



*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

Wednesday, April 26th, 2023, 10:11 am to 12:10pm
Hybrid Full Council Meeting

Valley Innovation Accelerator 245 W 21ST Street, Buena Vista, VA

Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89564878295?pwd=Rk4xMzdnZitYSk5TcTVSN2tCWE9VZz09>

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

Support staff attending included: Deborah Flippo (Region 8 Executive Director) Brandon Davis (NSVRC), Bonnie Riedesel (CSPDC), Elizabeth McCarty (CSPDC), Joshua Smoot (CSPDC), Jay Langston (SVP), Cody Anderson (DHCD) and Joel Hensley (Region 8 Administrative Coordinator).

In person guests included: Bill Fitzgerald (Buena Vista Mayor) Jason Tyree (Buena Vista City Manager) Debbie Irwin (SCCF), John Barlow (BRCC), Rick Whittington, David McDaniel (Rockbridge Co. Board of Supervisors Chairman), Mel Hansen (Buena Vista City Council), Nick Swartz (JMU), Ryan Hall (SCCF), Anne Herring (USDA), Ellen Campbell (House of Delegates), Jay Lewis (Rockbridge Co. Board of Supervisors)

Virtual guests included: Kristen Costello, Cynthia Schneider, Betty Mitchell, Brian Shull, Todd Lynn, Stephanie Lillard, Paige Owens, Peter Denbigh, and Joseph Dennie.

Call to Order and Welcome

The April 26 2023 Council meeting for GO Virginia Region 8 was called to order by Chair Chris Kyle at 10:11 a.m.

Chair Kyle welcomed everyone to the first Region 8 Council hybrid meeting of the year and noted the special guests in the attendance: Delegate Ellen Campbell, Buena Vista Mayor William Fitzgerald, Rockbridge Board of Supervisor's Chairman David McDaniel, Rockbridge Supervisor Jay Lewis, Buena Vista City Manager Jason Tyree. Mayor Fitzgerald & Chairman McDaniel welcomed everyone and highlighted improvements happening in their localities.

Roll Call

Joel Hensley, Region 8 Administrative Coordinator took roll call and a quorum was confirmed.

Virginia Innovation Accelerator Presentation

Deborah Flippo introduced Annette Patterson, President of the Advancement Foundation. Ms. Patterson provided a presentation about the history of Virginia Innovation Accelerator. She shared a list of the grants that were awarded to purchase the property and the companies and products that have been developed. Ms. Patterson also shared VIA's vision for future plans with Council.

Approval of January 2023 Council Meetings

The minutes for the January 24th, 2023 virtual Council meeting were reviewed. Devon Anders motioned for the minutes to be approved; seconded by Mike Goertzen. The minutes were approved unanimously by voice vote.

Project Reports

Open Projects

Bonnie Riedesel reviewed the total number of projects approved and total amount funded by Go Virginia to date. She reviewed the five projects currently open and provided an update on the progress of these projects.

Projects in Closing

Joel Hensley introduced the new format for addressing data points for closed projects. He addressed some of the possible various outcomes required by DHCD, including but not limited to job

creation. He mentioned that he would be reaching out to past grantees to determine sustainability of projects.

Deborah Flippo emphasized the need to track these metrics both during and after close-out and welcomed feedback from council. Chairman Kyle also encouraged members of Council to provide feedback and ideas to Deborah Flippo regarding these reports.

Executive Committee Reports and Updates

Financial Status Report

Brandon Davis, Executive Director, Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission, said that ERR Funding Program which was allocated during COVID, has now ended. ECB grant funds for planning projects that could lead to larger per capita projects have been exhausted.

Grants Review Committee: SCCF's Capacitor Incubator Program

Tracey Fitzsimmons thanked Delegate Campbell for continued support for GO Virginia. She proposed the Grant Committee's recommendation for approval for SCCF's Capacitor Incubator Program project funding request in the amount of \$395,067. She explained the program will help to fill clearly-defined gaps in the entrepreneur process and reminded Council about the recent Shenandoah Valley Accelerator and the similarities to previous programs funded.

There was discussion regarding the need to coordinate existing resources and concern about redundancy. Debbie Irwin said they coordinate extensively with other organizations. There was concern about financing to get ideas to market which Debbie agreed is always a large gap. She said the vetting process on the front end at SCCF is a Steering Committee which includes entrepreneurs, coaches and partners and on the back end SCCF will turn entrepreneurs to other groups after. Cody Anderson from DHCD said he would continue to scrutinize the application but praised Debbie for her efforts and has no concerns.

By roll call vote, the application was approved with Mark Merrill voting "nay".

Executive Director Report

Deborah Flippo said this was the first year where Region 8 has come close to spending the annual funds and updated Council on the activities since January including attendance at the Laurel Ridge Community College Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Accelerating Advanced Manufacturing Workforce Center, her meeting with Secretary of Commerce & Trade Karen Merrick with Chris Kyle and John King, the Pipeline Development Meetings which resulted in 46 attendees and roughly 15-18 potential project ideas. The ideas from these meetings will be given to Council to prioritize before their next meeting.

Deborah also talked briefly about the DHCD support organization retreat. It was a great networking opportunity that discussed public meeting laws and council engagement. Deborah reminded Council about upcoming meetings needed by the Growth and Diversification Plan Committee and other Ad Hoc committees, and the need to update the certifications and MOUs soon.

Deborah brought up the topic regarding the local government match requirement which was waived in April 2020. This is expiring and the GO Virginia State Board will consider elimination of this exemption and asked DHCD staff to receive comments from each region. Some potential applicants want to get their applications done before the September State Board meeting when the last applications without the local government match will be considered. Deborah would like to send a letter to the State Board which includes comments from grantees, council members, city managers, town managers and county administrators. Discussion ensued around providing positive examples as to how the waiver has helped. Further discussion included whether private enterprise match and in-kind support is included in total match requirements but there is nothing statutory regarding private enterprise satisfying the requirement amount.

Tracy Fitzsimmons moved that Region 8 Council empower the Region 8 Director, Chair, and Executive Committee to craft a response and position to the GO Virginia State Board that would advocate for the continuation of the current match requirements. Mark Merrill amended the motion to include private funding and in-kind contributions as part of the current match requirements. The motion was seconded by Robin Sullenberger and passed unanimously by a voice vote and virtual roll call vote.

Deborah reminded everyone the next meeting will be on July 25th in Winchester with a location to be determined and introduced Kristina Ramsey, Director of Economic Development for Buena Vista and Brandy Flint, Director of Economic Development for Rockbridge County. They provided a more in-depth analysis and update on some of the projects that are happening in the area.

Rick Whittington unveiled Region 8's new website which is designed to be a custom platform to grow and scale.

Other Business

No other business.

Public Comment

No public comment was given.

Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, July 25th, starting at 10:00am.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Council, Chair Kyle adjourned the meeting at 12:10 p.m.