

GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting Agenda

August 2, 2019, 10:00 am, Virginia Western Community College, 3102 Colonial Ave., Roanoke, VA 24016 RM Natural Science Center

Members in Attendance: Fred Armstrong, Kenneth Craig, Sandy Davis, Floyd Merryman, Marty Muscatello, John Dooley, Victor Iannello, Michael Friedlander, Debbie Petrine, John Putney, Don Halliwill, John Williamson, Matthew Stewart, Nathaniel Bishop, Ab Boxley, and Ray Smoot.

Members not in Attendance: John Capps, Beverly Dalton, Watt Foster, Georgeann Snead, Brian Hemphill, Marla Akridge, William Fralin, Mike Hamlar, and Terry Jameson.

Members Participating Remotely: None.

Staff in Attendance: John Provo, Scott Tate, and Eve Lettau.

Public in Attendance: Cal Ribbens, Virginia Tech Computer Science; Brandy Salmon, Virginia Tech Center for Industry Partnerships; Erin Burcham, Roanoke Regional Partnership; Wayne Strickland, Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission; Carole Tarrant, Virginia Western Community College; Aisha Johnson, City of Roanoke; Stephanie Seagle, Virginia Western Community College; Darlene Burcham, Town of Clifton Forge; Victoria Hanson, Deborah Flippo, Draper Arden Associates; Catherine Amelink, Virginia Tech Learning Systems Innovation and Effectiveness; Megan Lucas, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance; Jamie Glass, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance; Meredith Hundley, Valleys Innovation Council; Dwane Yancey, the Roanoke Times; Chris Faraldi, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance; and Jacob Demmitt, the Roanoke Times.

Chairman Smoot convened at 10:05 am and he ended it at 12:16 pm.

Discussion and Adoption of Revised Growth and Diversification Plan

Data Update

Scott Tate (OED) began by providing an overview of significant data changes within the growth and diversification plan. The data areas presented included demographics, manufacturing sector, food and beverage sector, emerging technology and IT sectors, life sciences and health care sectors, commuting patterns, and the labor force. The council presented a few questions about how the data had been calculated. Mr. Tate will advise council members of any revisions.

Plan Update

Scott Tate (OED) then gave an overview of the engagement strategies used for the plan update, including the survey and facilitated stakeholder sessions. Results from the survey provided an overview of the strongest and weakest regional economic factors. The facilitated insights also yielded information about new project ideas, key regional assets, and regional challenges to economic growth. Mr. Tate then updated the council on the key strategies, including an update

from the TEconomy update. The council discussed the importance of industry partnership with K-12 Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The next steps for the Growth and Diversification Plan include approval by the council and submission to the state by August 9th.

Mr. Williamson moved to authorize the plan with technical edits from staff, and Mr. Halliwill seconded. All were in favor, and none opposed.

Project Metrics and Evaluation Updates

John Provo (OED) gave an overview of how funded projects are being tracked and measured. He gave a brief update on a few select projects which have determined to be lagging on key milestones. Projects discussed were the Center for Energy Research and Education Industry Lab, Drone Zone, Region 2 Talent Collaborative, RAMP, and AMPL. Chairman Smoot asked if the council had any questions about any project specifics, there were none. Mr. Friedlander asked about the recourse for projects which the council believes have not completed adequate milestones. Mr. Provo explained that it would be up to the council to work with applicants to mediate the issue, but they may ultimately pull funding. Mr. Dooley brought up the topic of the council's public reporting responsibility. Chairman Smoot explained that public reporting is very important because the GOVA Region 2 council is funded by the taxpayers. Mr. Provo explained that the council is working with B2C in Roanoke to implement a marketing and reporting strategy to inform the public about the GOVA projects. Marketing materials should be seen close to the end of 2019.

New Capital Project Proposals

Chairman Smoot introduced the three new project proposals.

Blockchain Ecosystem Catalyst (Virginia Tech)

Scott Tate (OED) began with a brief overview of the Blockchain Ecosystem Catalyst project. This project is supported by the Virginia Tech Computer Science Department and the Virginia Tech Center for Industry Partnerships. The purpose of the project is to develop a talent pool of workers who have the skills necessary for blockchain. Brandy Salmon (Center for Advancing Industry Partnerships at Virginia Tech) then presented the project and explained how blockchain can aid in strengthening overall cybersecurity. She also presented the companies who are researching blockchain and the companies who have signed on to support this project. Cal Ribbens (Virginia Tech Computer Science) joined the discussion through a conference call. John Putney and Victor Iannello voiced their support for the project. John Dooley mentioned that the project has the full support of and matching funds from the Virginia Tech Foundation.

Mr. Williamson moved to approve the plan and Mr. Putney seconded it. Mr. Dooley recused himself because of the role of Virginia Tech Foundation in the project. All were in favor and none opposed.

Central Virginia Training Center Redevelopment Plan (Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance)

Scott Tate (OED) gave an overview of the project which was supported by the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance. Megan Lucas presented the project. The Central Virginia Training Center Redevelopment Plan seeks GOVA funding for a master redevelopment plan, an overlay district, and a market feasibility plan for a parcel in Amherst County. Some of the concerns of the project include environmental challenges of the facilities on the parcel. The project aims to pre-plan the site so that a developer may come in and execute the vision. John Dooley voiced some concerns about the cost and timeline. Additional concerns about this project include the site's ownership and whether it is sufficiently focused on job creation relevant to GO Virginia's goals. Chairman Smoot recommended that the proposal be tabled so that the applicant and staff can work together to address these concerns.

Mr. Craig motioned to table the project to the next meeting and Mr. Merryman seconded. All were in favor, and none opposed.

Developing a Destination for Talent, Industry Internship Program (Virginia Tech)

Scott Tate introduced the project titled Developing a Destination for Talent, Industry Internship Program, which is supported by Virginia Tech Learning Systems Innovation and Effectiveness. Catherine Amelink presented the project, which aims to facilitate economic growth in Region 2 by connecting Virginia Tech undergraduates, companies in the region, and Virginia Tech faculty. The application addressed the brain drain and its effects on the region. The strategies created from the project aim to create connections between local employers and top talent through internship opportunities. Erin Burcham (Roanoke Regional Partnership) explained how this program could expand work with projects already happening in Roanoke.

Mr. Iannello moved to approve the project and was seconded by Ab Boxley. John Dooley recused himself. All were in favor and none opposed.

Chairman Smoot moved to approve May 7th, 2019 full council meeting's minutes, all were in favor and none opposed.

Public Comment

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

Chairman Smoot adjourned the meeting at 12:16 PM.