



Region 8

Cities of: Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Staunton, Waynesboro, & Winchester

Counties of: Augusta, Bath, Clarke, Frederick, Highland, Page, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, & Warren

GO VIRGINIA REGION 8 COUNCIL

Tuesday, October 18, 2022, 10:00am to 12:00pm

Hybrid Full Council Meeting

Blue Ridge Community College, Plecker Center P126A

FIRST	LAST	AFFILIATION	ATTEND
Jon	Alger	James Madison University	Virtual
Devon	Anders	InterChange Group	X
Emily	Marlow Beck	Marlow Auto Group	
Kim	Blosser	Laurel Ridge Community College	Virtual
Kathlynn	Brown	SRI International	X
Robin	Crowder	Retired K-12 Superintendent	
John	Downey	Blue Ridge Community College	X
Ashley	Driver	Formerly AG Stacker, Inc.	X
Joanie	Eiland	Elk Trucking, Inc.	
Tracy	Fitzsimmons	Shenandoah University	Virtual
Mike	Goertzen	Serco, Inc.	X
Conrad	Helsley	NSVRC Board	X
Diar	Kaussler	Engooden Health	
Chris	Kyle	Shentel	X
Lai	Lee	High Meadow Strategies	
Connie	Loughhead	Des Champs Technologies	Virtual
Keith	May	Cottonwood Commercial	
Mark	Merrill	Retired - Valley Health System	Virtual
Kathy	Moore	Moore Public Relations	X
Yolanda	Shields	Yesbuilds	X
Terry	Short	Waynesboro City Council & CSPDC Board	X
Jeff	Stapel	Shickel Corporation	X
Robin	Sullenberger	Highland County Economic Development Authority	X

Support staff attending in-person included: Deborah Flippo (Region 8 Executive Director), Brandon Davis (NSVRC), Bonnie Riedesel (CSPDC), Elizabeth McCarty (CSPDC), Mary Lou Bourne (JMU & E2 Advisory Committee), Jay Langston (SVP & ED Ad Hoc Committee), and Jen Weaver (SVP & Region 8 Administrative Coordinator). Nathan Garrison (SVP) attended and assisted with the audio/video.

Call to Order

The October 18, 2022 Council meeting for GO Virginia Region 8 was called to order by Chair Chris Kyle at 10:05a.m.

Confirmation of In-Person Quorum/Virtual Participation Approval

Chair Kyle welcomed everyone to the hybrid Region 8 Council meeting including guests Cody Anderson from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and Lisa Botkin representing the Shenandoah Valley Airport (SHD). Chair Kyle then introduced Deborah Flippo, the new Region 8 Executive Director. He went on to say leadership was in the process of re-structuring support staff as Jen Weaver would be leaving her position as Administrative Coordinator on December 31, 2022.

Jen Weaver then did roll call and confirmed in-person quorum was met. It was noted several Council members were participating virtually and approval had been given prior to the meeting pursuant to Region 8's Electronic Participation Policy.

Council Action

Approval of April 26, 2022 Council Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the April 26, 2022 Council meeting were reviewed. Terry Short motioned for the minutes to be approved; seconded by Tracy Fitzsimmons. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Region 8 Council Re-Appointments

Jeff Stapel, Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported the recommendation of re-appointment to a two-year term for Council members: Kim Blosser, Robin Crowder, and Conrad Helsley. It was also recommended Robin Sullenberger be approved for a two-year Council term.

John Downey motioned to approve the Region 8 Council re-appointments of Kim Blosser, Robin Crowder, Conrad Helsley, and Robin Sullenberger as presented; seconded by Kathy Moore. The motion was approved unanimously.

Region 8 Electronic Participation Policy Amendments

Brandon Davis, Executive Director, Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission, reviewed the amendments being proposed for the Region 8 Electronic Participation policy. He noted recent changes at the State level will allow electronic "all virtual" meetings for both the Council as well as sub-committees. The fully virtual provision can only be used for two, or 25 percent, of the public body's meetings per year, whichever is greater. Amendments to the Region 8 policy will allow greater flexibility while still remaining compliant with Virginia code.

A question was raised regarding Region 8 leadership's plans for Council meetings moving forward. Chair Kyle responded the Executive Committee intends to put emphasis on continuing in-person meetings as leadership feels they offer great value. Plans are to also resume moving meeting locations throughout the region. He did acknowledge the January 2023 Council meeting would be all virtual, considering the potential for inclement weather.

Mike Goertzen motioned to approve the amendments to the Region 8 Electronic Participation Policy as presented; seconded by Ashley Driver. The motion was approved unanimously.

Grant Review Recommendations

"Shenandoah Valley Aviation Technology Park"

Tracy Fitzsimmons, Chair, Grant Review Committee, gave an overview of the "Shenandoah Valley Aviation Technology Park" application. GO Virginia Region 8 funds would be used to construct 1,920 linear feet of 8" water line and 980 linear feet of gravity sanitary sewer line. The project will relocate existing utilities from the middle of the site to its perimeter, which creates the opportunity for future hangar construction and buildout of the Aviation Technology Park.

Dr. Fitzsimmons reminded the group this project was voted first in 2019 when the Region 8 Council prioritized projects in the pipeline. She noted jobs created will far exceed GO Virginia minimum wage requirements for the region and the timeline for completion of this phase of work is only ten to twelve months. As well, the improvement of the site from a Tier 2 to Tier 4 will make the area more marketable and potentially attract new investors, including government contractors. Dr. Fitzsimmons reported the Grant Review Committee had thoroughly reviewed the application and asked questions of experts and now was enthusiastic to recommend for approval.

Upon no further discussion, Terry Short motioned for the “Shenandoah Valley Aviation Technology Park” project to be approved for funding; seconded by Robin Sullenberger. The motion passed unanimously.

“NextGen Nurses” Amended Budget

Tracy Fitzsimmons recused herself from the discussion and abstained from the vote.

Mark Merrill, Grant Review Committee member, reminded the Council of the NextGen Nurses proposal previously approved by the Region 8 Council and submitted to DHCD. When presented before the GO Virginia State Board, however, costs were identified that some felt were not appropriate and the application was approved but with funding decreased by approximately \$190,000. Region 8 then requested the State Board consider other options to fully fund the project. The GO Virginia State Board voted at their meeting on September 13th to approve the increase in funding through the Region 8 per capita allocation, pending Region 8 Council consideration and approval.

Mr. Merrill reported the Grant Review Committee recommended fully funding the project per the State Board’s approval.

Upon no further discussion, Mark Merrill motioned for approximately \$190,000 of the Region 8 per capita allocation be used to fully fund the “NextGen Nurses” project; seconded by Jeff Stapel. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Committee Reports and Updates

Executive Director Introduction and Report

Deborah Flippo introduced herself and gave a brief summary of her experience including involvement with the Virginia Economic Developers Association (VEDA) and Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP). She noted she lives in the Roanoke Valley but loves this region and understands why the Shenandoah Valley is held up in the State as the most collaborative region. Ms. Flippo said she has already met with numerous stakeholders throughout Region 8 and is anxious to learn of priorities for the project pipeline so allocated funds will be spent.

Financial Status Report

Brandon Davis, Executive Director, Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission, noted the Comprehensive Financial Dashboard included with the financial statements is a big picture summary of Region 8 funding. Taking into consideration the two projects approved during this meeting, over \$436,000 in funds are still available. The last column of the Dashboard spreadsheet reflects Economic Resilience and Recovery (ERR) funds which were an emergency allocation in response to the pandemic and will no longer be available. The other financial documents provided are breakdowns of all active projects.

Region 8 Funded Projects Status Report

Bonnie Riedesel, Executive Director, Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, reviewed the Project Status summary distributed in the Council packets. She noted eighteen projects have been approved and funded by Region 8 with the “Shenandoah Valley Aviation Technology Park” making nineteen. Of those, fourteen projects have been closed out or are nearing completion with all meeting or exceeding performance metrics. Between GO Virginia funds and local match, over \$8 million has been invested in the region.

Project Highlight: Sites Enhancement Project

Jay Langston, Executive Director, Shenandoah Valley Partnership, said the Sites Enhancement grant has been moving along well though some delays have been experienced due to a shortage of surveyors and the harvesting of crops on sites. Projections are for all work to be completed by March 2023. In response to a question, Dr. Langston said nine sites have been elevated in tier level through the work of this grant.

Economic Development Spotlight: Waynesboro

Greg Hitchin, Director of Economic Development & Tourism, gave an overview of the exciting work being done in the City as well as a summary of their Economic Development and Tourism Strategic Plan, which includes seven goals for community prosperity.

Other Business

No other business was brought before the Council.

Public Comment

No public comment was given.

Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 – Virtual Only

Chair Kyle reminded Council members of the draft 2023 Region 8 calendar distributed in their packets. He encouraged everyone to put the meeting dates on their calendars and share any concerns with Ms. Flippo.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Council, Chair Kyle adjourned the meeting at 11:20a.m.