



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR
**GROWTH &
OPPORTUNITY**
IN EACH REGION

GO Virginia Region 2

GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2025, 1:00p.m.- 3:00p.m.

**Fralin Biomedical Research Institute, Room G-101A/B, 4 Riverside Circle,
Roanoke, Virginia, 24016.**

Council members in attendance: Eddie Amos (Chair), Whitney Czelusniak, Rich Diddams, Caley Edgerly, Michael Friedlander, Don Halliwill, Bif Johnson, Fourd Kemper, Kim Payne, Debbie Petrine, Amy Sebring, Cathy Underwood, Richmond Vincent, Jacob Wright, Justin Yalung.

Council members attending remotely: John Capps, Janice Crawford, Nanci Hardwick, John Putney.

Council members not in attendance: Doug Agner, Paul Denham, Greg Feldman, Vince Hatcher, Marty Muscatello, Luke Towles, Amy White.

Staff in attendance: John Provo, Scott Tate, Jemma Sabokrouh , Emmalee Wagner, Julia Kell.

Staff attending remotely: Sarah Lyon-Hill, Alyssa McKenney.

Public in attendance: Cody Anderson, Megan Atkinson, Katie Boswell, Emma Carroll, Matt Dunleavy, Elise Spontarelli, Kim Soerenson, Jacob Suhr.

The meeting convened at 1:02p.m. and adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

Financials Review

Alyssa McKenney reviewed the financial reports included in the board packet. The Region 2 Council has a remaining balance of \$1,489,702 in FY25 per-capita funds. Alyssa then reviewed FY 25 Capacity Building balance (\$187,498). McKenney reviewed project details. Three GOVA projects are in fiscal closeout process (Regional Talent Strategy, Workforce & Entrepreneurship in a Regional Makerspace, and Region 2 Talent Pathways Initiative). Two projects have executed contract extensions (Industry 4.0 for the ACE Workforce and Lynchburg Beacon of Hope Career Acceleration Program). Finally, Project VITAL's contract was executed on 1/31/2025.

Project Proposals

Implementation Grants

Region 2 GO TEC Launch in the New River Valley and Roanoke County

Scott Tate provided an overview of the Region 2 GO TEC Launch implementation grant application. Tate shared application evaluation feedback from staff, Region 2 council members and external reviewers. Megan Atkinson, Matt Dunleavy, and Jacob Suhr were in attendance representing the applicants. Atkinson provided a brief overview of the program. Chair Amos opened the floor for questions. Atkinson responded to the council's questions.

Richmond Vincent motioned to move the project forward to the state board, Cathy Underwood seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.



Planning Grants

Prior to reviewing the planning grant applications, Tate reminded the council of the annual planning grant cap of \$250,000. The remaining funds in the FY 2025 planning grant budget would only cover one approved planning grant. The other planning grants could be preapproved by the council, but the funds would draw from FY 2026 planning grant funds.

New River Valley Regional Commission, Site Advancement Strategy

Tate provided an overview of the New River Valley Regional Commission, Site Advancement Strategy planning grant project application. Tate shared application evaluation feedback from staff, Region 2 Council members and external reviewers. Katie Boswell, Emma Carroll, and Leo Priddy were in attendance representing the applicants. Boswell gave a brief overview of the project. Chair Amos opened the floor for questions. Boswell and Priddy responded to the council's questions.

Vector Space, Robotics Facility Planning, Lynchburg Region

Tate provided an overview of the Vector Space, Robotics Facility Planning, Lynchburg Region planning grant application. Tate shared application evaluation feedback from staff, Region 2 Council members and external reviewers. Elise Spontarelli was in attendance representing Vector Space and gave a brief overview of the project. Chair Amos opened the floor for questions. Spontarelli responded to the council's questions.

United Way of Central Virginia, Childcare & Workforce Development, Lynchburg Region

Tate provided an overview of the United Way of Central Virginia, Childcare & Workforce Development, Lynchburg Region planning grant application. Tate shared application evaluation feedback from staff, Region 2 Council members and external reviewers. Kim Soerenon was in attendance representing the applicant and gave a brief overview of the project. Chair Amos opened the floor for questions. Soerenon responded to the council's questions.

Council Approval

Chairman Amos shared the executive committee's recommendation of which order to move these projects forward to the state board and reminded Region 2 Council that this order was just a recommendation. Chairman Amos opened the floor to comments and discussion.

The council deliberated on the best course of action, taking into account the urgency of funding for the applicants, the strength of the application, and alignment with the GOVA program.

Don Halliwill motioned to move the New River Valley Regional Commission, Site Advancement Strategy planning project forward to the state board in FY 2025; John Putney seconded. Bif Johnson abstained from voting due to conflict of interest. All others were in favor and none opposed.

Kimball Payne motioned to forward both United Way of Central Virginia, Childcare & Workforce Development, Lynchburg Region and Vector Space, Robotics Facility Planning, Lynchburg Region to the state board under FY 2026



funding. Recommended amendment to raise the GOVA funding request for the United Way of Central Virginia, Childcare & Workforce Development to \$101,000 to ensure the state board reviews the planning grant.

Yalung countermotioned that the council should vote on the final two planning projects individually. Payne withdrew the original motion.

Payne motioned to forward the United Way of Central Virginia, Childcare & Workforce Development, Lynchburg Region to the state board for FY 2026, with the amendment to raise the GOVA funding request to \$101,000 to ensure the state board reviews the planning grant. The chairman will submit a letter on behalf of the Region 2 Council and present the letter at the state board meeting when the application is reviewed. Richmond seconded. Chairman Amos called for a roll call vote:

Eddie Amos – Aye	Don Halliwill – Aye	Amy Sebring – Aye	<i>Remote Members</i>
Whitney Czelusniak- Aye	Bif Johnson – Aye	Cathy Underwood – Aye	John Capps – Aye
Rich Diddams – No	Fourd Kemper – Aye	Richmond Vincent – Aye	Janice Crawford - Aye
Caley Edgerly – Aye	Kimball Payne – Aye	Jacob Wright – No	Nanci Hardwick – Aye
Michael Friedlander – Aye	Debbie Petrine – Aye	Justin Yalung – No	John Putney – No

15 members were in favor; 4 members opposed. The motion moved forward.

Yalung motioned to move the Vector Space, Robotics Facility Planning, Lynchburg Region project forward to the state board, R. Vincent seconded. Putney abstained from voting due to conflict of interest. All others were in favor and none opposed.

Council Business

Minutes

Chairman Amos asked to move forward to council business for the sake of time. The council reviewed minutes from the Region 2 Council Meeting held on January 29, 2025. Chairman Amos asked if there were any corrections, additions, or questions regarding the minutes; there were none.

Yalung motioned to approve the minutes; R. Vincent seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Administrative Updates

Quarterly Project Reporting

Jemma Sabokrouh reviewed active project status, noting there is one current project listed in red, meaning they did not meet quarterly milestones, and staff is meeting with the sub-grantee. Due to unforeseen financial circumstances of the building owner, the project has restructured aspects of space and equipment ownership. This has taken priority or stalled work for Q1 2025. The subgrantee is committed to continue with the project and staff are in close communication with the subgrantee.

Three current projects are listed in yellow, meaning they did not meet one or more Quarter 1 2025 milestones and staff is monitoring. ACE workforce received a no-cost extension through December 31st, 2025, but is still behind on milestones and students trained metric. The Bedford Metal Workforce Training Center is behind on Quarter 1 2025 milestones, but they plan to complete them next quarter. This project received a no-cost extension through



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June 30th, 2025. The Educating Engineers in the region 2 workforce is also behind on Quarter 1 milestone. GOVA Region 2 staff will set up meeting with all these projects to check-in and support where possible. Lastly, the CS/root project ended March 30th, 2025. This project did not complete its last quarter milestones. Staff will discuss final deliverables and reporting.

All other active projects are listed in green, meaning they have met quarterly milestones and are on track with their current deliverables.

Speakers Bureau

Emmalee Wagner thanked council members who participated in the Speakers Bureaus.

2025 Growth & Diversification Plan

Sarah Lyon-Hill reviewed the scheduled industry workgroup roundtables. Lyon-Hill requested council member participation in these sessions or share with industry representative if unable to attend.

An additional industry session will be held at Mountain Gateway Community College on June 11th, 2025. Chairman Amos shared that an upcoming listening session will be hosted at CVCC on May 8th, 2025.

Lyon-Hill also emphasized the 2025 GOVA Impact Survey that will be an important part of the final plan.

Special Updates

Virginia Chamber Statewide AI Landscape Assessment

John Provo highlighted the upcoming Virginia Chamber of Commerce AI events. Two events will be held in Region 2: in Roanoke on April 30, 2025, and in Lynchburg on May 7, 2025. Council members are encouraged to attend if possible. The consultant for the AI Statewide Landscape Assessment (Region 2 is a part of) will be attending a few of these meetings as well.

Board Policy #10 Helene Business Recovery Initiative

John Provo reviewed the GOVA state board policy # 10. Eligible communities include all Region 2 localities in the New River Valley, except for Floyd County. Region 2 executive committee would vote on projects that come forward on behalf of the full body. June 30th is the deadline to submit for funding under Board policy #10.

Talent Pathways Initiative

Printed versions of the Region 2 Talent Pathways Initiative report is now available and the report is available on the GOVA Region 2 website.

[https://cece.vt.edu/content/dam/cece_vt_edu/govirginia_documentation/2024%20TPI%20Report%20\(digital-accessible\).pdf](https://cece.vt.edu/content/dam/cece_vt_edu/govirginia_documentation/2024%20TPI%20Report%20(digital-accessible).pdf)

The meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.