



GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting Minutes

February 5, 2021, 1:00p.m.- 3:00p.m, Zoom Webinar.

Council members in attendance: Eddie Amos, Amy Ankrum, Nathaniel Bishop, John Capps, Janice Crawford, Beverly Dalton, Sandy Davis, William Fralin, Michael Friedlander, Vince Hatcher, Don Halliwill, Victor Iannello, Floyd Merryman, Marty Muscatello, Debbie Petrine, John Putney, Ray Smoot (Chair), Luke Towles.

Council members not in attendance: Ab Boxley (Vice-Chair), Kenneth Craig, John Dooley, Mike Hamlar, Brian Hemphill, Kimball Payne.

Staff in attendance: John Provo, Scott Tate, Rachel Jones.

Public in attendance: Billy Gammel, Brian Hamilton, Caroline Buscaglia, Dean Rodgers, Deborah Flippo, Erin Burcham, Faith McClintic, Jason Ferguson, Jeremy Holmes, Lisa Soltis, Mary Zirkle, Michael Burnette, Mike Abbott, Rob Light, Sean Cuddy, Sharon Scott, Summer Bork, Tamra Lipscomb, Traci Blido.

The meeting convened at 1:03p.m. and adjourned at 2:40p.m.

Report of the Nominating Committee

Beverly Dalton began by providing the council with the report of the nominating committee, consisting of executive committee members Beverly Dalton and Sandy Davis. The nominating committee recommended the re-election of the following council members to serve an additional three-year term: John Capps, Sandy Davis, Michael Friedlander, Marty Muscatello, and John Putney. Beverly Dalton continued with a recommendation to re-elect Chairman Ray Smoot to serve an additional two-year term as Chair, as well as a recommendation to elect Eddie Amos to serve a two-year term as Vice-Chair. Ab Boxley prefers to step down from council due to work related travel. Council member Watt Foster has declined an invitation to serve another term.

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any further discussion. There was none.

All council members agreed to the recommended nominations.

Financial Report

John Provo began by providing the council with a brief financial report. The council has a remaining balance of \$1,663,160 in per-capita funds and a remaining balance of \$202,800 in Economic Resilience and Recovery funds.

Proposal Review

Executive Committee Report



With a fiscal year cap of \$250,000 for Enhanced Capacity Building proposals, the executive committee inquired each applicant team on their ability to table their proposal until the beginning of the FY22 fiscal year. The Carilion team has confirmed they hold a sufficient amount of funds to begin the initiative without the requested GO Virginia Region 2 funds that will be made available on July 1, 2021.

Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center

Scott Tate began by providing a brief overview of the new project proposal, *BioTech Lab Space Development*, submitted by the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center. The Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, Inc. (VTCRC), a wholly owned subsidiary of the Virginia Tech Foundation, Inc. (VTF), proposes to lead development of a comprehensive assessment, conceptual design, and associated operational plan to support both Roanoke and Blacksburg's life and health sciences ecosystem with flexible laboratory space. Brett Malone, Virginia Tech CRC, addressed questions raised by the council. Chairman Smoot requested clarification on project scope of work stating the project would be a study focused on the regional need for laboratory space in the life and health sciences sector, however, following the study, private entities would be involved in providing funds to build the lab spaces. Brett stated that is correct and the VTCRC has interested third party developers and real estate investors who would fund the initiative following the needs assessment. Brett continued by providing a brief overview of project deliverables which include an understanding of the market demand, a conceptual design of the type of facilities needed, and an operating plan for the CRC to manage the spaces to be located in Roanoke and Blacksburg. William Fralin inquired on the probability of job creation with this needs assessment, Brett stated the applicant team has a clear path to providing lab space to create as many as 300-400 jobs within the next 5 years as the CRC's available lab space has been 100% occupied for the last 5 years, with a current waiting list of 9 companies. Michael Friedlander commented that there is an immediate need as the Fralin Biomedical Research Center has been in contact with around 6 companies in ongoing discussion requesting lab space. Dr. Friedlander continued by stating the needs assessment would be very informative.

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any additional questions or comments. There were none.

The Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center request totaled \$100,000 in GO Virginia Region 2 Enhanced Capacity Building funds, with a match of \$55,000.

William Fralin motioned to approve the project and Marty Muscatello seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Carilion Clinic

Chairman Smoot mentioned to defer this proposal until next fiscal year's Enhanced Capacity Building funds are made available. Chairman Smoot asked if there was anyone present from the applicant team who would like to speak on this proposal. Cynthia Lawrence, Carilion Clinic, thanked the Region 2 Council for considering this proposal and commented that the proposal works in parallel with work that is being done at the state level as the former secretary of health and human resources, Bill Hazel and Delegate Austin are leading a conversation to address the need for a unified approach to health sciences



education in order to address the acute need across the commonwealth in health sciences careers which includes not only providing care but also the entirety of the growing health sciences sector. Ms. Lawrence continued by stating this conversation at a higher level has been ongoing for the last couple of years with regional health professionals collaborating to address an educational and career pathways pipeline. The proposal will better prepare the Blue Ridge Partnership for Health Sciences Careers to begin the initiative in a more formal fashion in order to continue leading the effort around the state. This proposal will be considered at a future council meeting.

Lynchburg Beacon of Hope

Scott Tate continued with a brief overview of the new project proposal, *Futures Centers Expansion*, submitted by Lynchburg Beacon of Hope. For the past 8 years, Lynchburg's Beacon of Hope has partnered with the Lynchburg City Schools to operate high-school based Future Centers. This project aims to scale the Future Center's model outside of the City of Lynchburg. Laura Hamilton, Lynchburg Beacon of Hope, provided a brief overview of project deliverables stating Beacon of Hope has spent the last 9 years working with students in the Lynchburg City schools to assist them with not only a greater awareness and access to both 2 and 4 year higher education, as well as technical certification programs, but also to portable certification through the workforce. The model has proven to be very successful in Lynchburg and other localities in the region has reached out to inquire if this model is a portable model in neighboring counties. Laura continued by stating the funding would be utilized to create a Futures Centers in Amherst County as a high school system, with intentions to also pilot the model to a third locality as the town of Altavista has expressed interest. The intention is to create a portable model that is effective in both urban and rural communities that helps create a network of support to benefit families of first generation to college or certification. In the City of Lynchburg, Beacon of Hope offers the first privately funded scholarship program implemented in the state called Stay Close, Go Far that allows any student who graduates from Lynchburg City schools to attend Central Virginia Community College free of charge. William Fralin requested clarification on local financial and technical support the applicant team is currently receiving from major employers. Laura responded by stating they are not currently receiving funding from local employers, they have received funding from a private investor, however, they now have a small cohort of employers who are working with the team in order to create both transformational and trans actual approaches to student's experiences in the workforce. The team has found that students are both unaware and underprepared in accountability to be successful once entering the workforce, they have been collaborating with Lynchburg's school superintendent as well as the career and technical education partners within the schools to create additional opportunities for soft-skill development. William Fralin inquired on future funding opportunities to ensure the pilot program is successful stating he is under the assumption that Beacon of Hope will reach out to employers located within the new entities to establish ongoing support. Laura responded stating that is their intentions. William Fralin expressed his opinion of this being a great pilot program that he would like to see implemented in other localities in the region. Janice Crawford then commented that her employer, Framatome, who has been a supporter of this program for the last 4 years, has seen great success with employing local individuals as they are more likely to stay in the region. John Capps expressed he has witnessed a transformational effect with the Futures Centers model in Lynchburg



schools and Central Virginia Community College by attracting additional students to attend college. Many of the students participating enroll into the high demand career and technical education courses, which our local employers need.

John Capps recused himself from the vote.

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any additional questions or comments. There were none.

The Lynchburg Beacon of Hope request totaled \$95,480 in GO Virginia Region 2 Enhanced Capacity Building funds, with a match of \$138,600.

Floyd Merryman motioned to approve the project and John Putney seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

The Advancement Foundation

Scott Tate continued with a brief overview of the new project proposal, *Ag/Food Technology and Business Innovation Center*, submitted by The Advancement Foundation. The Advancement Foundation proposes to conduct a needs assessment and feasibility around emerging technology in agriculture, food/beverage processing and business incubation in the Bedford area. Annette Patterson, The Advancement Foundation, provided a brief overview of project deliverables stating through the previously funded GO Virginia Region 2 project, *Increasing the Birth Rates of New High Growth Companies*, the Innovation Mill has exceeded their metrics and regarding the process of getting involved with new high growth companies, brought the project staff into conversation around hemp and other agriculture interests, as well as emerging technologies that could be adapted from bio technology to agriculture. The Advancement Foundation hosted a conference inviting locality leaders, entrepreneurs, farmers, and economic developers in January 2020 to engage conversation of agriculture and technology opportunities in Region 2, with some deliverables within this proposal being outcomes from that conversation. The Advancement Foundation has spent about 5 months engaging in conversation with a variety of entities including the Virginia Association of Biological Farming, the Virginia Bio-Technology Association, along with a number of farmers, technology companies that increased interest around this initiative. John Putney inquired on a mention of a site located in downtown Bedford being considered in the proposal but may not be definitive. Annette confirmed he is correct and stated the applicant team reviewed a number of sites as follow up to the January conference where potential sites were discussed. Chairman Smoot requested clarification on if the study supported the establishment of the center, what entity would be responsible for the build out of the center. Annette stated The Advancement Foundation would be responsible for the establishment of the center and through additional conversation staff has found a level of interest from investors.

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any additional questions or comments. There were none.

The Advancement Foundation request totaled \$85,000 in GO Virginia Region 2 Enhanced Capacity Building funds, with a match of \$42,500.



Victor Iannello recommended to table the motion and request the applicant to return with a revised proposal to address some of the concerns raised during the review process and John Putney seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance

Scott Tate continued with a brief overview of the new project proposal, *Site-specific Readiness for Amelon Industrial/IT Growth Center*, submitted by the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance. The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance is applying for a GO Virginia Region 2 site-specific readiness grant to build an Industrial/IT Growth Center on lot 6 of Amelon Commerce Center in Amherst County. Megan Lucas, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, and Victoria Hanson, Amherst Economic Development Administration, provided a brief overview of project deliverables stating the funding would support the site-specific readiness for a 40,000 square foot building to be constructed in the Amelon Industrial Center in Amherst County. Amherst County Economic Development is in the process of applying for a US EDA grant to build the manufacturing flex space. The US EDA grant will not support the final site prep work that is required prior to construction.

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance request totaled \$297,000 in GO Virginia Region 2 Per-Capita funds, with a match of \$526, 105.

John Putney recused himself from the vote.

Sandy Davis motioned to approve the project and Marty Muscatello seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Council Business

Minutes

The council reviewed minutes from the Region 2 Council meeting held on October 28, 2020. Chairman Smoot asked if there were any questions or corrections regarding the minutes; there were none.

Nathaniel Bishop motioned to approve the minutes and Victor Iannello seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Staff Updates

Project Reporting and Evaluation

John Provo provided a brief overview of the quarter 4 project evaluation and reporting, noting a highlight of the Central Virginia Training Center Redevelopment Plan is notably behind on project deliverables. Staff has intervened and begun the process of a no-cost extension. Eddie Amos and William Fralin suggested to include clarification on a course of action the council can take to assist a sub-grantee who is behind in future project reporting.



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John Provo asked if there were any additional questions or comments. There were none.

Other Announcements

John Provo announced the GO Virginia state staff has released guidance for mandated updates to the regional Growth & Diversification Plan, with a deadline to finalize by October 2021. John continued by stating Region 2 staff will provide council with a plan of action to update regional council funding priorities at a future meeting.

Other announcements include an inquiry from the state level regarding higher education. State staff has elected to put aside funds for innovative pilot programs related to internships in the region. Intentions include the scale up and better institutionalization of these efforts to ensure the highest level of broad engagement with regional employers possible. The requirements for this effort are underway. Region 2 staff has created a focus group including regional applicants and will extend this effort to all previous applicants once staff receives official guidance from the state level. Eddie Amos commented the CIT has been doing good work building on the GO Virginia framework, stating he believes they will move forward with a final proposal in March and it may be of interest to request an individual to come before the council to explain how those continuing funds fit into the GO Virginia framework.

Chairman Smoot asked if there were any additional questions. There were none.

Adjournment occurred at 2:40p.m.