**REGION 9 COUNCIL MEETING**

**AUGUST 20, 2024**

**9:30 am to 11:30 am**

**ALL-VIRTUAL via Zoom**

Virtual links in agenda posted with this agenda at www.GOVirginia9.org/calendar

**MINUTES**

**Attending**: Ethan Dunstan, Capital River Advisors (Chair); Rob Archer, Codebase Coworking (Vice Chair); Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch, Revalation Vineyards (Treasurer/Secretary); Kim Blosser, Laurel Ridge Community College; Roque Castro, Elysium LD Technology, Inc.; Tom Click, Patriot Industries; Bob Coiner, Town of Gordonsville; Brian Cole, LexisNexis Reed Tech; Gizelle Curtis, Dominion Energy; Ned Galloway, Albemarle County Board of Supervisors; Ray Knott, Atlantic Union Bank; Pace Lochte, UVA Economic Development; Patrick Mauney, Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission; Tony O’Brien, Fluvanna County; Brandon Payne, Self Storage of Louisa; Paige Read, Town of Culpeper; Jean Runyon, Piedmont Virginia Community College; Cathy Schafrik, Greene County; Tom Thorpe, Afton Scientific; Andy Wade, Louisa County; Jonathon Weakley, Madison County; Tina Weaver, Papa Weaver’s Pork, Inc.

**Absent:** Christine Jacobs, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission; Cheryl Kirby, Atlantic Union Bank

**Staff:** Helen Cauthen, Shannon Holland, Christie Taylor, Kristy Dancy

**Guests:** Bo Bundrick; Joseph Dennie, DHCD; Katie Dulaney, CVPED; Ruth Emerick TJPDC; Rachael Hobbs; Sarah Morton, VCW-Piedmont; Marci Posey, SBA

1. **Opening** 
   * **Call to Order**

Ethan Dunstan called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

New Council members attending for the first time were welcomed:

* + Tom Thorpe, Afton Scientific to complete the term of Jim Cheng
  + Ned Galloway, Board of Supervisors for Albemarle County, replacing Tony O’Brien from Fluvanna
  + Cathy Schafrik, Greene County Administrator, replacing Christian Goodwin
  + **Roll Call**

A roll call was performed. A quorum was established, as noted above.

* + **Public Comment**

Opportunities for public comment were made available for the meeting, however, no public comments were received.

1. **Consent Agenda – ACTION ITEM**

Ethan Dunstan noted that the five business items listed had been grouped together with the intention that the Council would discuss and act with one vote unless a motion was made to remove any item from the discussion. No such motion was made.

* + **Meeting Minutes, June 27, 2024**: No questions or comments were presented.
  + **Financials through June 30, 2024**: Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch reported that the FY 2023 funds were spent down to zero, and the organization is now operating out of FY 2024 funds. Active projects are on track for being spent down. The GO Virginia account had a fraudulent check cashed against a $12,000 balance. The Partnership stepped in quickly and covered the gap and is in the process of closing this account and adding additional security to the account while seeking restitution from the banks.
  + **MEMO: FY 2025 Capacity Building Contract**: Shannon Holland provided the update. The Partnership is a party to the contract and is reviewing for approval at its next Board meeting. No changes are anticipated. In general, revisions to the previous contract include:
    - Moved the Scope of Services section closer to the beginning of the document.
    - Expanded the Scope of Services to outline yearly activities required from the support organization and Council to qualify for funding.
    - Extend access to a project’s administration budget by 90 days after the contract end date to support project closeout activities.
* **MEMO: Leadership to Finalize Project VITAL Contract and MOU:** Shannon Holland provided the update.The attached contract is the approved template for Region 9 projects and will serve as the basis for negotiations once the MOU is complete. The highlighted sections will be tailored to specific Project VITAL activities.

Ethan Dunstan commented he was disappointed by the state’s lack of movement toward resolving the MOU contingency so that Project VITAL could get under contract and move forward. He noted that the project could lose key supporters or assets offered through this project, because of the unnecessary lag. Jonathon Weakley commented that other outcomes from the delay could be diminishing enthusiasm for support of the project. Ethan Dunstan asked Joseph Dennie to convey the Council concerns to state leadership.

* **Director Report –** There was no discussion related to this item though Shannon Holland pointed out the Council has $1,00,000 in Per Capita funds available to invest in projects and the $250,000 remaining in the Talent Pathway Initiative (TPI) will sunset at the end of the year.

***Roque Castro made a motion to approve Council business as presented. Patrick Mauney seconded the motion. A roll call vote was performed, and the motion carried. Ned Galloway, Tom Thorpe, and Cathy Schafrik abstained as new members who were not part of the previous meeting.***

1. **Electronic Meeting & Remote Participation Policy – ACTION ITEM**

Ethan Dunstan reviewed the highlights in the memo stating that:

* The new policy reflects both the state law and follows the GO Virginia Board policy
* Will be updated annually
* Region 9 Council’s culture is to host in-person meetings throughout the region

Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch mentioned that due to bandwidth limitations, she sometimes cannot use the video and microphone simultaneously.

Ned Galloway conveyed his interpretation of the policy from his training, pointing out that turning off one's camera may be the same as exiting a room. Consequently, if achieving a quorum is challenging, having the camera off might affect the meeting so it might be worth waiting to approve the policy until details have been ironed out. Joseph Dennie from DHCD will connect Shannon Holland to state FOIA council to help answer these questions.

***Ray Knott made a motion to approve the Electronic Meeting & Remote Participation Policy. Jonathan Weakley seconded the motion. A roll call vote was performed, and the motion carried unanimously.***

1. **Updates**

* Ethan Dunstan shared that the GO Virginia Board Retreat will be held September 9-10 in Danville, VA, at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, home of the GOTEC program. Ethan Dunstan will serve on a panel on the second day of the agenda to represent Region 9. Christie and Shannon are also attending, and Rob Archer may attend.
* Project VITAL update: the GO Virginia Board approved the Charlottesville Biotechnology Accelerator in early June as part of Project VITAL, pending an MOU for state agency collaboration. As of August 19, the MOU draft had not been supplied. On August 9, the Office of the Secretary of Commerce & Trade shared three recommendations for DHCD to implement with these projects before getting them under contract: 1) creating a coordinating group that includes the three-project teams; 2) requiring applicants have a conflict-of-interest statement; and, 3) sustainability documentation at 18 months.
* Helen Cauthen reviewed the bank fraud incident and shared that CVPED acted quickly, sending VCW-Piedmont the funds immediately after learning their check had been stolen. They are working to close accounts, file police reports, file the insurance claim, and other actions related to this incident. Insurance will cover up to $15,000.
* Ethan Dunstan thanked Ray Knott for presenting on behalf of the PATH foundation at the August 21 regional philanthropy meeting. He noted that the Executive Committee had discussed such outreach initiatives at a meeting earlier in the year.

1. **Project Updates: Talent Development** 
   * *Managing Outcomes* – Christie Taylor, Grants Manager, Region 9 presented the background of how outcomes are selected, monitored, influenced, and certified by projects. She also summarized the challenges all three talent projects had experienced, and recommended changes to ameliorate these challenges for future projects.
   * *Talent Supply Connector* – Sarah Morton, Director Virginia Career Works reviewed the progress and challenges of the project, which concludes January 2025.
   * *Tech Talent Retention* – Katie Dulaney, Talent Director, Central Virginia Partnership reviewed the TechLink project, also highlighting successes and hardships, and shared observations for future talent project implementation.

After the presentations, a discussion took place, focusing on dual enrollment, its evolving landscape, participation barriers, and the roles of community colleges and high schools in boosting enrollment. Jean Runyon proposed inviting K-12 leaders to a meeting to learn more about the programs and their challenges.

1. **Project Pipeline**

* Shannon Holland mentioned that a reply to the Council's Request for Letters of Interest regarding the TPI planning grant is anticipated by the September 25 deadline. The initiative, mainly led by CvilleBioHub in collaboration with UVA and other entities, concentrates on the prioritized Biotech sector. Nikki Hastings is in the process of assembling partners and creating matching support. Council members who have suggestions for the match were encouraged to contact Shannon. The funding expires in December 2024.
* Conversations are underway regarding upcoming initiatives that will arise from the REI and Wine Industry Planning grants, with both reports anticipated to be finalized later this year. Moreover, talent and site development concepts that might evolve into projects by late 2024 or early 2025 are also being considered.

1. **Other Business**

* Gizelle Curtis urged members to join the Sites 101 online seminar on August 29th at 2pm, as mentioned in a previous email to Council Members from the new Vice Chair of the GO Virginia Board, Leah Fremouw. Shannon Holland will provide more information.

1. **Adjourn**

***Ray Knott made a motion to adjourn. Andy Wade seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:17 a.m.***