



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

GO Virginia Region 2

GO Virginia Region 2 Celebration Meeting Minutes

January 22, 2020, Virginia Western Community College STEM Building, 3094 Colonial Ave SW, Roanoke, VA 24015

Council Members in Attendance: Eddie Amos, Ab Boxley, Marla Akridge, John Capps, Sandy Davis, John Dooley, Mike Hamlar, Don Halliwill, Floyd Merryman, Kimball Payne, Ray Smoot

Staff in Attendance: John Provo, Scott Tate, Elli Travis, Rachel Jones, Julia Kell, Omar Faison, Neda Moayerian, Ashley Posthumus

Additional Attendees: James Cabler (Onward NRV), Rich Diddams (Liberty University/CERE), Marty Holliday (New River/ Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board), Jamie Glass (Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance), Gail Johnson (AHEDC), Deborah Flippo (Draper Aden Associates), Sam English (VWCC Board), Jonathan Whitt (Liberty University), Mary Anne Holbrook (United Way of SWVA), Melinda Leland (United Way of SWVA), Travis Staton (United Way of SWVA), Jenna Lazenby (Hylaine), Laurence Hammack (The Roanoke Times), Jill Loope (Roanoke County), Susan Short (Virginia Tech), Amanda Forrester (Roanoke SBDC), Sheri Winesett (The Innovation Mill), John Hull (WVRIFA), Wayne Strickland (Roanoke-Alleghany Regional Commission), Gene Marrano (WFIR News Room), Katie Conner (VA Tourism), Massi Marshall, Nichole Hair (Town of Pulaski), Jerry Dunnavant (Brown Edwards), Cheryl Tucker (SBDC), Annette Patterson (The Advancement Foundation), Billy Gammel (DHCD), Ken McFadyen (Botetourt County), Gary Larowe (Botetourt County), John Phillips (RBTC), Kevin Byrd (New River Valley Regional Commission), Katherin Elam (JA SWVA), Rolando Holmes (The Foundry), Morgan Romeo (WVWDB), Erin Burcham (RRP), Meredith Hundley (Valleys Innovation Council), Beth Doughty (RRP), Karen Messer-Bourgoin (Hollins University), Sam Steidle (VWCC)

The meeting convened at 10:07 AM and adjourned at 10:23 AM.

Welcome

Robert Sandel, President of Virginia Western Community College (VWCC), began the event by welcoming everyone to the new VWCC STEM building. Dr. Sandel stated that economic development is the key for Virginia's Region 2 and it is important for the New River Valley and the Roanoke Valley to come together as a team. He stated that GO Virginia is a large reason for the synergy throughout Region 2.

GO Virginia Overview

Chairman Raymond Smoot thanked Dr. Sandel and his teammates for his hospitality. Chairman Smoot then introduced the GO Virginia program. GO Virginia was formed three years ago as a state-wide program with the goal of creating higher-paying jobs. Chairman Smoot remarked on how GOVA Region 2 has come together to work on matters of economic development and workforce capacity. He said the



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GOVA Region 2 council has a spirit of wanting to think regionally and advance programs across the region. Chairman Smoot spoke on the importance of focusing efforts on connecting with middle school and high school students in order to have a trained and capable workforce. Chairman Smoot then recognized and thanked present members of the GOVA Region 2 Council, present local government officials, and present GOVA Region 2 grantees. As GOVA Region 2 projects are wrapping up, Chairman Smoot said that it would be very informative to hear from the grantees and their project experiences. He thanked B2C Enterprises for creating video and case studies that share the work of GOVA Region 2 grantees and can be viewed at GOVA Region 2's new website. Following Chairman Smoot's speech, the audience viewed the GOVA Region 2 Sizzle Video, where they were able to learn more about GOVA Region 2 grantees and the projects they have developed.

Call to Action

Vice Chairman Ab Boxley stated that GO Virginia currently has \$1.4 million available in funding and accepts applications on a rolling basis. GO Virginia is looking for projects that will promote technology, talent development, entrepreneurship, or site development. Vice Chairman Boxley invited the audience to view the videos on the GOVA Region 2 website at <https://econdev.vt.edu/GOVAR2.html> and learn more about the program by speaking to GO Virginia staff as well as people involved with the GO Virginia process. Vice Chairman Boxley thanked the audience for attending the event and encouraged them to spread the word about the GO Virginia program.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 AM.



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