



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

## GO Virginia Region 2

### GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting Minutes

**February 4, 2020, Carilion Clinic 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Education Conference Room, 1 Riverside Circle, Roanoke, Virginia 24016.**

Council members in attendance: Marla Akridge, Eddie Amos, Amy Ankrum, Nathaniel Bishop, John Capps, Kenneth Craig, Beverly Dalton, Sandy Davis, Watt Foster, William Fralin, Michael Friedlander, Don Halliwill, Brian Hemphill, Victor Iannello, Floyd Merryman, Marty Muscatello, Kim Payne, Ray Smoot.

Council members not in attendance: Ab Boxley, John Dooley, Mike Hamlar, Terry Jamerson, Debbie Petrine, John Putney.

Staff in attendance: John Provo, Elli Travis, Rachel Jones, Julia Kell.

Staff participating remotely: Scott Tate.

Public in attendance: Jerry Dunnavant (Brown Edwards), Wayne Strickland (Roanoke Alleghany Regional Commission), Carole Tarrant (Virginia Western Community College), Sheri Winesett (The Advancement Foundation), Annette Patterson (The Advancement Foundation), Debbie Custer (The Advancement Foundation), Ashlyn Shrewsbury (Montgomery County), Mary Miller (RAMP) Laurence Hammack (The Roanoke Times), Deborah Flippo (Draper Aden), Megan Lucas (Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance).

The meeting convened at 3:02pm and adjourned at 4:54pm.

Chairman Smoot called the meeting to order with introductions of the three new council members, Amy Ankrum, Eddie Amos, and Kimball Payne.

Dr. Provo began by providing a brief financial report. The council has allocated \$2.9 million thus far with a remaining balance of \$1.5 million for the fiscal year. Staff was requested to provide a financial report during upcoming GO Virginia meetings.

### Project Review- Proposals

#### *Classrooms to Careers*

Dr. Provo began with an update and overview of the proposal “Classrooms to Careers” led by Mark Husband with Montgomery County Public Schools in partnership with Giles and Floyd County Schools.



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The proposal was approved for \$225,000 in GO Virginia funding during the October 24, 2019 council meeting. The project supports IT/cyber internships. Following advice by state program staff, the applicant expanded engagement opportunities for private sector partners. The proposal will move forward for state board review this quarter.

### ***Increasing the Birth Rates of New and High Growth Companies***

Dr. Provo provided an overview of a proposal led by the Advancement Foundation “Increasing the Birth Rates of New and High Growth Companies.” The first phase of this project was approved in Spring 2019 for one year of funding. The Council asked the applicant to return with results from that first year for a proposed second year of funding, which is the standard length of GO Virginia per capita projects.

Annette Patterson, President of the Advancement Foundation, spoke to the Council documenting their success in meeting and exceeding goals for serving entrepreneurs. Mr. Muscatello asked if Ms. Patterson saw a positive participant pipeline in the new year. She stated that she did, highlighting the pace of local referrals and strengthening of other ecosystem connections.

The Advancement Foundation request totaled \$180,000 of GO Virginia Region 2 funds. Mr. Iannello motioned to approve and Mr. Halliwill seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

### ***Virginia Accelerator Network***

Dr. Provo gave an overview of the new project proposal *Virginia Accelerator Network* submitted by Lighthouse Labs in partnership with RAMP. This \$3m project will draw on the state competitive fund, which requires partnerships between multiple GO Virginia regions. The proposal was approved by Region 4 who would serve as the administrative lead for project implementation.

Carole Tarrant from Virginia Western Community College and Mary Miller from RAMP explained benefits for Region 2 from the partnership, including support for university engagement. Mr. Iannello expressed his understanding of state support for receipt of this project.

Mr. Fralin moved to approve the project, and Mr. Merryman seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

### **Project Metrics Reporting**

Elli Travis reviewed the quarterly report on all existing grantees. Most are on time or ahead of schedule. Staff reported they are continuing to monitor the Region 2 Talent Collaborative project because of some delays with billing of expenses. Additional monitoring will continue to take place, with reports back to council at future meetings.

### **VEDP Sites Study/ New State Broadband Policy**



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Dr. Provo introduced to new state board policies on sites and broadband. These are intended to guide the council on the types of projects that would be more likely to find support from the state board.

The Council organized a Broadband task force to address funding requests. Mr. Fralin highlighted the challenge of defining the application of the term “middle mile infrastructure” that is the recommended focus of state policy. Mr. Fralin and Ms. Akridge recommended engaging providers in the discussions of the proposed task force. Chairman Smoot then called for members of the council who would be interested in serving on the Broadband task force and those members who indicated interest are as follows: Ms. Marla Akridge, Mr. William Fralin, Mr. Eddie Amos, and Mr. Victor Iannello.

Dr. Provo shared that the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) has asked GO Virginia regions assist in facilitating a rollout of a statewide study referenced in the new state policy. A meeting of Region 2 stakeholders with VEDP is scheduled for April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020. The meeting will include a public presentation, high level version of findings, and opportunities for consultations. Further details will be shared as available.

### Council Business

Chairman Smoot reminded the Council of last year’s speaker bureau activity. He requested volunteers for a new round of outreach to local governments in support of the program and potential match funding commitments. Staff will be in contact with council members to schedule dates/times available for outreach.

Chairman Smoot reminded the Council there are currently two vacancies in the Lynchburg region, one vacancy in the New River Valley, and two vacancies in the Roanoke Valley/Alleghany Highlands region. The Chairman requested Council members from those regions to bring forward a person to fill those vacancies.

The Council reviewed minutes from the Council meeting held on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the Executive Committee meeting held on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, and the GO Virginia Celebrate Success event held on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020. Chairman Smoot asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes, there were none. Mr. Merryman motioned to approve the minutes, with Ms. Davis seconding. All were in favor and none opposed.

Dr. Provo then led the council through the GO Virginia Celebrate Success event highlights, including the presentation of educational videos explaining the program. Dr. Provo also reminded the Council that state workgroup meetings to recommend policy changes to the state board are underway. Two final meetings will be held on February 7<sup>th</sup>, with the topic of discussion being program focused/traded sectors and high wage jobs, and February 21<sup>st</sup>, with the topic of discussion being project evaluation/return on investment.



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