recommend that the North Carolina General Assembly recognize and value its vulnerable and older citizens by making available \$5 million in recurring funds in the State budget to meet the growing need for APS in North Carolina.

Reestablish the Study Commission on Aging

The General Assembly of the State of North Carolina created The North Carolina Study Commission on Aging in 1987 to study and evaluate the delivery of services to older adults and recommend improvements that would meet their current and future needs. In 2011, this commission was repealed, creating an information gap between the older adults in need of assistance and organizations concerned with meeting those needs. The North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature requests the North Carolina General Assembly reestablish the North Carolina Study Commission on Aging. UPDATE: The Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services has designated a Subcommittee on Aging, which began meeting in November of 2017.

Mary Edwards of the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services is the principal staff aide and can be contacted at Mary.Edwards@dhhs.nc.gov or 919-855-3437.

STHL can be found on the web at: www.ncsthl.org and on Facebook (North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature).

For more information about the North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature, please contact your local delegate or alternate:

Alexander County

Delegate - Margo Mosley Smyre: margojack202@yahoo.com

Alternate - Paulette Huffman: huffmanp64@gmail.com

Burke County

Delegate - Karen Robinson: kjcr@charter.net

Alternate - Maxine Childres: maxinechildres@gmail.com

Caldwell County

Delegate - Trilla Annas: trillaannas@gmail.com

Alternate - Faye Higgins: rhiggins00@gmail.com

Catawba County

Delegate - Gail Miller: gdbrmiller@charter.net

Alternate - Richard Smith: smithrpsjr@gmail.com

[Article by Anita Roberts](#)

Community & Economic Development Essential Single Family Rehabilitation (ESFR) Program Available to Alexander County Eligible Homeowners

The Western Piedmont Council of Governments has been awarded \$175,000 from the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency to rehabilitate five (5) homes scattered throughout Alexander County. The primary goal of the ESFR program is to encourage the essential

rehabilitation of scattered-site single-family housing units owned and occupied by lower-income households with an elderly and/or disabled full-time household member or with a child under the age of 6 whose health is threatened by the presence of lead-based paint hazards and veteran households with incomes at or below eighty percent (80%) of the area median incomes

The amount of funds available for the rehabilitation of each home can vary from \$5,000 to \$25,000, depending on the condition of the home. The home must be economically feasible to rehabilitate. Each dwelling unit assisted must meet all requirements of the ESFR Rehabilitation Standards at a cost that is within the program limits. Mobile homes are not eligible for this program.

Eligible applicants will be served on a first-come, first served basis without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, physical or mental handicaps, or family status. ESFR assistance will be provided to eligible owner-occupants in the form of interest-free, forgivable loans covering the costs associated with rehabilitation of the unit. These interest-free loans will be forgiven at the rate of \$3,000 per year. For example, if \$24,000 is spent on housing rehabilitations and the owner lived in the home for eight (8) years after the work is completed, the loan is totally forgiven.

Staff is currently taking applications for this program. Homeowners desiring additional information or wishing to apply for the ESFR Program may do so by contacting Laurie Powell at 828-322-9191 ext. 249.

[Article by Laurie Powell](#)

Community & Regional Planning

Western Piedmont Stormwater Partnership Outreach



This year the WPCOG will take part in four EXTREME STEM Tour Lunch & Learns at the NC Center for Engineering Technologies. Each tour hosts over eighty STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) students. Stations for different subjects are located so that the students can easily move between stations. Students are able to easily move between stations covering different STEM subjects. The WPCOG station explained water quality planning, and time was taken out to explain the relationship between stormwater and water quality. Dates and Schools participating in the tour include:

March 16th - River Bend Middle School
March 28th - Mill Creek Middle School
April 13th - Maiden Middle School

Students learned that almost two-thirds of water pollution in North Carolina is caused by polluted runoff. When it rains, water washes over lawns, sidewalks, and streets. Besides litter, this water picks up chemicals found in lawn fertilizers, bacteria found in pet waste, and oil from cars. This polluted water then enters roadside ditches and the storm drains found in our streets. Large pipes under the ground connect the storm drains to the closest lake or stream. This can directly affect our drinking water and wildlife.

The WPCOG conducts stormwater awareness outreach on behalf of the Western Piedmont Stormwater Partnership. The Partnership is made up of five local governments (Conover, Hickory, Maiden, Morganton, and Valdese) that contract with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments to perform outreach to better inform the general public about stormwater issues. The program focuses on getting the information to teachers and students. The Annual Western Piedmont Annual Water Quality Conference and Annual STEM tours conducted at the WPCOG offices are other ways in which the WPCOG educates teachers on stormwater.

Article by [John E. Wear](#)

IT/GIS Services

Five Advantages of Online Utilities GIS Versus Paper Maps

Until the advent of GIS (Geographic Information Systems), municipal utilities had to rely on static paper maps and staff members' memories to know the location and details of their water, wastewater, stormwater and electric infrastructures. In the past decade, however, WPCOG IT/GIS has worked with multiple local cities and towns to build online GIS interfaces for their utilities. These systems have many benefits versus the older system of using paper maps:

Preservation of Data - Paper maps fade and crumble over time. Part of the GIS-creation process involves digitizing paper maps, thus preserving them, and placing them into the GIS. The maps can then be turned on and off and overlaid in their proper geographic position along with other features.

Organization - Over time, drawings, as-builts and plats can build up into the hundreds or thousands. Paper maps are often scattered about and get shuffled between Town Hall and the Public Works building, and it becomes difficult to find one for a desired area. When placed into a GIS, drawings are codified by year and content, and can easily be viewed on a PC or tablet screen.

Memory - Often, knowledge of a particular map is held by only a handful of staff, or sometimes one individual staff member. If these people leave, then the information is gone. When creating a GIS, WPCOG IT/GIS staff work with public works staff members to learn the location of infrastructure and place all information into the system. Then all authorized staff members can have access to the latest location and info.

Infrastructure Changes - Infrastructure condition and location evolve daily. In the past, Towns would oftentimes keep one Town-wide paper map in a truck, and important updates would be scribbled in pen or pencil onto the map. The map then becomes irreplaceable. However, maps crumble and writing fades, and changes are in jeopardy of being lost. Using a GIS, Town staff members can update data in real-time, and the information stays current.

Scalability - Using paper maps, users cannot "zoom in" to see detail. Using Town-wide maps, the viewer often cannot even tell on what side of the street that lines run. But in a GIS, workers can zoom to see a more precise location. The GIS allows detailed information to pop-up as a user zooms in. GIS users can also add useful backgrounds, such as aerial photos, streets or zoning. The State of NC takes aerial photos of our region every four years, and these are added to the GIS.



(Above) Water Detail from Paper Map

(Right) Same Area with Detail of Meters, Valves and Line Materials.



If you would like to learn more about what GIS can do for your Public Works, please contact Scott Miller, IT/GIS Services Director at scott.miller@wpcog.org.

Article by Tom Bell



Announcements

THE REAL DEAL ABOUT **REAL ID**

Congress passed the REAL ID Act requiring states to issue identification that meets higher security standards.

- ✦ A single form of identification for ease of travel
- ✦ An increased security measure (*Verifies identity and residency*)
- ✦ Meets federal identification requirements for TSA and federal facilities, including military bases and nuclear power plants
- ✦ A driver license or identification card with a gold star
- ✦ Same cost as a driver license and identification card
- ✦ Must be obtained in a driver license office
- ✦ Non-REAL IDs will not have the gold star and will be clearly noted "Not for Federal Identification".
- ✦ Without a REAL ID, you will need to contact TSA and each federal facility about the additional identification required for access.

Get the complete list of requirements at
NCREALID.gov

Call to schedule your appointment
(919) 715-7000



[Frequently Asked Question](#) | [Real ID Brochure](#)

Calendar of Events

March

- 20 - WPAQC Meeting (10am)
- 26 - RHA Public Briefing of Administrative Plan (9am)
- 27 - WPCOG Policy Board Meeting (6pm)
- 28 - Greater Hickory MPO TAC/TCC (2pm/3:30pm)

April

- 18 - Water Resources Committee Meeting (11am)
- 19 - Mayor/Chairman/Manager Meeting (6pm)
- 23 - Regional Aging Provider Meeting (2pm)
- 24 - WPCOG Executive

May

- 9 - Regional Managers' Meeting (12pm)
- 14 - Regional Aging Advisory Committee/STHL Meeting (12pm)
- 15 - WPAQC Meeting (10am)
- 22 - WPCOG Policy Board

29 - Regional Managers'
Meeting (12pm)

Committee Meeting (6pm)
25 - Greater Hickory MPO
TAC/TCC (2pm/3:30pm)
26 - WPCOG Annual
Meeting (6pm)

Meeting (6pm)
23 - Greater Hickory MPO
TAC/TCC (2pm/3:30pm)
23 - NCLM Town Hall Day
29 - Rural Day (Raleigh)
30 - County Assembly Day



Stay Connected



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