**REGION 9 COUNCIL MEETING**

**AUGUST 28, 2025**

**9:30 am to 11:30 am**

**ALL-VIRTUAL MEETING**

Virtual links in agenda posted at www.GOVirginia9.org/calendar

**MINUTES**

**Attending**:; Rob Archer, Codebase Coworking (Chair); Roque Castro, Elysium LD Technology, Inc. (Vice Chair); Cathy Schafrik, Greene County (Secretary/Treasurer); Kim Blosser, Laurel Ridge Community College; Ike Broaddus, Fauquier County; Christina Clough, Pioneer Bank; Ethan Dunstan, Capital River Advisors; Ned Gallaway, Albemarle County; Rahul Keshap, Shuru Law; Leslie Kidd, All Install; Cheryl Kirby, Atlantic Union Bank; Ray Knott, Blue Ridge Bank; Pace Lochte, UVA Economic Development; Patrick Mauney, Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission; Paige Read, Town of Culpeper; Jean Runyon, Piedmont Virginia Community College; Jennifer Schmack, Fluvanna County; Francoise Seillier-Moiseiwitsch, Revalation Vineyards; Tina Weaver, Papa Weaver’s Pork, Inc.

**Absen**t: Gizelle Curtis, Dominion Energy; Christine Jacobs, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission; Jonathon Weakley, Madison County; Gary Wood, Firefly Fiber Broadband

**Staff**: Shannon Holland, Christie Taylor

**Guests:** Sabawoon Ahmadzai, Albemarle County; Tom Berry; Helen Cauthen, CVPED; Kristy Dancy, CVPED; Katie Dulaney, CVPED, Joseph Dennie, DHCD; Sarah Dunnigan, DHCD; Shara Gibson, DHCD; Ian Ginger, Orange County; Jeanette Hastings, NBC29 News; Rebecca Haydock, Venture Central; Ashley Hernandorena, Albemarle County; Rachael Hobbs, UVA; Jack Honig, DHCD; Matt Johnson, City of Charlottesville; Emily Kilroy, Albemarle County; Hope Lawrence, Venture Central; Candace Spence, CVPED; Alan Yost, Greene County

1. **Opening**
   1. **Call to Order**

Rob Archer called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

* 1. **Roll Call**

A roll call was performed. A quorum was established, as noted above.

* 1. **Public Comment**

No public comment was submitted or presented.

Rob Archer sought a motion to edit the agenda by bringing Item #5 Project Review to be discussed before the Consent Agenda because Ray Knott, who co-led the project task force discussion, had to leave the meeting at 10 a.m.

***Ethan Dunstan made the motion to amend the agenda to have Project Review as the next item. Kim Blosser seconded the motion. A roll call vote was performed. Motion carried.***

1. **Project Review: Project FUEL**

Ray Knott noted that there was a project executive summary on page 51 and 52 within the agenda for reference. Ray Knott stated that he co-led a joint task force meeting as Chair of the Grow Existing Business Task Force, along with Rahul Keshap as Chair of the Entrepreneurship Task Force on August 7. The main effort of that meeting was to review the proposal and prepare a recommendation for full council to consider. Both task forces unanimously recommended to decline the proposal. In general, reasons cited were ambiguity in project activities, budget transparency issues, misguided strategies, lack of sustainability, and lack of geographic diversity. Rahul Keshap added that the two projects tied to Venture Central currently on the dashboard are both in yellow status. Closure and success needs to be brought to those projects before advancing another one.

***Ray Knott made the motion to decline the Project FUEL proposal. Rahul Keshap seconded the motion. A roll call vote was performed. Motion carried.***

Rob Archer welcomed the following new Council members to their first council meeting:

* + Leslie Kidd
  + Christina Clough
  + Rahul Keshap
  + Gary Wood
  + Jennifer Schmack

1. **Consent Agenda – ACTION ITEM**

There was no motion to discuss any item separately.

* 1. **Meeting Minutes, Annual Meeting, June 17, 2025**

There was no discussion on the meeting minutes.

* 1. **Financials through June 30, 2025**

Cathy Schafrik shared that the Executive Committee received the June financials at the end of July. All the FY 2024 Capacity Building funds were expended in early June. Therefore, the council has begun drawing on FY 2025 capacity building funds during the latter part of June to cover operational expenses. That is why there are two capacity building budgets in the agenda. FY 2024 Capacity Building Funds are now fully utilized, with $250,000 in total expenditures. FY 2025 Capacity Building Funds were activated with $17,639.84 expended in June, representing 7.06% of the annual budget. Key expense categories include salaries, rent/lease, and general administration. Project Budgets begin on page 10. Several projects are approaching their end dates, while others are ramping up activity. Staff received the July financials on Monday and the Executive Committee will review soon.

* 1. **MEMO: Request to Approve FY 2026 Capacity Building Contract**

Shannon Holland explained that the FY 2026 Capacity Building Contract remains the same as the previous year. Annually CVPED, the Council, and DHCD sign this.

* 1. **MEMO: Request Approval for Project Contract Templates**

Shannon Holland shared that the contract templates have changed for future grants. The two applicable contracts were provided with track changes. DHCD made changes to improve clarity on when project expenses can be incurred and when final remittances are due for closeout processing.

* 1. **MEMO: Request Approval for Task Force Charter**

Shannon Holland reported that this charter is to serve as a guiding document to clarify the roles of the collective task force effort, and the objective for each task force, including resources and tools available. Feedback has been solicited at the Joint Entrepreneurship and Grow Existing Business Task Force Meeting in August as well as during a meeting with the Talent Development Task Force Chair.

***Paige Read made the motion to approve the consent agenda. Ray Knott seconded the motion. A roll call vote was performed. Motion carried.***

1. **Director Report +**
   1. **Report & Project Pipeline**

Shannon Holland highlighted the current amount available for Region 9 projects at the top of the report page on page 44. Related to that is the project pipeline on page 46 to give a sense of potential incoming projects that could be vying for those funds. The newest one added is GO TEC. GO TEC will be a collaboration between schools of Albemarle County, Greene County, and the City of Charlottesville to set up technical career introduction labs in locality middle schools.

* 1. **Infographic, Project Milestone Dashboard, and Project Spotlight**

Christie Taylor reported that the infographic was updated for Q2 reports. Brief project updates were shared for the dashboard. The Wine Industry Implementation Grant was the project spotlight, with note that recent successes included sale of Virginia wines by a DC vendor, coalition meetings underway, and the project’s first attributed hire.

1. **Updates** 
   1. **Chair, Executive Committee**

Rob Archer shared that the executive committee has not met since the last Council meeting. Rob Archer also noted that he, as Chair, and Roque Castro as Vice Chair, along with staff will attend a the GO Virginia Board Retreat on September 8 and 9. We’ll report back at the next meeting. Rob Archer added that the Council received a request from Region 2 to sign a letter to the Board requesting an opening to support childcare grants. Since this has not been previously raised as a council priority and there was no Council meeting before their deadline, he declined to sign but asked to stay informed.

* 1. **Nominating Committee**

Rob Archer shared that Tina Weaver has agreed to serve as the Chair of the Nominating Committee now that Tom Click has left the Council.

* 1. **Task Forces**

There were no updates from Task Forces outside of the project review previously in the meeting.

* 1. **Other**
     + GO Virginia Board Regional Council Committee: Rob Archer shared Ethan Dunstan volunteered to serve on this committee in lieu of Rob.
     + GO Virginia Blueprint Tour: Roque Castro reported that the Virginia Chamber hosted their Blueprint Tour at PVCC in late July. Many Council members also attended. Shannon Holland emailed a copy of the event presentation.
     + AISLA: Roque Castro reported that the AI Landscape Assessment Grant has engaged a consultant to review the AI landscape in Virginia alongside the Virginia Chamber Blueprint efforts. He is representing the Council on the advisory committee, which has met twice. A report with assessment by GO Virginia Region is expected in November.

1. **2025 Growth & Diversification Plan – Draft & Presentation**

Shannon Holland reviewed the Growth & Diversification Plan presentation. The main goal of the presentation was to share provide a high level overview of what has been accomplished thus far and to present the draft grant opportunities for the coming two years. The presentation was posted with meeting materials. Staff is requesting feedback on the draft growth plan opportunities by September 10. A draft is due to DHCD by September 15.

1. **Other Business**

No other council business was presented.

1. **Adjourn**

***Cathy Schafrik made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Ike Broaddus seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.***