

**GO Virginia Region 2 Council  
Meeting Minutes  
May 22, 2017 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**Location** Liberty University Montview Student Union,  
3rd floor ballroom 1971 University Blvd. Lynchburg, VA

Council Members In Attendance: Marla Akridge, Ab Boxley, Dr. John Capps, Kenneth Craig, Patrick Collignon, Beverly Dalton, Dr. Angela Falconetti, Dr. Michael Friedlander, William Fralin, Rex Geveden, Don Halliwill, Dr. Victor Iannello, Doug Juanarena, Floyd Merryman, Debbie Petrine, John Putney, Dr. Ray Smoot, E.W. Tibbs, Shannon Valentine, John Williamson

Council Members in Attendance via Conference Call: Dr. Nathaniel Bishop, Sandy Davis, Dr. Brian Hemphill

Council Members Absent: Dr. Eddie Amos, Dr. John Dooley, Michael Fleming, Watt Foster, Mike Hamlar, Terry Jamerson, Randy Smith, E.W. Tibbs

Others Present: Duncan Adams, Caroline Biggs, Ed Craighill, Jamie Glass, Larry Jackson, Dr. John Provo, Dr. Scott Tate, Jonathan Whitt, Dwayne Yancey

**I. Call to Order**

- a. Chairman Smoot convened the meeting of the GO Virginia Region 2 Council on May 22, 2017 at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia at 1:07 p.m.

**II. Policy on Individual Participation in FOIA Council Meetings by Electronic Means under Virginia 2.2-3708.1**

- a. Chairman Smoot directed Council members to the proposed policy document allowing electronic participation of individual members. Mr. Boxley motioned for adoption of the policy. Mr. Williamson seconded. All members voted in favor with none opposed.

**III. Presentation – Lynchburg Region**

- a. Megan Lucas of the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, Gary Christie and Ben Bowman, Executive Director of the Region 2000 Workforce Development Board presented to the Council Ms. Lucas shared a packet of information including regional information and three recent reports to the Board: an updated comprehensive economic development strategy; a target industry study; and a Lynchburg Regional Connectivity transportation study.

- b. Ms. Lucas presented on regional strengths, particularly from the perspective of industry attraction.
- c. Mr. Christie shared highlights from the Lynchburg Regional Connectivity study.
- d. Mr. Bowman provided information on the region's workforce and educational and training programs.
- e. Discussion – Council members asked questions and engaged the presenters in questions about the region. Mr. Bowman had shared information about a region goal to retain more of the numerous college graduates within the region. Council members asked about the mechanisms for tracking those numbers. Dr. Friedlander suggested that an important part of ecosystem is also attracting new talent to region who are skilled. He inquired as to the amount of focus on retaining those here versus a focus on attracting highly skilled talent from without the region. Mr. Juanarena also echoed this concern, sharing an example of technology companies having to work hard to recruit talent to the region.

Dr. Iannello asked about jobs for people employed not in college programs (truck drivers, construction, etc.) and suggested the region can do a better job with that population of workers (high school graduates). Mr. Fralin asked about the connection between the number of certification and training completions and the numbers of needed workers, to get a specific sense of employer needs for trained workers. Mr. Williamson also asked question about data. Mr. Bowman and Dr. Provo shared that there is information about specific openings and needs including workforce development board strategic plans and other data. Provo shared that future projections are derived from aggregated and historical data, which is not always validated with regional employers. Council members expressed the perspective that aggregated job openings and employment data will be useful.

Dr. Smoot asked, what do you need in this region to do better? Ms. Lucas responded from the group and shared a discussion last week with regional economic developers who identified the region's biggest need as sites that are 50 acres or larger with infrastructure in place. She also mentioned the importance of continuing to develop a skilled workforce.

#### **IV. Update on GO Virginia Region 2 Work Plan**

- a. Dr. Provo directed members' attention to their packets and a document outlining the work plan. Provo summarized the plan for Council.
- b. Provo described that the Virginia Tech team, on behalf of the Council, will assemble four workgroups to provide input into areas related to the plan. Mr. Provo shared information on recruiting individuals for workgroup participation

and encouraged Council to share the opportunity widely. Mr. Provo's team at Virginia Tech has distributed a sign-up and interest survey to a broad range of stakeholders across the region, including those who had previously expressed interest in a Council position.

- c. Discussion with Council. Mr. Fralin inquired about the expectations for a growth and development plan. Provo referenced the language provided by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development and suggested that the plan is largely to be defined by Council, as developed through the work process. Dr. Smoot suggested that not only should Council look at existing plans and what is being done in the region, but the group should also consider, where can we make a difference? Fralin observed that numbers and metrics would be extremely important, as well as whether we could get input from Council on elements or themes most important to measure. Dr. Friedlander suggested the Council might ultimately consider the possibility of different levels of projects and funding, encouraging smaller pilot projects as well as funding some larger initiatives.

#### **V. Council Budget: discussion and adoption**

- a. Dr. Provo presented information on the budget request and referred Members to the budget request document, which he summarized. The state term is a budget request (\$650,000) for each region, for staffing, plan development, and capacity building. He shared that the first \$400,000 is directly available from the state and the last \$250,000 must be paired with regional matching resources.
- b. Provo clarified that the approval of this request does not restrict the Council from making future changes. He shared that, as he understands, most regions are requesting all of the available funding of \$650,000. Provo said that this funding will support logistics and meetings, develop the Growth and Diversification Plan, provide technical assistance and support to applicants, administer contracts, handle project reporting and evaluation, reporting and updates of Growth and Diversification Plan, and to establish project reserves.
- c. Brief discussion among Council, including some questions about process and budget templates.
- d. Dr. Friedlander moved that the Council approve the budget request. Mr. Merryman seconded the motion. All those present were in favor and none were opposed.

#### **VI. Other Administrative Updates**

- a. Chairman Smoot referred members to the copy of the April 27 meeting minutes and asked for any comments or revisions. Dr. Falconetti stated that her name should be listed with those who participated via conference call. Dr. Iannello stated that his last name was spelled incorrectly, and should have an additional

“n”. Boxley motioned that the minutes be approved. Williamson seconded. All were in favor with none opposed.

- b. Chairman Smoot referenced the Council by-laws document in the member packets, and asked for members to review and provide any comments or questions.

## **VII. Council Discussion**

- a. Chairman Smoot asked for other items from members.
- b. Mr. Fralin reiterated the importance of work groups and the question of capturing how we would measure success in the region. He reiterated the importance to move quickly and empowering Dr. Provo and the Virginia Tech team to assemble workgroups and coordinate their activities. Mr. Fralin also said it is important to let people know about this opportunity to provide input and for the workgroup membership to be open and not exclusive. Mr. Smoot asked council members to encourage people to participate on committee and to share the statement of interest email link that Provo provided. The Council asked about numbers so far. Provo responded that approximately 3 dozen or so individuals have expressed interest in workgroup participation to date.
- c. There was a general discussion about workgroups. Council members explored whether or not we can begin to identify measures without guidance or without the plan document. Members also suggested looking at individuals on committees and seeing if we need to recruit others to ensure expertise and representation on workgroups. A member suggested remote access may be important for workgroup participation as well.

## **VIII. Public Comment**

- a. Chairman Smoot called for comments from the audience. There were no comments from those in attendance.

## **IX. Adjournment**

- a. Chairman Smoot suggested that Council be guided by considering what can we do that is going to make a contribution to advancing welfare of region and that does require metrics. He shared the next meeting date and location: June 29, 2017 from 3-5 pm in Fairlawn, Virginia at the New River Valley Regional Commission facility.
- b. Meeting Adjourned at 3:10 pm.