GO Virginia Region 2 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

October 15, 2025, 2:00 - 4:00p.m.
Roanoke Higher Education Center
108 N Jefferson St, Room 701A
Roanoke, VA 24016

Executive Committee members in attendance: Eddie Amos (Chair), Paul Denham (Vice Chair), Whitney Czelusniak, Richmond Vincent, Justin Yalung.
Staff in attendance: Alyssa McKenney, Sarah Lyon-Hill, John Provo, Barb Reibsamen, Jemma Sabokrouh, Emmalee Wagner.
Council members in attendance: Greg Feldmann, Nick Kessler, Tony Seupaul.
Public attendance: Erin Burcham.
Public virtual attendance: Becky Chipman, Heather Fay, Anthony Grafsky, Ashley Posthumus, Elise Spontarelli, Robert Turner, Rachel Yost.
The meeting convened at 2:00 p.m. and adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

I. Opening
Staff, council members, and attendees introduced themselves.

II. Staff Report
Ms. Jemma Sabokrouh reviewed Region 2 proposal updates, sharing notes on approved, denied, and deferred projects.
Ms. Sabokrouh shared that during the GOVA State Board meeting, although the United Way of Central Virginia Childcare and Workforce Development project was denied, the board committed to discussing a childcare policy during the next Governance and Policy subcommittee meeting.

III. Financials Review
Ms. Alyssa McKenney reviewed the financial reports included in the committee packet. Council has a remaining balance of $467,241 in FY25 per-capita funds, along with $1,506,951 in FY26 per-capita funds, leaving a remaining FY25/FY26 per-capita balance of $1,874,193.
Ms. McKenney reviewed the FY26 planning cap funds, with a remaining balance of $250,000.
Ms. McKenney then reviewed Capacity Building balances; the FY25 fund has been drawn down, and the program will draw from FY26 funds.
Ms. McKenney reviewed project status'; Bedford Metal Workforce Training Center has completed closeout, GOTEC Launch in the New River Calley and Roanoke County contract is executed, New River Valley Regional Commission Site Advancement Strategy and Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance Regional Talent Portal contracts are processing.

IV. Quarterly Project Reporting
Ms. Wagner reviewed active project status, noting two current projects listed are red.
Four active projects are listed in yellow, meaning they did not meet one or more Quarter 3, 2025 milestones, but there is a plan to complete all contracted outcomes and products by the contract end date. The six remaining active projects are listed in green, meaning they have met quarterly milestones and are on track with their current deliverables.

V. Project VITAL Update

Ms. Erin Burcham provided an update on the activities and accomplishments of Project VITAL in Region 2 through Quarter 3. Dr. Robert Turner, new Director of Usability for Human Factors Lab at Carilion Clinic, reviewed the previously delayed project milestones that are now underway since his onboarding.

VI. Project Proposals

SBDC Business Preparedness Program NRV

Ms. Sabokrouh reviewed the Helene Business Recovery Initiative implementation project application, submitted by Roanoke New River Valley SBDC, requesting $71,156 in GOVA funding. Ms. Sabokrouh shared application evaluation feedback from staff, a Region 2 council member, and external reviewers. Chair Amos opened the floor for questions. Ms. Heather Fay and Mr. Anthony Grafsky represented Roanoke New River Valley SBDC and responded to the committee's questions.
Mr. Justin Yalung motioned to move this project forward for the council's review. Mr. Paul Denham seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Blue Ridge Innovation Corridor (BRIC) Industry Scale-Up Plan for Regions 2 & 3

Prior to discussion of Blue Ridge Innovation Corridor application agenda item, Chair Amos announced a conflict of interest and recused himself from participating in the item. Vice Chair Denham assumed the role of presiding chair for the duration of the discussion and any related action on this item.
Mr. Richmond Vincent similarly announced a conflict of interest and recused himself from participating in this item.
Ms. Sabokrouh reviewed the statewide competitive planning project application, submitted by BRIC, requesting $250,000 in GOVA funding. Ms. Sabokrouh shared application evaluation feedback from staff, a Region 2 council member, and external reviewers. Mr. Denham opened the floor for questions. Ms. Rachel Yost represented BRIC and responded to the committee's questions.
Mr. Yalung motioned to move this project forward for the council's review, contingent upon the applicant having all necessary support documents. Ms. Whitney Czelusniak seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Vector Space Robotics Program Planning in Lynchburg

Ms. Sabokrouh reviewed the planning project application, submitted by Vector Space, requesting $97,200 in GOVA funding. Ms. Sabokrouh shared how the applicant revised their application materials based on DHCD feedback. Chair Amos opened the floor for questions. Ms. Elise Spontarelli represented Vector Space. Since the full council already approved the application, and no substantive changes to outcomes were made in the revision process, the executive committee was asked to approve the application on behalf of the full council.
Mr. Vincent motioned to approve this project on behalf of the council. Mr. Denham seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Project Pipeline

Ms. Sabokrouh reviewed the projects in the pipeline, highlighting strategy areas and interested applicants.

VIII. Regional Council Committee Meeting Update

Mr. Vincent shared the topic of discussion for the next Regional Council Committee meeting on October 22, 2025.

IX. *Program Updates & Business*

State of the Region Event

Chair Amos shared the agenda for the annual Region 2 GOVA event on October 29th.

2026 Calendar

Ms. Sabokrouh shared the draft 2026 meeting calendar.

Q3 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

The committee reviewed minutes from the Region 2 Executive Committee Meeting held on July 16, 2025. Chair Amos asked if there were any corrections, additions, or questions regarding the minutes; there were none.
Mr. Denham motioned to approve the minutes; Mr. Vincent seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

FY 2025 Annual Report

Ms. Sabokrouh shared that the FY 2025 Annual Report is finalized on the regional website.

X. 2025 Growth & Diversification Plan Presentation

Dr. Sarah Lyon-Hill reviewed the goals and outcomes of the Region 2 Growth & Diversification Plan 2025 update.

XI. Council Membership

Executive Committee and Leadership

Chair Amos term ends in January 2026. He motioned to nominate Mr. Denham as the next Region 2 Council Chair to the full council for approval. Mr. Yalung seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
Mr. Denham motioned to nominate Mr. Vincent as the next Region 2 Vice Chair to the full council for approval. Ms. Czelusnizak seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
Mr. Denham motioned to nominate council members Caley Edgerly and Greg Feldmann to the Executive Committee. Chair Amos seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Nominations of New Members

Mr. Denham presented James Richards for nomination as a council member for the full council's approval. Ms. Czelusnizak moved the nomination; Mr. Vincent seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
Chair Amos presented the nominations of Mr. Daniel DiMarco, Dr. Frank Shushock, and Mr. Paul Nester to the full council for approval as new members. Mr. Vincent seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.