



## REGION 9 COUNCIL MEETING

April 16, 2025

9:30 am to 11:30 am

IN-PERSON

North Fork Meeting Center

994 Research Park Blvd., Charlottesville, VA 22911

Virtual links in agenda posted at [www.GOVirginia9.org/calendar](http://www.GOVirginia9.org/calendar)

## MINUTES

**Attending:** Ethan Dunstan, Capital River Advisors (Chair); Rob Archer, Codebase Coworking (Vice Chair); Ike Broaddus, Fauquier County; Roque Castro, Elysium LD Technology, Inc.; Tom Click, Patriot Industries; Ned Gallaway, Albemarle County; Christine Jacobs, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission; Cheryl Kirby, Atlantic Union Bank; Ray Knott, Blue Ridge Bank; Patrick Mauney, Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission; Paige Read, Town of Culpeper; Cathy Schafrik, Greene County; Tom Thorpe, Afton Scientific; Jonathon Weakley, Madison County

**Attending Virtually:** Gizelle Curtis, Dominion Energy

**Absent:** Kim Blosser, Laurel Ridge Community College; Brian Cole, LexisNexis Reed Tech; Pace Lochte, UVA Economic Development; Brandon Payne, Self-Storage of Louisa; Jean Runyon, Piedmont Virginia Community College; Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch, Revalation Vineyards (Treasurer/Secretary); Andy Wade, Louisa County; Tina Weaver, Papa Weaver's Pork, Inc.

**Staff:** Helen Cauthen, Kristy Dancy, Katie Delaney, Shannon Holland, Christie Taylor

**Guests:** Cody Anderson, DHCD; Ian Ginger, Orange County; Rachael Hobbs, UVA; Emily Kilroy, Albemarle County; Beth Mehring, UVA Health; Jennifer Schmack, Fluvanna County

**Virtual Guests:** Joseph Dennie, DHCD; Stephanie McNamara, VCW-Piedmont

### 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**

Beth Mehring, UVA Health, Director, Earn While You Learn signed up for public comment to introduce herself as the leader of the Virginia Partnerships for Health Science Careers: Region 9. She shared that this new partnership was now underway to address healthcare career pathways and encouraged regional members to help build connections for the effort.

### 2. Consent Agenda – ACTION ITEM

Ethan Dunstan noted that the listed agenda items were to be voted on with one action unless there was a motion to discuss any item separately. There was no such motion.

- **Meeting Minutes, January 16, 2025:** Tom Click asked that a correction be made to “The proposal requests \$613,57 to advance 172 acres in northern Albemarle from Tier 3 to Tier 4.”
- **MEMO: FY 24 Capacity Building Budget Revision:** A query was been made concerning the guideline mentioned in the memo that permits staff to amend the Capacity Building Budget. The inquiry specifically pertained to whether the \$15,000 adjustment is categorical or total, and whether it applies on a quarterly or annual basis.

***Tom Click made the motion to revise the Capacity Building Budget Revision guidance to specify there may be one revision per quarter and the revision should be reported at the Council Meeting following the change.***

***Rob Archer seconded the motion. A vote was performed. Motion carried.***

- **Financials through February 28, 2025:** It was noted that Shannon Holland reported on the February financials but the January financials were included in the meeting packet. According to the Statement of Financial Position the Accounts Receivables are at just over \$130,000 and Accounts Payable at \$130,257, of which approximately \$64,600 is owed to the Partnership. The Capacity Building Budget is at 73% expended, which is on track for nine months of expenses. The rent share increased slightly with a new lease effective 2/1/2025. The budget is on track to close in May or June. The BioBridge project and the Food & Beverage Accelerator should be added when the March Financials are published. The Talent Supply Connector is the only project currently in the process of closing where about \$54,000 of funds may potentially be unused.
- **Memo: Approve FY 2026 Capacity Building Budget:** Shannon Holland reminded Council they are currently operating a year behind on the Capacity Building budget. The FY25 Capacity Building funds will be opening soon for use in the current fiscal year. The audit estimate has increased, so that line may require future adjustment.

***Ray Knott made a motion to approve Council business as presented. Tom Click seconded the motion. A vote was performed. Motion carried.***

3. **Dashboard/Director Report:** Shannon Holland reported that there is about \$62,000 available in Per Capita grant funds until the next fiscal year begins on July 1. She noted that if a \$100,000 project were approved at the meeting, it could have to wait for available funds. She added there is a possibility that the fiscal closeout for the Talent Supply project could result in a return of about \$54,000 per capita funds, allowing for approval earlier than July 1. The applicant team has been informed that realistically, the project might proceed by mid-July, if approved.

Shannon Holland shared that staff were developing more ways to engage Council Members in project activities and outcomes. To that end, she asked Christie Taylor to present the project dashboard and spotlight as part of the Director’s Report. Christie Taylor shared the following highlights:

- The Wine Implementation Grant (Nelson), Project VITAL, BioBridge (CvilleBioHub), Food & Beverage Accelerator (Venture Central), and Rivanna Futures (Albemarle) are all rated as green as they are all just now underway. She added that Project VITAL had a slight delay in their lease but is now on track.

- Carver Commercial Kitchen (Culpeper) is waiting on final equipment expenditures (procurement process delays).
- Rural Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Building (CIC) has had some challenges. After a site visit staff perceived a lack of traded sector representation in the program as well as a lack of acknowledging GO Virginia as funder. The project team acknowledged concerns, and staff feels the project is approaching a turning point in identifying sector champions. The project has completed 4 of the 6 required activities and obtained an extension from April to October to allow more time for remaining activities and outcomes.
- REI (CIC)– The project is ranked as yellow as we are waiting to receive the expected implementation grant proposal in May.
- Project Spotlight: BEACON's Commercial Kitchen held its grand opening in April. A handout with quick facts and elevator pitch about the project impact and GO Virginia's role was shared.

The Council suggests including wage benchmarking in future reports and notifying them if their involvement is needed to overcome barriers to success.

#### 4. Updates from Committees, Task Forces, etc.

- **Entrepreneurship Task Force**

Tom Click reported that the Task Force hasn't met since the last Council meeting so there isn't much to report. They are expecting Venture Central to take the lead on developing an implementation grant to advance some of the Regional Entrepreneurship Initiative recommendations. The Tom Tom Festival is this week in Charlottesville with a Technology conference tomorrow and Entrepreneurship on Friday.

- **Grow Existing Business Task Force**

Ray Knott reported that the Task Force met on April 4th to discuss the Innovation Corridor Roadmap planning grant and contributed to the Growth Plan cluster-based economic development analysis.

- **Sites Task Force**

No report.

- **Talent Development Task Force**

No report.

- **Nominating Committee**

Jonathan Weakley reported that Brandon Payne has informed the Chair and Committee that he is in the process of moving out of state and resigning from Council. Therefore, there is one additional Council Member seat to fill. Council Member Nomination Forms are posted on the Region 9 website and can be requested from Shannon Holland. The Committee is seeking nominations from Chambers of Commerce or At-Large and Self-Nominations for 3 or 4 private sector members. Tom Click and Brian Cole have unfortunately reached term limits.

- **Chair & Executive Committee**

Ethan Dunstan reported that per the bylaws it is time for the Chair to appoint the next Nominating Committee. They will meet in May to prepare the Slate for the Annual Meeting. Tina Weaver, Jean Runyon, Cathy Schafrik and Tom Click, as Committee Chair, have agreed to serve. He extended appreciation to Brian Cole, Patrick Mauney, Christine Jacobs, and Jonathon Weakley, who have previously served on this committee.

## 5. Proposal Review – ACTION ITEM

**Innovation Corridor Roadmap (Planning Grant):** Ray Knott introduced the proposal summary. The Innovation Corridor Roadmap Planning Grant is led by the Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development, requesting \$100,000. The project will use the funds primarily to hire a consultant to identify the unique strengths in life sciences, digital technologies, and national security. The effort will result in a report with recommendations including an action plan to drive future oriented economic growth through business expansion, attraction and high-paying jobs.

The Task Force met on April 4. Shannon Holland shared that all pending documentation had been received, including the Orange County match form and two new private letters of support from Afton Scientific and Euro-Composites.

In the discussion, task force members noted that there was obviously an effort to assemble stakeholders for the proposal as there was an extensive list of advisory members. They noted a high level of local match even though it isn't required for planning grants. Local support was evident in the proposal. The applicant team has identified TEconomy as their potential consultant after interviewing three candidates, due to their experience in similar efforts and familiarity with Central Virginia. TEconomy is currently engaged on the BioBridge TPI project, which could further optimize results. The Task Force raised two questions regarding private sector leadership and project vision. Shannon Holland was asked to let the applicant team know that they want to see more private sector engagement; though they didn't want to dictate how they did it, it was suggested adding private sector representatives on the steering committee and/or increasing engagement on the advisory committee. The applicant response included a stronger vision statement and ideas for stronger business involvement.

Discussion of the project included:

- The Steering Committee is a misnomer as it is in many ways the staffing role for the project.
- Letters of support were regional and thorough, making it a strong proposal.
- UVA was a significant partner to CVPED on the project.

***Ray Knott made a motion to approve the Innovation Corridor Roadmap contingent on available funds. Jonathan Weakley seconded the motion. A vote was performed. Motion carried.***

## 6. Growth & Diversification Plan

- **Identify Target Sectors**
- **Strategy Assessment**

Shannon Holland presented on the Growth & Diversification plan development. (The presentation is posted with these Minutes at <https://www.govirginia9.org/calendar/>). The presentation goal was to advise the council on how the future traded sectors were identified and to do a quick assessment of how grant investments are driving observable and sustained impact in target sector.

The Council discussion included:

- Albemarle County's experience in Clean Tech corroborated findings that the jobs are primarily in construction.
- The New Pathways Program is generating graduates, which could mitigate the red rating for Talent in Light Manufacturing.
- The current VTOP project should impact Talent in IT & Communications
- The low jobs results on the Tech Talent Retention project was primarily because internships needed to be established as a pathway to jobs, and the project closed before internships converted to jobs attained.
- There is a need for talent pathways plans across all sectors. The hope is to replicate lessons learned in the BioBridge TPI across sectors. One takeaway from the Tech Talent Retention project is the strategy for each sector is nuanced.
- It was suggested that the cluster-based models could have a trendline added to indicate whether an area is trending positively or negatively.
- The Council was interested in educational attainment levels by county, migratory commuting by county, and inflation's impact on wages.
- It was suggested to consider creating a regional index of jobs to monitor trends.

## **7. Project Pipeline**

Ethan Dunstan noted the REI, Food & Beverage Business Accelerator, and TPI planning grants should generate potential projects.

## **8. Other Business**

- Paige Read shared VEDP is looking for firms to share feedback for its talent marketing workgroup.
- Council was reminded DHCD is hosting an AI virtual information on 4/18/2025

## **9. Adjourn**

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