



GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting Minutes

May 5, 2022, 3:00p.m.- 5:00p.m,

Carilion Children’s Tanglewood Center, Mill Mountain Conference Room, 4348 Electric Road, Roanoke, Virginia, 24018.

Council members in attendance: Michelle Austin, John Capps, Janice Crawford, Beverley Dalton, Paul Denham, John Dooley, Don Halliwill, Pat Huber, Fourd Kemper, Floyd Merryman, Kim Payne, Debbie Petrine, Ray Smoot (Chair), Luke Towles, Justin Yalung.

Council members attending remotely: Sandy Davis, Nathaniel Bishop, Vince Hatcher, Michael Friedlander, John Putney.

Council members not in attendance: Eddie Amos, Kenneth Craig, Mike Hamlar, Victor Iannello, Marty Muscatello.

Staff in attendance: Sara Dunnigan, John Provo, Scott Tate, Elli Travis, Quina Weber-Shirk, Alyssa McKenney, Rachel Jones, Julia Kell.

Public in attendance: Thatcher Stanley, Beth Simms, Marjette Upshur, Megan Lucas, Mary Zirkle.

The meeting convened at 3:07p.m. and adjourned at 5:01p.m.

Financials Review

John Provo led the council through the review of Region 2 allocations. Council has a remaining balance of \$1,002,882.65 in per-capita funds. Alyssa McKenney then reviewed drawdown status of all active Region 2 projects per fiscal year.

Intentional Project Development Discussion

Project Pipeline Review

Scott Tate provided an overview of the current Region 2 project pipeline, stating the Vector Space proposal previously approved by the regional council has been deferred at the state level and will be reviewed by the state board at its next meeting following guidance from state staff. A proposal led by Virginia Tech computer science faculty is expected to come before the council, this proposal will focus on a pre-launch entrepreneurship tech assistance in areas such as cybersecurity, blockchain, cloud, quantum computing, AI, and systems design. Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, GenEdge, and additional partners will submit a statewide application related to the continued development of a coalition around the transportation and logistics sector in southwest and southern Virginia. Additional discussions held include a statewide proposal, expansion of GOTECH, that would include Franklin County in Region 2, a proposal from the Town of Bedford regarding a partnership program, a machining training



center, with Central Virginia Community College, and a targeted worker training program from VA Career Works, central region.

Growth and Diversification Plan Messages

John Provo and Quina Weber-Shirk began by presenting important information from the updated Region 2 Growth and Diversification Plan (2021). This plan is a roadmap for utilizing GO Virginia funding for regional projects focused on industries with high growth potential, featuring in-demand occupations with higher wages. John Provo continued by sharing key takeaways from the 2021 updates, highlighting the 4 target industry clusters of Transportation and Autonomy, Life Sciences and Healthcare, Materials and Machinery Manufacturing, and IT and Emerging Tech. With projected data (2021-2026) of 32 high-wage occupations and 3,716 regional annual job openings, these 4 interrelated clusters offer the greatest potential for sustainable, scalable, future growth in the region. Quina Weber-Shirk continued by sharing core strategies related to each cluster and how this information can be useful to prospective applicants. John Provo then discussed previous council activities such as a speaker's bureau, which played an essential role in awareness of the program and encouraged local government participation. The state board recently voted to extend the relaxed match policy of a \$1:2 match, with local match waived, however, more than one locality must be active participants.

Special Updates

Cluster Conversations: Internships (Regional Internship Collaborative)

Quina Weber-Shirk provided the committee with an overview of the Regional Internship Collaborative, stating the driving priority of the initiative is to give students deep roots in our business community prior to graduation so they choose to live and work here. The Regional Internship Collaborative is funded by the State Council of Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV). SCHEV funded the Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership, which is a statewide initiative looking to increase the readiness of both employers and students around internships and work-based learning. The Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership is funding internship initiatives in each GO Virginia region. Chairman Smoot inquired if the internships are paid. Quina responded the program is emphasizing paid internships as the quality of the experience tends to be higher for both the employer and intern. Beverley Dalton stated paid internships also encourage employers to ensure they are receiving the quality of work that they are paying for, as well as potential future talent. Quina Weber-Shirk continued by stating the framework is about recognizing that there are strong programs and initiatives around internships- workforce development and talent development already exist in Region 2, SCHEV aims to build a network to better share information across these groups so there are no duplications. The Regional Internship Collaborative will link and leverage existing efforts and scale these efforts across our region through increased awareness and access to work-based learning experiences, improve connections and internship placements, and increase the placement or retention of students in full-time jobs. Quina Weber-Shirk then shared highlights of the recently held virtual employer roundtable discussions in the focused clusters of IT and Emerging Tech and Materials and Machinery Manufacturing. Key takeaways from these conversations include the real importance of growing talent through creating clear career pathways and providing



multiple entry points for perspective employees comprising of high school students, college students, and career-changers.

Project Evaluation Highlight: Developing a Destination for Talent

Catherine Amelink, Project Manager, Developing a Destination for Talent, presented project outcomes as the grant entered closeout phase. During the 2-year grant timeline, the Developing a Destination for Talent program provided 217 internships, connecting Virginia Tech students with 52 local employers who had not previously engaged with the university. In addition to the 217 internships facilitated through GO Virginia funds, an additional 102 interns were funded exclusively by employers. Over the course of the project, interns had the opportunity to apply for 150 new jobs. Eight of the employers hired interns into full-time positions. The Developing a Destination for Talent program model was used to secure additional funding through State Council for Higher Education and Strada Education Network to further sustain the program's efforts.

Statewide Program Update

Sara Dunnigan, Deputy Director, GO Virginia and Economic Development, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, shared state program updates. Since inception, the program has reached 209 investments, with around \$88M in state funds deployed, and \$94M contributed in matching funds from participating localities. The successful 2-day GO Virginia State Board Retreat was held in April, inviting members of the regional councils and support staff to engage with members of the state board. Program achievements were celebrated. Reaching a new level of maturity, 2021 was the first year in which the state program has obligated its full \$31M appropriation. Following roundtable discussions, an economist's presentation reviewed matters such as the state's slow job growth, changes in Northern Virginia, and the effects of the Federal Reserves' increasing federal funds target rate. The Talent Pathways Initiative was highlighted through discussion on the importance of talent attraction, development, and retention. The Governor's proposed budget plan includes an amendment that would allocate an additional \$75M specifically for talent development within the GO Virginia program. The proposed senate budget would be more conservative with the program receiving baseline funding. The third option, the proposed house budget would allocate a baseline funding of \$31M, with \$9M infusion for the Talent Pathways Initiative, however, also includes a recapture provision of \$27.5M of unobligated funds balances from fiscal years 19, 20, and 21. Once the state budget is approved, more information will be circulated from state staff.

Council Business

Quarterly Project Reporting

Elli Travis reviewed quarter 1 project progress reporting, noting one project is listed in red, ELITE Internship Program, due to a mismatch between the model and how many internships Region 2 employers are currently able to provide. Region 2 staff are working with the project manager on a



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

revised workplan, including the addition of more vendors in their model, as well as an outreach plan to match more interns with employers.

Minutes

Council reviewed meeting minutes from the GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting, held on February 4, 2022. Chairman Smoot asked if there were any corrections, additions, or questions regarding the minutes; there were none.

John Dooley motioned to approve the minutes, with Don Halliwill seconding. All were in favor and none opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:01p.m.

DRAFT