



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR  
**GROWTH &  
OPPORTUNITY**  
IN EACH REGION  
REGIONAL COUNCIL 9

**REGIONAL COUNCIL 9  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**JANUARY 7, 2025**

**1:30 pm to 2:30 pm**

**ALL-VIRTUAL**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89266954721>

Call 434-979-5610 x. 106 with connectivity issues.

**MINUTES**

**Executive Committee Members Present:** Ethan Dunstan, Chair; Rob Archer, Vice Chair; Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch, Treasurer; Roque Castro, Jean Runyon

**Guests present:** Pace Lochte

**Staff present:** Helen Cauthen, Shannon Holland, Christie Taylor

**1. Welcome**

Ethan Dunstan called the meeting to order at 1:31 PM and stated that the meeting was held all-virtual, due to the Governor's State of Emergency Declaration.

- Roll Call  
A roll call was performed. **A quorum was established, as noted above.**
- Public Comment  
No public comment was submitted prior to or at the meeting.

**2. Committee Business – Action Item**

Ethan Dunstan stated that both items of committee business were listed here with the intent of discussing and acting on with one vote unless he heard a motion to discuss each item separately. No motion was made.

- Approve Minutes
- Approve Financials

***Ray Knott made a motion to accept the April 3, 2024 Minutes and October 31, 2024, Financials as presented. Roque Castro seconded the motion. The motion carried.***

After the motion, Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch reviewed the financial report for FY24 funds through October 31, 2024. The Council can expect a budget revision request at the January Council meeting to bring the FY24 budget in line with actual year-end budget. For example, Admin is at \$20,000 and was last budgeted at \$37,000; \$7,000 is budgeted for the audit but it could be closer to \$12,000. One computer replacement also means the equipment line needs to be adjusted. The audit is due to DHCD 3/31, and CVPED is in the process of finalizing that.

**3. Project Pipeline**

- Project in Development

Pace Lochte attended in order to share information on a potential project being discussed. Pace Lochte noted that there had been significant public and private sector investments in our region, especially relation to life science, data science, AI and autonomy, advance materials, cyber, and national security. She is part of a coalition interested in a data-driven approach to assessing how the region could realize the economic potential of these and other assets to drive the development of a regional advanced industry cluster and ecosystem.

This activity and collaboration could lead to a planning grant request to GO Virginia that might include:

- Quantitative assessment of industry-facing core competencies and of the region's growing

industry clusters.

- Identification of high growth opportunities.
- Situational assessment for regional development to inform strategic priorities.
- A Strategic Roadmap with recommended strategies and actions with a line of sight to future investments needed create additional opportunity.

St. Louis did a similar exercise when significant investments were made in geospatial intelligence, resulting in a GeoFutures roadmap with a line of sight to becoming a geospatial center of excellence.

They are still refining the scope and deliverables and plan to submit a Region 9 proposal in time to meet the March deadline. The scope is expected to include all of Region 9 in the assessment.

Helen Cauthen noted that the GeoFutures initiative has positively impacted a large regional area by delivering a cohesive message, identity, and unique differentiator. Implementing a similar approach for our region would present a significant opportunity. Jean Runyon added that there is a need to pull the groups together for a unified focus moving forward.

- **Grant Funding**

Shannon Holland informed the Committee that at the January 16 Council meeting there are three projects that could overdraw the \$1M allocation:

- Food & Bev Accelerator – \$100,870 (approved at Council, but is still waiting for DHCD approval)
- Sites – \$613,750
- Wine – \$ 353,120

Shannon Holland has been seeking guidance from DHCD on how to address this issue but hasn't heard back. One factor is that if one project is not awarded that would affect the total.

At a previous meeting using Capacity Building funding on a sites project was discussed. Considering the proposed Rivanna Futures project, this is no longer being pursued. Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch asked what has been funded through those funds before. Shannon Holland clarified that two entrepreneurship planning reports were funded in addition to the Super Regional Strategies with the recent CEDS initiatives.

#### **4. Task Force Updates and Engagement**

- **Sites:** Shannon Holland provided the update on the primary action item which was addressing the draft for defining regionally significant site, reviewed Rivanna Futures proposal and made recommendations for strengthening.
- **Grow Existing Businesses:** Ray Knott provided an update on meeting outcomes which chiefly concerned reviewing the Wine Industry Implementation proposal and feedback to the project team.
- **Entrepreneurship:** Shannon Holland shared the Task Force addressed feedback to REI project team and provided a path forward for addressing a project that has not delivered reports to the councils expectations.
- **Talent Development:** Did not meet

Ethan Dunstan thanked those who attended the Task Force meetings. Holding those meetings is part of the effort we discussed at the Council Meeting for engaging Council Members. He has appointed members to lead those task forces until the nominating committee can nominate new

leaders (or re-nominate) leaders for the Task Forces in June at the Annual Meeting.

**5. Upcoming Year:**

- Growth Plan Update 2025: Staff will begin the work of updating the Growth Plan, per DHCD requirements.
- Nominating Committee: Ethan Dunstan asked members to start considering the nomination process and candidates they may want to refer for service on the Council.
- Meeting Cadences: Ethan Dunstan expressed the goal to have Task Forces integrate with proposals earlier in the process and meet more frequently.

**6. Other Business**

No other business was presented.

**7. Adjourn**

***Motion was made by Ray Knott to adjourn. Motion seconded by Rob Archer. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 2:21 p.m.***