



## REGION 9 COUNCIL MINUTES

APRIL 25, 2024

9:30 am to 11:30 am

Orange County Public Safety Building

11282 Government Center Dr., Orange, VA 22960

In-Person Meeting; virtual link was provided in agenda.

**Attending:** Ethan Dunstan, Capital River Advisors (Chair); Rob Archer, Codebase Coworking (Vice Chair); Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch, Revaluation Vineyards (Treasurer/Secretary); Kim Blosser, Laurel Ridge Community College; Roque Castro, Elysium LD Technology, Inc.; Tom Click, Patriot Industries; Gizelle Curtis, Dominion Energy; Christian Goodwin, Louisa County; Christine Jacobs, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission; Ray Knott, Atlantic Union Bank; Pace Lochte, UVA Economic Development; Patrick Mauney, Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission; Paige Read, Town of Culpeper; Andy Wade, Louisa County; Jonathon Weakley, Madison County; Tina Weaver, Papa Weaver's Pork, Inc.

**Attending Virtually:** Brandon Payne, Ruckersville Self Storage

**Absent:** Kenny Allison, The Coleman Group; Bob Coiner, Town of Gordonsville; Brian Cole, LexisNexis Reed Tech; Jean Runyon, Piedmont Virginia Community College

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

**Guests:** Joseph Dennie, DHCD; Sharra Gibson, DHCD; Nikki Hastings, CvilleBioHub; Rachael Hobbs, UVA Julie Perry, Orange County; Candance Spence, CVPED; Ted Vorhees, Orange County

**Guests (virtual):** Matthew Brown, MWJ Brown Consulting; Stephen Davis, CIC; Katie Dulaney, CVPED; Sara Dunnigan, DHCD; Tracey Gardner, Madison County; Dana Goldsmith; Charlie Henneman, CvilleBioHub; Craig Honick, Good People Research; Hope Lawrence, Venture Central; Matt Johnson, City of Charlottesville; Tony O'Brien, Fluvanna County (Council member joining as non-voting guest); Doug Parsons, Fauquier County; Payam Pourtaheri, AgroSpheres; Jennifer Schmack, Fluvanna County

### 1. Opening

- **Call to Order**

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

- **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. Council Business – 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, January 26, 2024

- Memo: Accept FY 2023 Capacity Building Budget Revision
- Financials through February 2024
- Memo: Approve FY 2025 Capacity Building Budget and Contract
- Director Report and Infographic

When discussing the Director’s Report, Shannon Holland noted that the Council still has not received any responses to the Request for Letters of Interest for the Talent Pathways Initiative (TPI) opportunity and the funds will expire December 2024. Ray Knott asked what might be replicable from other regions. Shannon Holland said that Virginia Tech has taken on TPI activities but is also the support organization for GO Virginia in Region 2. She also added that she has initiated discussions with community colleges, Virginia Career Works, the Partnership, and UVA however a mutually beneficial opportunity has not yet been identified. Joseph Dennie with DHCD shared that in Region 4 (Richmond) the community colleges have taken the lead on the project.

***Ray Knott made a motion to approve Council business as presented. Christian Goodwin seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.***

### **3. Updates from Committees, Task Forces, etc.**

- **Executive Committee**

Ethan Dunstan reported that the Executive Committee met on April 4. They approved a budget revision and had an early discussion with the Project VITAL grant leader, Nikki Hastings, PhD.

- **Nominating Committee**

Patrick Mauney reported that the Nominating Committee has not met since the last Council Meeting. He noted that nomination forms are posted on the Council website and are due May 10.

- **Task Forces**

The Grow Existing Business Task Force and the Entrepreneurship Task Force met on April 12 to discuss the Project VITAL proposal. The applicant team was present at the meeting. Terry Clower of George Mason University was also present to discuss Return on Investment (ROI) model validation.

- **Chair**

Ethan Dunstan appointed a new Nominating Committee, as required in the Bylaws. The members will be Brian Cole, Christine Jacobs, Patrick Mauney, and Jonathon Weakley.

Ethan Dunstan informed the Council that there was a project in development, led by Region 6 and involving Orange County schools. This project requires no action from the Council. The project is led by Mary Washington University, and it includes AI teacher training and virtual AI academies.

### **4. Project Review – ACTION ITEM**

Project VITAL: Charlottesville Biotechnology Accelerator, Nikki Hastings, PhD, CvilleBioHub

Shannon Holland gave updates on the proposal including:

- **Sustainability:** In response to Council feedback, the proposal will be updated to include a sustainability model that includes pursuit of federal funding, fee for service models and a sustainability committee that will meet monthly.

- **Budget:** The Total Match amount has increased by \$250,000 as the project has documentation committing the UVA space at \$750,000 and has moved the Wilson Sonsini IP legal services to the Other Leverage category resulting in the net increase.
- **ROI:** The reviewers were supportive of the ROI in the proposal but because this project will target statewide funds, a validation by Terry Clower at GMU must be submitted when the proposal is submitted to the state board.

Ethan Dunstan thanked the many Council members who invested their time and expertise in evaluating the project. Comments made during the meeting discussion included:

- The project is lucrative to the region. It will generate jobs and fill the void created by a lack of accelerators in the region.
- The project demonstrates strong inter-regional and intra-regional collaboration with three distinct projects that will work together.
- There is strong sustainability in the alignment with National Science Foundation federal grant opportunities.
- It is also complementary to UVA research activities and the upcoming Biotechnology Institute.
- There is significant indirect and induced economic impact.
- The project is a much-needed support mechanism for bringing new products to market.
- As companies move out of the acceleration phase they will expand beyond Charlottesville and into other localities, benefiting the region.
- There are many organizations and individuals that would be keenly interested in creating side-funds to support this initiative thus addressing sustainability questions.
- The project is filling a crucial gap and is a quality strategic investment in a proven leadership team.
- This project will “put the transmission in the car.”

***Pace Lochte made a motion to approve Project VITAL along with the Local and Total Match Waivers included in the proposal. Paige Read seconded the motion. A roll call was performed. The motion carried unanimously.***

## 5. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update

Patrick Mauney and Christine Jacobs presented an update on the CEDS and Super Regional Strategies process. [The presentation is posted with these minutes at <https://www.govirginia9.org/calendar/> ]

- There was a discussion on Goal 2. There were questions regarding whether clean energy referred to generation, R&D, or manufacturing. Patrick Mauney said the Council can choose to act on these findings in a way that is best suited for the region.
- Andy Wade commented that there has been discussion around state incentives to promote local affordable housing plans that could impact Goal 6.
- Ethan Dunstan asked staff to work with Christine Jacobs, Patrick Mauney, and the Central Virginia Partnership to make a recommendation at the June Council Meeting as to how to update the Growth Plan with these findings.

## 6. Project Updates

- **Regional Entrepreneurship Investment Strategy (REI)**  
Stephen Davis, President, Community Investment Collaborative (CIC), presented on the REI grant. He noted that the focus group process took longer than expected but he doesn't expect a delay of the report.

Christian Goodwin asked about how specific the recommendations will be. Stephen Davis answered there will be detailed action items such as project-ready applications for GO Virginia grants. Ray Knott asked to revisit interviews in localities where participation is currently low, to ensure adequate representation. [The presentation is posted with these minutes at <https://www.govirginia9.org/calendar/> ]

- **Wine Industry Planning Grant Update**  
Matt Brown, M. W. J. Brown Consulting, LLC, gave the presentation. The study is the first of its kind in the state and will be peer-reviewed inside and outside of Virginia. [The presentation is posted with these minutes at <https://www.govirginia9.org/calendar/> ]

**7. Project Pipeline**

There were no updates.

**8. Other Business**

Pace Lochte asked if there is anything Council members can do in preparation for the state board vote on Project VITAL. Shannon Holland will assemble speaking points to share. Senator Deeds has recently been appointed to serve on the GO Virginia Board.

**9. Adjourn**

***Tom Click made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 11:17 a.m.***

\*Council Member Virtual Participation - To comply with law and policy, the following is reported:

Council Member	Joined from	Reason
Brandon Payne	VA	Personal matter