



REGION 9 COUNCIL MEETING

January 16, 2025

9:30 am to 11:30 am

ALL-VIRTUAL

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

MINUTES

Attending: Ethan Dunstan, Capital River Advisors (Chair); Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch, Revalation Vineyards (Treasurer/Secretary); Kim Blosser, Laurel Ridge Community College; Ike Broaddus, Fauquier County; Roque Castro, Elysium LD Technology, Inc.; Tom Click, Patriot Industries; Gizelle Curtis, Dominion Energy; Ned Galloway, Albemarle County Board of Supervisors; Christine Jacobs, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission; Cheryl Kirby, Atlantic Union Bank; Ray Knott, Blue Ridge Bank; Pace Lochte, UVA Economic Development; Patrick Mauney, Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission; 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: Rob Archer, Codebase Coworking (Vice Chair); Brian Cole, LexisNexis Reed Tech; Brandon Payne, Self-Storage of Louisa

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

Guests: Jeanette Ark, Albemarle County; Matt Brown, Matt Brown Consulting; Joseph Dennie, DHCD; Rose Deal, Town of Culpeper; Tracey Gardner, Madison County; Rebecca Haydock, Venture Central; Rachael Hobbs, UVA; Rebecca Ivins; Matt Johnson, City of Charlottesville; Maureen Kelley, Nelson County; Emily Kilroy, Albemarle County; Hope Lawrence, Venture Central; Julie Perry, Orange County; Greg Rosko, PVCC; Carlton Shutt, MEC-Fauquier; Debroah Van Earsel, UVAF; Alan Yost, Greene County, and others

1. Opening

- **Call to Order**

Ethan Dunstan called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

Council welcomed Ike Broaddus from Fauquier County Board of Supervisors to his first meeting. He was appointed by RRRC to complete the term of Bob Coiner who retired on December 31.

- **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.

2. Consent Agenda – ACTION ITEM

Ethan Dunstan noted that the listed agenda items are to be voted on with one action unless there is a motion to move any item separately. As Chair, he requested to consider the Director Report for a separate discussion and action immediately following the consent agenda; there were no objections.

- **Meeting Minutes, October 19, 2024:** No discussion.

- **Financials through November 30, 2024:** Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch reviewed the financial report. She clarified that the \$70.50 in banking fees will be reimbursed in December. Several budget categories are over 50%, including Administration at 67% and Equipment at 85%. Staff has proposed a budget revision. Four projects will close soon, and new projects like VITAL and BioBridge are being added.
- **MEMO: FY 24 Capacity Building Budget Revision:** There was no discussion on this memo.
- **MEMO: Regionally Significant Sites Definition:** Ethan Dunstan opened the floor for discussion on the proposed Region 9 definition for a “regionally significant site”. It was clarified that this definition is new, not a reworking of an existing one. A question was raised about whether properties at Tier 3 and above are considered under this definition, and if this could result in missed opportunities, especially in the northern part of the region. The discussion highlighted that sites below Tier 3 primarily involve due diligence work, and these sites could pursue planning grants to prepare them for Tier 3 consideration and subsequent implementation grants. The task force will continue to identify Tier 1-3 sites for grants.

Jonathan Weakley made a motion to approve Council business as presented. Ray Knott seconded the motion. A roll call vote was performed. Motion carried.

- **Dashboard/Director Report:** Shannon Holland reported that since the Director Report was published, the pending Food & Beverage Business Accelerator planning grant had been awarded through DHCD for \$100,000. Therefore, only \$900,000 is available for grant funding instead of the \$1M noted on the Director Report. The next \$1M funding allocation is not available until July 1. If both proposals under consideration at the meeting are awarded at the requested funding levels, the amount would exceed the available funds by \$66,970. The Wine Industry Applicant team has requested a revision to their proposal that could address this gap, so the Council should consider reviewing both proposals completely before acting on either.

Tom Click made a motion to accept the Director Report as presented and hold action until both proposals were discussed. Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch seconded the motion. A roll call vote was performed. Motion carried.

3. Updates from Committees, Task Forces (TF), etc.

Ethan Dunstan shared that there are now three chairs appointed to three task forces that will serve at least until the Annual Meeting when the Nominating Committee addresses. He thanked Tom Click, Ray Knott, and Brandon Payne for taking on these roles.

- **Entrepreneurship Task Force**
Tom Click reported that the Task Force met on January 7, 2025. No projects were reviewed, but staff discussed ongoing projects like the Rural Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Building grant and the REI grant. He mentioned that he and Shannon Holland met with the REI team on Monday to provide guidance on future GO Virginia entrepreneurship grant funding in the region.
- **Grow Existing Business Task Force**
Ray Knott reported that the Task Force met on January 7, 2025, to discuss the final Wine Industry Action Plan deliverable and the implementation proposal. Staff shared their efforts in creating an action plan to support the implementation grant. The action plan was delivered with the grant proposal.

- **Sites Task Force**
Ethan Dunstan shared the Task Force met on January 7, 2025, to discuss the Rivanna Futures Site proposal as well as discuss the proposed draft definition of “regionally significant sites.”
- **Talent Development Task Force**
No report.
- **Nominating Committee**
Ethan Dunstan announced that the Nominating Committee will soon start the nomination process for the Annual Slate. Members are encouraged to ask questions or express interest in roles.
- **Chair & Executive Committee**
Ethan Dunstan reported that another Growth Plan Update is due this year. He noted that a timeline for this effort was included in the packet, and activities will commence once DHCD delivers the data set in late January. Referring to the link on the agenda, Ethan Dunstan recommended that members take time to follow the link on the agenda to review the GO Virginia Program review tool. Ethan Dunstan also noted that the Executive Committee met on January 7, 2025, and discussed engaging council members in project development and management through Task Force activities.

4. Proposal Review – ACTION ITEM

Ethan Dunstan thanked the Council Members who scored proposals: Christine Jacobs, Paige Read, Jean Runyon, Andy Wade, Patrick Mauney, Gizelle Curtis, Brandon Payne, and Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitch. The Sites project received 7 reviews, while the Growing Existing Business project received 3 reviews.

- **Rivanna Futures (Sites):** Shannon Holland reported that the Albemarle County Economic Development office is leading the Rivanna Futures proposal with Greene County and Charlottesville, which are providing support and participating on an advisory board. CVPED is also on the advisory board. The proposal requests \$613,57 to advance 172 acres in northern Albemarle from Tier 3 to Tier 4. This project aligns with the Region 9 Growth Plan's goals of site development for target sectors and supports the CEDS Plan Super Regional Strategies. Reviewers noted it meets GO Virginia's goals of higher-paying jobs, out-of-state investment, transformative projects, and regional collaboration.

These updates were provided following the Task Force review:

- 1) Update ROI: New ROI worksheets submitted along with a new IMPLAN study from Weldon Cooper have been received.
- 2) The advisory committee will meet monthly though that have already been meeting to some degree now. It was shared that the CVPED Executive Committee, and the CVPED Board, that include Administrators from 9 local governments, supports this proposal.
- 3) Line and Grade has a term contract with Albemarle County and is ready to go. The County is now working on a request for qualifications for the next phases of work.
- 4) VEDP recommended that GO Virginia be approached first to better prepare this site for greater funding via VBRSP. The applicant has about \$25M in articulated grant

potential, but those funds require this work to be done or underway. The project team is pursuing MEI through the General Assembly due to the amount needed as well as working with VEDP. They are also working with VEDP on EDAP funding, but this will not affect the dollar amount requested from GO Virginia, again due to funding needs.

- 5) Applicant is in contact with REC regularly and have an in-depth meeting soon. The applicant is also pursuing redundant power and broadband at the site.
- Discussion of the project included:
 - The Task Force's general support for the project, awarding it a high average score.
 - The county's purchase of 462 acres and the conceptual development of 172 acres, with Phase 1 encompassing the initial 50 acres.
 - The project's current classification is Tier 3, with a goal to reach Tier 4.
 - The county's application for funding from the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program for a much larger amount to “move dirt”.
 - The role of GO Virginia funding in advancing design efforts to enable prompt construction if additional funding is secured.
 - Comparisons to the success of the Shannon Hill site in Louisa County.
 - Concerns about allocating GO Virginia funds without confirmed VBRSP funding.
 - The project team's thoroughness, responsiveness, and confidence-inspiring efforts.
 - The clear outlining of ROI and diligent risk mitigation efforts.

5. Proposal Review – ACTION ITEM

- **Wine Industry Implementation Grant (Grow Existing Business):** Shannon Holland presented a proposal for \$353,120 to benefit all of Region 9. With local matches totaling nearly \$210,000 and pending cash match from Albemarle, the grant aims to strengthen the wine sector by coordinating 11 of 25 recommendations from the Wine Industry Report Action Plan. This initiative is expected to create 10 jobs, expand exports for 10 businesses, and serve 104 businesses. The project will also form a coalition, develop professional credentials for the wine industry, and improve impact and cost production reporting. Reviewers noted this as a transformative project that fosters higher-paying jobs and collaboration, aligning with GO Virginia program goals.

These updates were provided following the Task Force review:

- 1) Revised # of jobs created – 20; Revised # of companies exporting – 25
- 2) Salary projections were pulled from (<https://www.winebusiness.com/wbm/article/292594>).
- 3) The Virginia Wine Board provides funding for research, education, and marketing initiatives to support the Virginia wine industry but does not carry out projects directly. The Coalition aims to enhance the wine industry with specialized programs and services that are currently unavailable, specifically to promote Virginia wine in the traded sector. It will offer education and training to boost job growth and increase wages. As a 501c3 organization, it can raise funds to sustain its activities.

- 4) Businesses will be directed to the SBDC directly for service unless they need the specialized resources that the Coalition will offer. Any new content will be owned by the grant applicant until the Coalition is a viable business entity.
- 5) Credential needs stronger tie-in and validation with a direct effect on exports, and the activity starts late in the grant so may not be effective in contributing to outcomes, project would likely be stronger without it: There is anecdotal information from other states that have wine credential programs (CA, TX, WA, OR); however, there is no economic data linking credentials to exports. Therefore, the applicant requested that the credential program be removed from the grant request (\$128,995).

During the discussion, the following topics were covered:

- Expansion of jobs through capacity building in vineyard, production, and sales.
- The potential impact on the wine industry due to the lack of a central body organizing implementation projects.
- The need for a central champion to elevate the industry to a global level through exporting.
- Sustainability through curriculum development and the creation of a revenue stream for credentialing organizations.
- The cost efficiency of the program compared to individual vineyard efforts.
- The \$88,000 technical category, needs more detail to support
- The possibility of expanding partnerships with other regions
- The applicant team's request to remove the credential activity from the proposal, reducing the original GO Virginia request by \$128,995 to a revised request of \$224,125.

Jonathan Weakley made a motion to approve the wine grant with removal of funding for the certification. Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch seconded the motion. A roll call vote was performed. Paige Read abstained. Motion carried.

Ray Knott made a motion to approve the Rivanna Futures proposal. Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch seconded the motion. A roll call vote was performed. Motion carried.

Shannon Holland reviewed the process for advancing these to the GO Virginia Board.

6. Project Pipeline -

Pace Lochte shared that a coalition is forming to develop a planning grant request. The funds would be used to evaluate the opportunity presented by significant public and private investments that have been made in the region, particularly in life science, data science, AI, autonomy, advanced materials, cyber, and national security. Examples include Rivanna Futures, Afton Scientific expansion, Maning Institute for Biotechnology, National Security and Policy Data Institute, CvilleBioHub, NSSA Conference, MITRE drone facility, etc. The coalition is interested in a data-driven approach to assess the region's economic potential and develop a regional advanced industry cluster and ecosystem. St. Louis conducted a similar exercise resulting in a GeoFutures roadmap. The scope and deliverables are being refined, with a proposal expected in March. The grant aims to support ecosystem development and industry interplay, articulating the

region's competitive advantage and developing a shared vision for a public-private partnership, like other regions with cohesive global-market identities.

Shannon Holland said she and Helen continue to evaluate site grant opportunities. Staff continue to work hard with the REI team to get an action plan that will deliver a strong implementation grant. The REI report and action plan should define opportunities for investing in future implementation grants. Staff also received feedback during the task force meetings that sharing new projects from other regions in some form might help task forces drive ideas around new projects as well.

Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch inquired about the challenges in the Tech Academies dual enrollment program. Kim Blosser explained that due to lower-than-expected enrollment, the program shifted to bootcamps, which are now fully enrolled. They have moved from full semesters to blocks and weekends. When asked why only Rappahannock and Fauquier counties were included, Blosser clarified that the program started with schools partnered with the Fauquier campus, but the bootcamps are open to all counties.

7. Other Business -

There was no other business.

8. Adjourn

Jonathan Weakley made a motion to adjourn. Tom Thorpe seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.