



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

GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting Minutes

July 24, 2023, 2:00p.m.- 4:00p.m.

Via Zoom Webinar.

Council members in attendance: Eddie Amos (Chair), Michelle Austin, Nathaniel Bishop, John Capps, Kenneth Craig, Janice Crawford, Whitney Czelusniak, Beverley Dalton (Vice-chair), Sandy Davis, Paul Denham, Greg Feldmann, Mike Friedlander, Don Halliwill, Vince Hatcher, Pat Huber, Bif Johnson, Fourd Kemper, Kim Payne, Debbie Petrine, John Putney, Amy Sebring, Ray Smoot, Luke Towles, Cathy Underwood, Richmond Vincent, Jacob Wright, Justin Yalung.

Council members not in attendance: Mike Hamlar, Marty Muscatello.

Staff in attendance: John Provo, Scott Tate, Sarah Lyon-Hill, Quina Weber-Shirk, Rachel Jones, Alyssa McKenney.

Public in attendance: Cody Anderson, Jason Ferguson, Laura Hamilton, Macey Normyle, Sarah Spotswood, Altan Mitchell, Ashley Posthumus, Billy Gammel, Central Virginia Planning District Commission, Danielle Murray, Kathy Hodges, Kristen Costello, Lane Guilliams, Marilyn Herbert-Ashton, Pam Bailey, Ruth Caul, Tommy Miller, Valleys Innovation Council, Erin Burcham, Appomattox County, Alec Brebner, Johnnie Roark, Bruce Boone.

The meeting convened at 2:01p.m. and adjourned at 4:00p.m.

Financials Review

Alyssa McKenney reviewed the financial reports included in the board packet. Council has a remaining balance of \$2,248,099 in per-capita funds. If the two proposals before council is approved, there will be a remaining balance of \$995,609.

KPI Template

Quina Weber-Shirk shared a proposed template for KPI data highlights. Reviewed in KPI data highlights included a project pipeline overview, Region 2 project metrics, as well as jobs reported/committed across all grants awarded through GO Virginia Region 2.

Project Proposals

Strengthening Entrepreneurs' Impact

Scott Tate offered a brief overview of the new project proposal, "Strengthening Entrepreneurs' Impact", submitted by VERGE. Erin Burcham, VERGE, shared project deliverables and answered questions from the council. Ray Smoot requested more information about the companies VERGE will be accelerating. Erin Burcham stated the companies moving through the accelerator will be newly established



companies, meaning they will not possess an LLC. This project would help more companies progress out of a higher end “lab” space, where they’re still in R&D phase, and into a commercialized space.

VERGE’s request totaled \$577,800 in Region 2 per-capita funds, with a match of \$288,900.

Members recusing from the vote include John Capps, Eddie Amos, Pat Huber, Justin Yalung, and Michael Friedlander.

Debbie Petrino motioned to approve this proposal, and Richmond Vincent seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

ACA Classical & CTE Institute

Scott Tate offered a brief overview of the new project proposal, “*ACA Classical & CTE Institute*”, submitted by Appomattox County. Alec Brebner, Central Virginia Planning District Commission, shared project deliverables and answered questions from the council. Chairman Amos requested staff clarify the negative 3-year ROI. Scott Tate responded by stating the negative 3-year ROI is due to the lower average wage projection in comparison to the high allocation request. The average wage for an individual fresh out of the training program is estimated to be around \$40,000, with wages increasing as experience is garnered. The applicant has augmented the ROI with some upskill training, however, it can take some time for this to be reflected by the actual salary projections. Sandy Davis requested if the lower average wages of \$40,000 is due to the student’s readiness to join the workforce following the program. Alec Brebner responded by stating the applicant team assessed entry level salaries throughout the greater Lynchburg region from Jobs EQ to determine that projected salary of around \$40,000, with hopes that their new facility will help raise the average entry level projections.

Appomattox County’s request totaled \$565,000 in Region 2 per-capita funds, with a match of \$429,969.

Council members recusing from the vote include John Capps.

Pat Huber motioned to approve this proposal, and John Putney seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Special Updates

Preliminary Report of G&D Plan Updates

Sarah Lyon-Hill provided a detailed overview of 2023 updates to the GO Virginia Region 2 Growth & Diversification Plan. Information reviewed includes the goals of the G&D plan updates, regional data highlights, skills gap analysis, and next steps for final submission in October. The finalization of the draft will take place in July-September, with assistance from regional stakeholder engagement sessions to be held in August. The final draft of the plan will be presented to the GO Virginia Region 2 Council at its next meeting on October 19th, with final submission to the state on October 31st. Region 2 support staff are requesting council volunteers to chair each regional stakeholder engagement session. Michael Friedlander requested clarification on changes within the life science industry sector, particularly in the



technical space for what he refers to as staff scientists, or individuals trained in technical skills as needed instrumentation for federally and privately funded research projects. Sarah stated when completing the skills gap analysis, most of the healthcare occupations overturn life science occupations, shadowing them in many ways. When reviewing skillsets existing in in-demand occupations in both healthcare and the life sciences sectors, secondary data suggests healthcare overshadows life sciences. Ray Smoot requested clarification on whether or not regional growth in Region 2's industry clusters is less than the national averages. Sarah stated the clusters of IT & Emerging Tech and Transportation and Autonomy are slowly growing compared to the nation.

Project Spotlight: Lynchburg Beacon of Hope

Laura Hamilton and Macey Normyle presented final outcomes of their planning grant, Lynchburg Beacon of Hope. A major deliverable for the grant was a Playbook for Future Centers, a programmatic guide for operations of the high school future center, a template for hiring the director of each future center, as well as a professional development and training module for effective Future Centers. The project team presented both an interactive web-based playbook, as well as their pdf version to council.

State Updates- Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development

Cody Anderson, Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD), provided an overview of state updates regarding the matching fund requirements for future project applications. The GO Virginia State Board voted to end the local match waiver and return to original total match requirements of 1:1 matching funds for implementation projects, with reinstated local match requirements, but eliminating the \$50,000 minimum. Planning grants will return to a required 2:1 matching funds, with no local match required. Other changes include a total and local match waiver request process. Total match waiver requests will be processed for localities who are identified as under fiscal distress or state funding could lead to an extraordinary economic opportunity. Local match waiver requests will be processed based on localities' ability to financially contribute.

Council Business

Membership Reappointments

Chairman Amos confirmed the following council members have agreed to serve an additional 3-year term: Janice Crawford, Vince Hatcher, and Luke Towles.

Outline for Celebrate Success Event

Quina Weber-Shirk reviewed staff's recommendations and options for an upcoming Celebrate Success event to be held in the Fall of 2023. Chairman Amos encouraged council members to provide feedback to regional staff over email correspondence at any time during the planning process.

Quarterly Project Reporting



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Rachel Jones reviewed active project status, noting there is one current project listed in yellow, meaning they did not meet one or more quarter 2 milestones and staff is monitoring. All other active projects are listed in green, meaning they have met quarterly milestones and are on track with their current deliverables.

Rachel Jones then provided an overview of the packet information item: Region 2's Electronic Meeting Authorization.

Minutes

Council reviewed minutes from the Region 2 Council Meeting held on April 28, 2023. Chairman Amos asked if there were any corrections, additions, or questions regarding the minutes; there were none.

Richmond Vincent motioned to approve the minutes, with John Putney seconding. All were in favor and none opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00p.m.

DRAFT