**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 Executive Committee Minutes**

Thursday, March 7, 2024, 8:30 a.m. – 9:54 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87273638088?pwd=NKwg8ZlXkVsgsaqrensieHwaCEzIIX.1

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| **FIRST** | **LAST** | **AFFILIATION** | **ATTENDED** |
| Mark (Chair) | Merrill | Retired-Valley Health System | X |
| Yolanda (Vice) | Shields | Yesbuilds |  |
| Kim | Blosser | Laurel Ridge Community College | X |
| Janet | Clarke | Clarke Consulting, LLC. | X |
| Joanie | Eiland | Elk Trucking, Inc. |  |
| Lai | Lee\* | High Meadow Strategies, LLC | Virtual |
| Connie | Loughhead\* | Des Champ Technologies | Virtual |

\*Members were present after the roll call.

Deborah Flippo (Region 8 Executive Director) attended virtually, Joel Hensley (Region 8 Administrative Coordinator) attended in-person.

**Call to Order**

The Thursday, March 7, 2024 Executive Committee meeting for GO Virginia Region 8 was called to order by Chair Merrill at 8:30 a.m.

**Roll Call/Quorum Confirmation**

Joel Hensley took roll call and noted that with at least 1/3 of the Executive Committee members present, a quorum was confirmed.

**Status of Project Applications**

*Shenandoah Valley Partnership-Blue Mountain RIFA Feasibility Study*

Deborah provided an update on a new marketing agreement between the Blue Mountain site landowner and Augusta County. She reported the agreement has been finalized and approved by the landowner. The agreement, which needs to be approved at the Augusta County Board of Supervisors, is scheduled to be presented at their meeting on March 13. Deborah reported that she has asked Dr. Downey of BRCC to contact members of the Board. The Committee emphasized the time sensitivity of completing this agreement.

*Executive Summary: OKV Tech Hubs Planning Grant*

Deborah provided a summary of a potential new project application. The potential grant application is related to Advanced Air Mobility. The Executive Committee agreed it should go before the Grants Review Committee at their next meeting. The Committee also agreed the applicant should be encouraged to partner with BRCC and SHD as these two organizations are partnering in aircraft maintenance. The Committee agreed this grant application could offer a great opportunity for regional collaboration.

**Approval of Coordinating Entity for Talent Pathways Initiative**

Deborah emphasized that any chosen coordinating entity for Region 8’s TPI initiative will recognize that aviation is priority within the Transportation & Logistics target industry sector within Region 8. She said the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board was the only entity that submitted a proposal to Region 8 to serve as the coordinating entity. Discussion ensued about SVWDB’s capacity. The Executive Committee agreed that the SVWDB has capacity and is qualified to be the coordinating entity.

Janet Clarke made a motion to approve SVWDB to submit a proposal to go to Grants Review Committee and, subsequently to the Region 8 Council. Mark Merrill inquired if this qualifications statement needed to go to the GRC or could the Executive Committee approve. Deborah explained the Executive Committee could vote to approve and defer to the GRC and ask them to review a formal proposal from SVWDB. Janet Clarke then moved to amend her original motion to correct the previous motion, and accept a proposal from the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board as the Region 8 coordinating entity for the Talent Pathways Initiative, with the Statement of Qualifications to be included. Connie Loughhead seconded the motion. The amended motion was approved unanimously by a roll call vote.

**Board Development Plans**

The Executive Committee discussed Council continuity and noted a rather high number of Council members will be leaving the Council this year and in 2025. The Committee discussed potential new members and replacements for three Council members retiring in May 2024. The Committee discussed the need for regional and industry sector balance and maintaining the required ratio of private and public representation. Mark noted a few areas within Region 8 have low representation, specifically, Warren and Page Counties have limited or no representation whereas Shenandoah, Rockingham, Augusta and Frederick Counties have 3-5 members each. Members agreed to reach out to their respective contacts to gauge their interest in joining the Region 8 Council. Ms. Blosser agreed to contact a Page County candidate and Mark Merrill noted he was pursuing several candidates. Ms. Clarke agreed to explore candidates from the Warren region.

**Discussion: Region 8 Support Organizations, Executive Director and Administrative functions**

After a brief discussion, Chairman Merrill decided to continue further discussion at the April 2, 2024 Executive Committee meeting.

**Public Comment**

No one from the public participated.

**Next Meeting**

Tuesday, April 2 at 8:30 AM

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Region 8 Executive Committee the meeting was adjourned at 9:54 a.m. by Chair Merrill.