



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

GO Virginia Region 2

GO Virginia Region 2 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

April 22, 2021, 1:00p.m.- 3:00p.m, Zoom Webinar.

Executive Committee members in attendance: Eddie Amos (Vice-chair), Beverly Dalton, Ray Smoot (Chair).

Executive Committee members not in attendance: Sandy Davis.

Council members in attendance: Don Halliwill.

Staff in attendance: John Provo, Scott Tate, Sarah Lyon-Hill, Rachel Jones.

Public in attendance: Aisha Johnson, Beth Simms, Billy Gammel, Dean Rodgers, Deborah Flippo, Jason Ferguson, Jill Loope, John Coggsdale, Kathy Hodges, Luke Campbell, Mary Zirkle, Nina Rezaei, Megan Lucas, Cynthia Lawrence, Marty Holliday, Scott Weimer, Jody Keenan, Josh Green, Sean Mallon, Caroline King.

The meeting convened at 1:05p.m. and adjourned at 3:03p.m.

Financial Report

John Provo began by providing the executive committee with a brief financial report. The council has a remaining balance of \$1,468,320 in per-capita funds and a remaining balance of \$202,800 in Economic Resilience and Recovery funds.

Proposal Review

Dearing Ford Industrial Park

Scott Tate began by providing a brief overview of the new project proposal, *Dearing Ford Industrial Park*, submitted by the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance. The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance is applying for a GO Virginia Region 2 site readiness grant to assist with the extension of a gas line to 49.9 acres of land in Dearing Ford Industrial Park, located in Altavista, Virginia. Megan Lucas, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, addressed concerns raised by the committee regarding Columbia Gas' participation in the proposal stating most companies will not provide utilities to an industrial site unless there is an end user involved. Megan Lucas continued by stating the site does have a prospective end user, however, Columbia Gas has labeled the end user as speculative, therefore, they will not move forward with the gas extension. Chairman Smoot requested clarification on the local matching funds provided, Ms. Lucas responded by stating the full match has been committed from the town of Altavista. Beverly Dalton commented that it seems as though the county's tax structure better enables the county to weigh in on the incentive issues; and the financial strength of the community of Altavista enables the town to support the project financially. Chairman Smoot then inquired on Columbia Gas' financial participation in the extension of the gas line, stating he supports this proposal; however, he would like to see Columbia Gas commit funds to the project. Chairman Smoot requested support staff to follow up



with state staff concerning the use of GO Virginia funds to enhance a private company's ability to profit from the sale of gas when said company has not committed financial participation into an asset in which they are going to own upon completion of the project.

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

The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance request totaled \$800,000 in GO Virginia Region 2 Per-Capita funds, with a local match of \$400,000.

Health and Life Science Workforce Initiative

Scott Tate began by providing a brief overview of the new project proposal, *Health and Life Science Workforce Initiative*, submitted by Carilion Clinic and the Blue Ridge Partnership for Health Science. Over the course of one year, this proposal aims to accelerate the establishment of a new model for wide-spread business-education collaboration, increase the number of health and life sciences graduates, and begin to formalize a health sciences talent pipeline. Cynthia Lawrence, Carilion Clinic, began with the announcement that CentraHealth has accepted an invitation to join the initiative. Cynthia Lawrence then explained the General Assembly request of \$1,000,000, submitted by Delegate Austin, has been confirmed as a recurring funding source. These funds will be available for this initiative to cover dual enrollment costs for credit courses at the community colleges involved for both years of the biennium budget. Ms. Lawrence continued by highlighting work that has been completed thus far including the formation and engagement of the task forces, as well as the creation of the working groups. Ms. Lawrence continued by addressing concerns raised in the review process regarding how this proposal will engage the health and life sciences sector on a broader level, stating through the creation of a talent pathways task force, chaired by Morgan Romeo, the board will identify companies within the health and life sciences sector who are seeking to recruit talent and work to connect their needs with the region's workforce development efforts.

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

The Blue Ridge Partnership for Health Science Careers request totaled \$100,000 in GO Virginia Region 2 Enhanced Capacity Building funds, with a match of \$106,355.

Beverly Dalton motioned to recommend the proposal for review by the Region 2 Council, and Eddie Amos seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

PICKS TM (Profiles that Increase the Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills That Matter)

Scott Tate began by providing a brief overview of the new project proposal, *PICKS TM*, submitted by the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Consortium Board. Profiles that Increase the Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills That Matter (PICKS TM) proposes to expand our regional capacity for meeting the talent needs of businesses by building a foundational system to better understand and communicate knowledge, skills and abilities required to effectively perform specific in-demand jobs of high-growth businesses in targeted industries of GO Virginia Region 2. Marty Holliday, New River/Mount Rogers



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Workforce Consortium Board, began by elaborating on project deliverables, stating there is often a disconnect between the skills needed in the local workforce and college graduates seeking employment; this proposal would develop a tool to assist businesses more efficiently with meeting their staffing needs and ultimately increase their return on investment through lower turnover rates. Utilizing the American College Testing (ACT) Job Profiling system, the team will consult with subject-matter experts located at companies within the region to analyze the skills, skill levels, and skill frequency candidates need to be successful in specific job positions. Businesses will gain a detailed analysis of skills and abilities required to be productive in the workplace. Using ACT's structure, detailed internal reports will enable efficient job matching to applicant work history, applicant training completions, and employee skill mastery.

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

The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Consortium Board request totaled \$100,000 in GO Virginia Region 2 Enhanced Capacity Building funds, with a match of \$101,840.

Beverly Dalton motioned to recommend the proposal for review by the Region 2 Council, and Eddie Amos seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Industry 4.0 Manufacturing Workforce Program

Scott Tate continued with a brief overview of the new project proposal, *Industry 4.0 Manufacturing Workforce Program*, submitted by Virginia Tech Industrial and Systems Engineering. This proposal will address the need for specifically trained talent in both the current and future Region 2 workforce by creating experiential learning opportunities in specific local technologies and drafting a non-credit curriculum for existing workforce development. Scott Weimer, Roanoke Regional Initiatives at Virginia Tech, began with a brief overview of project deliverables, stating this proposal is centered around the new experiential learning factory at Virginia Tech. The learning factory is currently being outfitted with industry 4.0 technologies in areas of robotics, advanced manufacturing, and digital manufacturing. The project team believes there are challenges that have not been addressed both within the lab space as well as with regional manufacturers, including the current workforce receiving limited exposure to what is considered as typical industry 4.0 technologies, educational programs often lacking experiential learning opportunities where students can acquire the technical skills being used by local employers, and engineering students generally lacking awareness of viable long term local employment. This planning proposal includes multiple events that will bring together a broad group of stakeholders representing municipalities from across the region including Roanoke County, Roanoke City, New River Valley, Botetourt County, Lynchburg, Covington, and Clifton Forge. This is a planning effort to determine where the skills gaps are related to industry 4.0 technologies, what are the technology gaps themselves, and how does this align with efforts conducted within the learning factory program as well as ongoing efforts within educational institution partners' programs. Vice-chair Eddie Amos voiced his support for this proposal, stating this is applied science and practice to benefit the commonwealth in general, as he believes the initiative should be replicated across Virginia's community colleges. Eddie Amos then inquired about intentions to engage other manufacturing companies in Lynchburg into this effort. Scott Weimer responded by stating they have received one letter of support from Innerspec, located in Bedford County, and the Lynchburg region will certainly be involved through the group of stakeholders,



as well as potential projects to come out of this planning grant once the team moves forward with curriculum development.

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

The Virginia Tech Industrial and Systems Engineering request totaled \$45,360 in GO Virginia Region 2 Enhanced Capacity Building funds, with a match of \$30,000.

Eddie Amos motioned to recommend the proposal for review by the Region 2 Council, and Beverly Dalton seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Expansion of ICAP Mentor Network

Scott Tate continued with a brief overview of the new project proposal, *Expansion of ICAP Mentor Network*, submitted by the Virginia Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Launched in January 2018, the Innovation Commercialization Assistance Program (ICAP) helps inventors and entrepreneurs take the right first steps in bringing new technologies and innovations to market. This GO Virginia Statewide ERR proposal is requesting \$882,794 in funding over two years to expand the capacity of the ICAP program to support more early-stage technology and innovation-driven startups across Virginia. Jody Keenan and Josh Green, Virginia SBDC Network, addressed concerns raised in the review process regarding long-term financial sustainability, stating they are receiving CIT funds for this effort, with an expectation to receive these funds on an annual basis, contingent upon an application process. Jody Keenan continued by stating they are pursuing additional federal funding for this project as well, then building on strong program results, they expect to incorporate this ongoing funding into George Mason University's strategic priorities for study and continuous state investment. Other state programs around the country that provide this type of technology business assistance are similarly financed, as they started with seed funding through a state program similar to GO Virginia and were able to be incorporated into a more steady stream of state investment after positive results. To ensure the program's efforts reach state-wide, they will hire new mentors in the general regions of western Virginia, Roanoke-Blacksburg, Charlottesville/Richmond, the coastal area, Hampton Roads, and Northern Virginia.

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

The Virginia Small Business Development Center's request totaled \$882,794 in GO Virginia Statewide Economic Resilience and Recovery funds, with a match of \$442,497.

Eddie Amos motioned to recommend the proposal for review by the Region 2 Council, and Beverly Dalton seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Council Business

Council Vacancies



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Vice-chair Eddie Amos put forth two names for review of the executive committee to fill existing vacancies in the Roanoke/Alleghany region: Michelle Austin, Senior Vice President and CFO of the Bank of Botetourt, and Fourd Kemper, Attorney with Woods Rogers Attorneys at Law.

The committee has recommended Michelle Austin and Fourd Kemper for appointment by the Region 2 Council.

Beverly Dalton then put forth one name for review of the committee to fill an existing vacancy in the Lynchburg region: Paul Denham, President of Southern Air, Inc.

The committee has recommended Paul Denham for appointment by the Region 2 Council.

Minutes

The executive committee reviewed meeting minutes from the Region 2 Executive Committee meeting held on January 21, 2021. Chairman Smoot asked if there were any questions or corrections regarding the minutes; there were none.

Beverly Dalton motioned to approve the minutes and Eddie Amos seconded. All were in favor and none opposed.

Special Updates

Virginia Innovation Partnership Update

Sean Mallon, Vice President of Entrepreneurial Ecosystems, Center for Innovative Technology, provided the committee with an overview of the Virginia Innovation Partnership Authority (VIPA). Created in the previous legislative cycle, VIPA is a state authority and sits overtop of Center for Innovative Technology (CIT), a non-profit. CIT has four divisions: Entrepreneurial Ecosystems, Commercialization, Investments, and Strategic Initiatives. The Entrepreneurial Ecosystems division serves as a support and connection for entrepreneurial ecosystems and stakeholders around Virginia, including startup incubators and accelerators. The Commercialization division provides grant funding in support of tech-based research, development, and commercialization to drive economic growth in Virginia. The Investments division provides seed and early-stage funding for Virginia-based companies with high potential for rapid growth and significant economic returns. While the Strategic Initiatives division provides leadership for strategic initiatives that explore and shape programs designed to attract and grow innovation and new industries. CIT's Regional Innovation Fund offers up to \$200,000 to one grantee per region, per year. CIT targets this funding to recipients of GO Virginia "start-up ecosystem" grants, with an REI organization preferred. Vice-chair Eddie Amos thanked Sean Mallon for the ongoing work while integrating with the local ecosystem and is very pleased to see that this effort will be an addition to work completed thus far in GO Virginia Region 2 and will build the continuity this region is trying to build.

Adjournment occurred at 3:03p.m.