



GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting Minutes

October 29, 2025, 12:45 – 2:45p.m.

Taubman Museum of Art

110 Salem Ave SE, Roanoke, VA 24011

Council members in attendance: Doug Agner, Eddie Amos (Chair), John Capps, Janice Crawford, Paul Denham (Vice Chair), Rich Diddams, Greg Feldmann, Michael Friedlander, Don Halliwill, Steve Harvey, Vince Hatcher, Bif Johnson, Angela Joyner, Ken McFadyen, Nick Kessler, Kim Payne, Debbie Petrine, Amy Sebring, Luke Towles, Cathy Underwood, Richmond Vincent, Amy White, Jacob Wright, Justin Yalung.

Council members not in attendance: Whitney Czelusniak, Caley Edgerly, Nanci Hardwick, Fourd Kemper, Marty Muscatello

Staff in attendance: Julia Kell, Sarah Lyon-Hill, Alyssa McKenney, John Provo, Jemma Sabokrouh, Emmalee Wagner.

Public in attendance: Alec Brebner, Ashley Carter, Heather Fay, Anthony Graftsky, Jack Honig, Tamara Jamerson, Scot Shippee, Dana Silva, Ashley Sowers, Rachel Yost

Chair Eddie Amos called the meeting to order at 2:45 p.m.

I. Roll Call

Chair Amos led an introduction of new council members and staff. Attending council members, staff, and members of the public introduced themselves. Emmalee Wagner used this as roll call.

The arrival of council members that were not present at this time is noted going forward.

II. Council Membership

Terms and Vacancies

Chair Amos presented the two nominees for council members from the Roanoke subregion (Daniel DiMarco and Dr. Frank Shushok). Vice Chair Paul Denham presented the nominee for council member from the Lynchburg region (Jim Richards).

Kim Payne moved to accept the nominations to fill council vacancies; Michael Friedlander seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Doug Agner entered the meeting at this time and is included in future votes.

Leadership and Executive Committee

Chair Amos presented Vice Chair Paul Denham as the Executive Committee's recommendation for the role of Region 2 Council Chair, effective January 1, 2026. Dr. Friedlander moved to approve; Janice Crawford seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Following the approval of Vice Chair Denham to be Chair in January 2026, Chair Amos passed control of the meeting to Vice Chair Denham.

Ken McFadyen entered the meeting at this time and is included in future votes.

Vice Chair Denham presented the Executive Committee's recommendation of Richmond Vincent as the next Region 2 Council Vice Chair, effective January 1, 2026.

John Capps moved to approve the nomination; Cathy Underwood seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Denham announced that Caley Edgerley and Greg Feldmann have joined the Executive Committee and thank the retiring council members (Eddie Amos, Don Halliwell, Kim Payne, and Debbie Petrine) for their service.



Greg Feldmann and Richmond Vincent entered the meeting at this time and are included in future votes.

III. Financial Report

Alyssa McKenney reviewed the financial reports included in the council packet: FY25/FY26 balance, the FY25 and FY26 planning cap funds, the remaining FY25 Capacity Building balance, and the FY26 Capacity Building balance. Ms. McKenney reviewed the current project drawdown summary.

IV. Program Report

Proposal Updates

Jemma Sabokrouh reviewed Region 2 proposal updates on approved, deferred, and denied projects.

State Board Childcare Discussion

Vice Chair Denham updated the council that at the September 9th GO Virginia State Board meeting, the board discussed the letter submitted for public comment from the Region 2, 3, and 5 Councils requesting a policy change to allow workforce development-based childcare projects to be funded. The request was referred to the Governance & Policy subcommittee for review. This subcommittee meeting has not met in the interim.

2025 Annual Report

Ms. Sabokrouh shared the new FY2025 Region 2 Annual Report.

2026 Calendar

Ms. Sabokrouh shared the dates for the 2026 meetings; time and location to be determined.

Don Halliwell and Amy Sebring joined the meeting during this portion and are included in future votes.

V. Quarterly Project Reporting

Ms. Wagner reviewed active project status, noting one project listed in red and five projects listed in yellow. The six remaining active projects are listed in green.

IV. Project Proposals

Bif Johnson and Debbie Petrino joined the meeting during the first project proposal and are included in future votes.

SBDC Business Preparedness Program NRV

Ms. Sabokrouh reviewed the Helene Business Recovery Initiative project application, submitted by the Greater Roanoke and New River Valley Small Business Development Center, requesting \$71,156 in GOVA funding. Ms. Sabokrouh shared application evaluation feedback collected through the review process and from the Executive Committee. Anthony Graftsky represented the applicant and provided a project overview to the council. Vice Chair Denham opened the floor for questions. Heather Fay (Greater Roanoke & New River Valley SBDC) and Mr. Graftsky addressed the council members' questions.

Mr. Payne motioned to approve the project for state board review; Vince Hatcher seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

BRIC Industry Scale-Up Plan for Regions 2 and 3

Ms. Sabokrouh reviewed the BRIC Industry Scale-Up Plan for Region 2 and 3 statewide competitive planning project application, submitted by the Blue Ridge Innovation Corridor, requesting \$250,000 in GOVA funding.



Ms. Sabokrouh shared application evaluation feedback collected through the review process and from the Executive Committee. Rachel Yost, representing the applicant, provided a project overview to the council. Vice Chair Denham opened the floor for questions. Ms. Yost addressed the council members' questions.

Members who recused themselves: Eddie Amos, Michael Friedlander, Don Halliwell, Debbie Petrine, Cathy Underwood, Richmond Vincent.

Ms. Crawford motioned to approve the project for state board review; Justin Yalung seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Regional Council Committee Meeting Update

Mr. Vincent shared an update from the GOVA Regional Council Committee on October 22, 2025.

Chair Amos motioned that the Region 2 council send a letter to the state board, suggesting the board amend the planning grant cap policy and adopt the 2023 JLARC recommendation. Mr. Feldmann seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Growth & Diversification Plan Update

Dr. Sarah Lyon-Hill reviewed the final 2025 Region 2 Growth & Diversification Plan, including survey results on the GOVA program's performance, available industry sites, and strategic activities for each target cluster.

IX. Council Business

Growth & Diversification Plan

Mr. Vincent motioned to approve the updated 2025 Growth & Diversification plan; Ms. Crawford seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes

The council reviewed minutes from the Region 2 Council Meeting held on July 24, 2025. Vice Chair asked if there were any corrections, additions, or questions regarding the minutes; Ms. Sebring noted a typo under section IX.

Ms. Petrine motioned to approve the minutes contingent upon fixing the typo; Mr. Hatcher seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Dr. Capps motioned to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Underwood seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Vice Chair Denham adjourned the meeting at 2:43 p.m.