



**REGIONAL COUNCIL 9
GEB + E-SHIP TASK FORCE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 29, 2020
2:00 PM to 3:00 PM
Zoom Link or Call-In**

Due to the COVID crisis this meeting was held via electronic means details included with this agenda.

*Public Comments are welcome. To submit a public comment form, enclosed, complete the attached form and email to sholland@centralvirginia.org by 7 am the day of this meeting.

MINUTES

Task Force Members Attending:

Grow Existing Businesses: Brian Cole, Jim Crozier, Ed Scott, Ray Knott, Alicia Pitorri, Felix Sarfo-Kantanka

Innovation/E-ship: Jim Cheng, Pace Lochte, Tom Click, Yolunda Harrell

Talent Development: Ed Dalrymple

Absent: Miles Friedman, Kurt Krueger

Staff: Shannon Holland, Helen Cauthen

Guests: None

1. Welcome

Ed Scott, Chair

Ed Scott opened the meeting at 2:01 pm and stated that the meeting was being held electronically via Zoom video and call-in due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor. He noted that the purpose of the meeting was to review two proposals and make recommendations for the full Council to consider during the October 14, 2020, Council Meeting.

2. Roll Call

Shannon Holland, Director

Shannon Holland performed a roll call attendance and attendance is noted above and a quorum was present.

3. Public Comment

Ed Scott

Ed Scott stated the meeting had been publicly noticed and a public comment form was made available. All public comments were to be emailed by 7 am today. Shannon Holland stated that no public comments had been received.

4. Approve Prior Meeting Minutes, as needed

Ed Scott

Ed Scott noted that there were no prior meeting minutes to review.

5. Project Review(s) and Vote(s), as needed

Ed Scott

• Venture Central

Ed Scott stated that Region 9 has approximately 1.3 million in Per Capita project funding available to award to Region 9 projects. He asked Shannon Holland to provide any proposal updates, as needed. Shannon Holland indicated that she had recently learned of a similar project, RAMP out of Roanoke/Blacksburg, had been awarded 1 million in federal funds for regional efforts showing opportunity for downriver sustainability. Also, Shannon Holland stated that staff recommended the project for proposal as it was in line with the Venture Hub Planning Grant, funded by GO Virginia Region 9 Council, and the Region 9 Growth Plan, as well as the Region 9 Council's strategy for driving a

region wide entrepreneurship ecosystem through two coordinated initiatives, Venture Hub and the Rural E-ship Action Plan.

Jim Cheng began the project discussion by adding that other initiatives that could support this initiative are: CIT, now VIPA and that the Venture Central project fits within the bigger pictures of the Regional Council's approach to regional ecosystem development. Helen Cauthen shared that she had discussed the proposal with economic developers of the rural localities that are members of the Central Virginia Partnership and wrote a Letter of Support reflecting their support. Ed Dalrymple noted he was pleased with the number of reviewers for the project. Ray Knott had a question regarding how the applicant will navigate if they don't see the volume of deal flow that might be caused by COVID.

Jim Cheng made a motion to recommend to the Council to approve the Venture Central Proposal. Jim Crozier seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried. Yolunda Harrell and Pace Lochte abstained.

6. Inter-Regional Project(s) Review(s) and Vote(s), as needed **Ed Scott**
• **VA Bio Connect**

Ed Scott reminded the reviewers that the Council voted to be a participating region on this statewide initiative and that he partnering region should have the opportunity to review the proposal and define their support. Ed Scott added that no funds are required from Region 9 in the proposal. Ed Scott asked Shannon Holland to provide any additional project updates, if any. Shannon Holland shared that:

- 1) Region 9 should benefit by being more closely connected to the entire statewide biotech industry and increase awareness of biotech industry strength in Region 9.
- 2) GMU has a contract with DHCD and they will review the ROI provided.
- 3) Over 1.5 million match has now been documented per the applicant representative.

A robust discussion ensued related to the proposal. It was stated that though the project would not directly benefit the entire Region 9 footprint, the target sector, biotech, was an important one and the project could be very strong for the state, as a whole. More discussion ensued around the depth of the talent pipeline portion of the proposal and whether that initiative would only serve higher paying jobs versus career pathways.

Jim Crozier made a motion to recommend to the Council to approve the VA Bio Connect proposal with additional information from the applicant regarding the focus of talent development. Alicia Pitorri seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried.

7. Other Business **Ed Scott**
No new business was presented.

8. Adjourn **Ed Scott**
Ray Knott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:52 pm. Tom Click seconded the motion. The motion carried.