**GO Virginia Region 8 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, September 2, 2025 at 8:30 AM

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/92473015565>

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| **Committee Member** | **Representing** | **Attendance** |
| Yolanda Shields, Chair | YesBuilds! | ✓ |
| Janet Clarke, Vice Chair | Clarke Consulting, LLC | ✓ |
| Kim Blosser | Laurel Ridge Community College | ✓ |
| Mike Stolartz | UTS Systems | ✓ |
| Lai Lee | High Meadows Strategies, LLC | ✓ |
| Conrad Helsley | NSVRC Commissioner | ✓ |

*Guests in attendance: Alison Varner-Denbigh (Region 8 Executive Director), Brandon Davis (NSVRC), Vince Gregg, & Russell Sears (both-BRTC applicant presenters)*

At 8:30am, Chair Yolanda Shields welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Executive Director Alison Varner-Denbigh called roll, and a quorum determination was made. Approval of August meeting minutes was not needed (no votes at prior meeting).

Blue Ridge Technical Center submitted a grant application draft for Advanced Manufacturing & CNC Pathway Program. The applicant was in attendance to present on the project and answer questions. BRTC did state there were a couple unknowns still in progress; Classroom Plan A = ~$137K of cost to building to accommodate the equipment size into the classroom (This is not feasible grant request) so Plan B location is now under review for equipment placement & room need to outfit the equipment. The executive committee requested for additional explanation regarding data related to the student move-on/”passing” rate, identify prerequisites needed for any of the courses, list the local employers needing machining workforce (there was a concern that machining does not have a local demand), data on # of students going directly into workforce vs. continued education, CIM/CAM acronyms better explained on differences, define further past the program completion (next steps), and incorporate the Plan of Study (VDOE Pathways Sheet) into application. Great conversation.

Talent Pathways Initiative Final Report is complete. Distribution and posting on GoVaR8 website will occur this week. Virtual Meeting will be scheduled for end of September.

Growth & Diversification Plan Draft is under review with the R8 G&D committee with meeting set for Thursday. The Draft deadline to DHCD is 9/15/25.

Project Pipeline was reviewed and discussed. No questions were asked. SVWDB Strategic Planning Meeting is scheduled for 9/10/25 for half day to discuss the TPI report, TPI grant application proposal discussion, and discuss the SVWDB purpose going forward due to State Workforce Funding changes and upcoming leadership transition June 2026 (Sharon Johnson Retiring).

GoVaR**2** distributed a childcare initiative grant application and requested other GoVa regions to sign showing support for childcare initiatives. Yolanda and Janet have voiced the need to speak with R8 council first before signing on behalf of R8. Instead, Harrisonburg-Rockingham County Chamber, in partnership with area organizations, will submit a letter requesting consideration for childcare funding policy on behalf of target industry workforce needs in the area. The letter will be distributed to R8 executive committee and will be included in the GoVa state board meeting under Public Comments.

The Executive Committee adjourned at 10:00 am.

*Next Executive Committee meeting – Tuesday, October 7, 2025 at 8:30 AM (Virtual)*