



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

GO Virginia Region 2

GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2024, 1:00p.m.- 3:00p.m.

Fralin Biomedical Research Institute, Room G-102A, 4 Riverside Circle, Roanoke, Virginia, 24016.

Council members in attendance: Michelle Austin, Nathaniel Bishop, Whitney Czelusniak, Greg Feldmann, Michael Friedlander, Don Halliwill, Vince Hatcher, Pat Huber, Fourd Kemper, Marty Muscatello, Kim Payne, Debbie Petrine, John Putney, Ray Smoot, Luke Towles, Cathy Underwood, Richmond Vincent, Jacob Wright, Justin Yalung.

Council members attending remotely: Kenneth Craig, Janice Crawford, Amy Sebring.

Council members not in attendance: Eddie Amos (Chair), John Capps, Beverley Dalton (Vice-chair), Paul Denham, Mike Hamlar, Bif Johnson, Marty Muscatello.

Staff in attendance: John Provo, Scott Tate, Quina Weber-Shirk, Rachel Jones, Julia Kell, Alyssa McKenney, Emmalee Wagner.

Public in attendance: Peter Sheldon, Gary Dop, Lane Guilliams, Jason Vaughn, Elizabeth Dorsett, Heather Lindby, Jackie Lackey, Jess Edwards, Aileen Helsel, Kristy Ojeda, Erin Burcham, Mark Monday, Marc Nelson, Brandy Salman.

The meeting convened at 1:01p.m. and adjourned at 3:05p.m.

Financials Review

Alyssa McKenney reviewed the financial reports included in the board packet. Council has a remaining balance of \$1,163,024 in per-capita funds. If the three proposals before council is approved, there will be a remaining balance of \$110,641.

Council Business

Council Membership

Ray Smoot recommended the reappointment of the following council members to serve an additional three-year term: Paul Denham and Fourd Kemper. Michelle Austin has declined an invitation to serve an additional term.

Greg Feldmann motioned for the reappointment of Paul Denham and Fourd Kemper, and Richmond Vincent seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Region 2 MOU and Budget Review



Quina Weber-Shirk reviewed the proposed Region 2 MOU and budget which would allow Virginia Tech's Center for Economic and Community Engagement to remain the support organization for GO Virginia Region 2 through the next two years.

Don Halliwill motioned to approve the MOU and budget. Greg Feldmann seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Project Pipeline and Tableau Review

Quina Weber-Shirk reviewed the project pipeline; listing 5 possible proposals that may come before council. Weber-Shirk then unveiled the Region 2 online tableau dashboard which is an interactive web-based portal representing real time project data regarding outcomes/impact of active and closed projects existing in the region.

Project Proposals

Educating Engineers for the Region 2 Workforce

Scott Tate offered a brief overview of the new project proposal, "*Educating Engineers for the Region 2 Workforce*", submitted by Randolph College. Peter Sheldon, Gary Dop, and Lane Guilliams, Randolph College, shared project deliverables and answered questions from the council. Huber requested clarification on how an undergraduate degree in mechatronics goes beyond an engineering technology degree. Sheldon responded stating Randolph College has courses specializing in mechatronics and robotics certifications that differ from skills taught in other engineering degrees. Feldmann inquired on the starting salary of a graduate coming from this program. Sheldon responded stating the starting salary is around \$65,000. Feldmann inquired on the life expectancy of the lab equipment. Sheldon and Dop stated they believe the equipment will need to be updated/replaced every 5-10 years. Friedlander inquired on the existence of traditional aspects of computer science courses such as coding ect, to be integrated in the proposed mechatronics courses to be taught. Sheldon responded that those skills will be integrated into their course materials.

Randolph College's request totaled \$367,200 in Region 2 per-capita funds, with a total match of \$692,584.

Michelle Austin motioned to approve this proposal, and Vince Hatcher seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Citizens Broadband Expansion

Scott Tate offered a brief overview of the new project proposal, "*Citizens Broadband Expansion*", submitted by Citizens Telephone Cooperative. Jason Vaughn, Citizens Telephone Cooperative, shared project deliverables and answered questions from the council. Smoot inquired on the matching funds committed by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), noting action by the body of GO Virginia Region 2 would be conditional on favorable action by the ARC in terms of providing the required match. Vaughn responded stating potentially, if the ARC does not grant the matching funds, Citizens would seek



an alternate funding source. Sebring inquired on the CRC's involvement. Jeff Crowder, Virginia Tech Division of IT, stated Brett Malone (president of VT CRC) did provide a letter of support for the project.

Citizens Telephone Cooperative's request totaled \$378,000 in Region 2 per-capita funds, with a total match of \$350,000.

Greg Feldmann motioned to approve this proposal, and John Putney seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Project Vital

Scott Tate offered a brief overview of the new project proposal, "*Project Vital*", submitted by VERGE. Erin Burcham, VERGE, shared project deliverables and answered questions from the council. Austin inquired on the state process should one region not receive approval from their regional council. Sara Dunnigan, Department of Housing and Community Development, stated if one of the three involved regional councils do not approve this proposal then the applicants would need to return to their individual councils to request funding following implementation of suggested improvements from state guidance. Vincent inquired on the estimated return on investment of the proposal. Burcham stated the 3-year ROI estimate is the creation of 406 jobs, and the 5-year ROI estimate is the creation of 558 jobs within the region.

VERGE's request totaled \$4,932,028 in statewide competitive funds, with a total match of \$2,516,443.

Council members recusing from the vote include Justin Yalung, Pat Huber, Michael Friedlander, Don Halliwill, Nathaniel Bishop.

Fourd Kemper motioned to approve this proposal, and John Putney seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Special Updates

Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

Sara Dunnigan, DHCD, introduced the new GO Virginia Program Manager, Shara Gibson. Dunnigan continued sharing program updates from the state level following the review of the JLARC report and recommendations. Of the 16 recommendations listed in the report, 2 of them are policy related. DHCD has implemented two committees at the state level: a committee who monitors governance of the board, and a committee dedicated to program performance and evaluation. These committees will review and address the JLARC recommendations for improvement. Two revised policies have been implemented: expanded access to statewide competitive funds by allowing access to these funds by a single region. The second policy is expected to be implemented at the June state board meeting, which would allow access to funds used for proposals benefitting the healthcare industry. Proposals related to healthcare will be considered at the state level if a region can provide evidence that lack of healthcare services is limiting their ability to grow one or more of their traded industry sectors, then GO Virginia



funds can be used to increase capacity to increase the pool of qualified workers to support the healthcare industry.

Proposal Updates

Quina Weber-Shirk shared updates for the applications who received Region 2 Council approval at their last meeting in January: these proposals were not voted on at the state board meeting in March due to lack of quorum at the state level. They will now be considered at the state board meeting in June. Rachel Jones then shared updates regarding the previously approved proposal, ACA Classical & CTE Institute, stating the project team has submitted the following updates to their original proposal: additional focus on the fabrication space, with higher electrification needs due to additional equipment being sought, and a reduction in the number of welding booths from 22 to 10 as students will alternate between welding and fabrication equipment.

TPI Update

Emmalee Wagner shared quarter 1 milestones met by the Region 2 Talent Pathways Initiative, as well as upcoming quarter 2 goals.

Quarterly Project Reporting

Rachel Jones reviewed active project status, noting there are six current projects listed in yellow, meaning they did not meet one or more quarter 1 milestones and staff is monitoring. Region 2 Talent Pathways Initiative did not meet Q1 milestones due to a delay in a regional gap analysis. Center for Entrepreneurship due to a continued delay in the opening of their physical space at the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance. Regional Talent Strategy Implementation due to delays in the finalization of a web-based talent portal. Bedford Metal Workforce Retention Center due to continued delays closing on the Winoah property. Project has received a no-cost extension through June 30, 2025. Lynchburg Career Accelerator due to delays in the establishment of a core training program for career acceleration coaches, as well as the creation of a final brand and communications plan. Industry 4.0 for the Automated- Connected-Electrified (ACE) Workforce as the project has fallen behind in metrics reporting for students trained. All other active projects are listed in green, meaning they have met quarterly milestones and are on track with their current deliverables.

Minutes

Council reviewed minutes from the Region 2 Council Meeting held on January 25, 2024. Smoot asked if there were any corrections, additions, or questions regarding the minutes; there were none.

Pat Huber motioned to approve the minutes, with John Putney seconding. All were in favor and none opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:05p.m.