



GO Virginia Region 8 Council Meeting Minutes

Friday, August 18, 2017, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Washington & Lee University, Hillel House, West Washington Street, Lexington, Virginia

FIRST	LAST	AFFILIATION	ATTENDED
Jon	Alger	James Madison University	
Devon	Anders	InterChange Group	X
Stacy	Barrett	Barrett Machine, Inc.	
Kathlynn	Brown	SRI International	X
John	Downey	Blue Ridge Community College	
Joanie	Eiland	Elk Trucking, Inc.	X
Tracy	Fitzsimmons	Shenandoah University	X
Frank	Friedman	CornerStone Bank/City of Lex Mayor	X
Dilton	Gibbs	Kraft Foods	X
Mike	Goertzen	Serco, Inc.	
Mike	Keyser	BARC Electric	
John	King	Virginia Poultry Growers Cooperative	X
Chris	Kyle	Shentel	X
Connie	Loughhead	Des Champs Technologies	X
Gwen	Malone	Retired K-12 Educator/Planning Commission	
Keith	May	Cottonwood Commercial	
Jill	McGlaughlin	Classic Kitchen & Bath	X
Mark	Merrill	Valley Health System	
Kathy	Moore	Moore Public Relations	
Dennis	Morris	NSVRC Board Chair	
John	Neff	Retired - Nielsen Builders	X
George	Pace	Shenandoah Valley Angel Investors	X
Fulton	Sensabaugh	Kjellstrom & Lee	
J.J.	Smith	Valley Proteins	X
Jeff	Stapel	Shickel Corporation	X
Robin	Sullenberger	Highland County Economic Development Authority	X
Rick	Till	O'Sullivan Films	X
Judith	Trumbo	Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community	X
Carrie	Chenery	Shenandoah Valley Partnership	X
Bonnie	Riedesel	Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission	X
Brandon	Davis	Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission	X
Sharon	Johnson	Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board	X

Call to Order

The August 18, 2017 Council meeting for GO Virginia Region 8 was called to order by Chairman George Pace at 10:05 a.m.

Welcome & Introductions

Steve McAllister, Vice President for Finance, Washington & Lee University, welcomed the Council to Lexington and emphasized how fortunate Washington and Lee University is to be part of such a special community. He went on to stress the importance of higher education on the economy and how higher education is an essential piece of the puzzle when it comes to economic development.

Mayor Frank Friedman, City of Lexington, extended a warm welcome on behalf of the City and echoed Mr. McAllister's sentiments on what an extraordinary community Lexington is. Mayor Friedman encouraged everyone to take some time to enjoy the city while there.

All Council members then introduced themselves.

Approval of July 18, 2017 Minutes

The minutes of the July 18, 2017 meeting were reviewed. Joanie Eiland motioned for the minutes to be approved, seconded by John Neff. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Growth & Diversification Plan Presentation

Bonnie Riedesel, Executive Director, Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, reminded the Council of the upcoming August 25th deadline for the final Economic Growth and Diversification Plan to be submitted to DHCD. Ms. Riedesel then introduced Camoin Associates and turned the meeting over for their EG&D Plan presentation.

Rob Camoin began the presentation by highlighting the many positives Region 8 enjoys including a strong work ethic, the importance of I-81, and the phenomenal natural environment. He reminded the Council that the information being presented was a framework rather than a strategic plan. Mr. Camoin went on to give a brief summary of the five Targeted Industries to be included in the Region 8 Economic Growth and Diversification Plan as determined by the interviews, focus groups, and data Camoin gathered. These industries are:

- Financial & Business Services
- Healthcare
- IT/Communications
- Transportation/Logistics
- Light Manufacturing

Tony Waterson, TPMA, then presented his findings related to Talent Workforce. Through his research, Mr. Waterson said workforce is the number one issue cited by economic developers and businesses. He presented several opportunities for growing and strengthening the Region 8's workforce.

Cathy Renault, Innovation Policyworks, shared her findings regarding Startups, Entrepreneurship and Innovation. She said rural regions tend to be disadvantaged in creating entrepreneurial ecosystems and though sources of capital are relatively strong, they are limited. Ms. Renault also noted the colleges and universities in this region are limited in research. She offered several opportunities for encouraging and supporting entrepreneurship.

Michael N'dolo, Camoin Associates, gave insight on growing the existing businesses in the region and provided various opportunities for business retention. Mr. N'dolo continued his segment of the presentation by focusing on potential business sites and noted the lack of information available on these sites as well as the missing infrastructure. He suggested opportunities to strengthen this area for businesses looking to locate in the area.

Rob Camoin ended the presentation by noting the various overlaps between Region 8 and Region 9 and encouraging possible collaboration. As well, Mr. Camoin emphasized the importance of being organized about the project vetting process to make sure projects are structured around the framework of the EG&D Plan submitted.

The presentation was then concluded with questions or comments. A suggestion was made to not only focus on the intersection of I81 and I64, but to also consider the importance of I66 in this region. In regard to whether I81 is becoming more of a liability than an asset with the increasing congestion, a Council member noted the only way to bring about change is to pressure the politicians and stress the importance the interstate has on the economy. Another Council member questioned if the EG&D Plan is going to be just a reality check on who we are as opposed to offering new, diverse ideas.

Public-Private Project Funding Opportunities

Chris Kyle introduced Ted Chandler, Co-Founder and Managing Director, NRV and Paul Nolde, Director of Business Development, NRV. NRV works to ignite and advance creativity and innovation in the community by connecting experts with start-ups and investing growth capital in local ventures. Mr. Chandler and Mr. Nolde suggested the brilliance of the GO Virginia initiative is it makes for new thinking. They noted educational institutions are a big factor in an economy and giving students a reason to stay in an area is fundamental. Region 8 has an advantage with the "where" and needs to focus on natural attributes. They also stated high tech jobs can happen quickly. As well, they encouraged the Council to prioritize innovation investments and, even though a huge amount of money is not available, "make a statement with the money that is available".

Next Steps

State Deadlines

Chairman Pace reminded the Council the final Region 8 Economic Growth and Diversification Plan must be submitted by Friday, August 25th. A motion was made by John Neff to grant authority for the Executive Committee to approve the final Plan on behalf of the entire Council. Frank Friedman seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Carrie Chenery, Executive Director, Shenandoah Valley Partnership, directed the Council members to a listing of Key Dates and Deadlines included in their packets. As well, she noted that financials and contact information for Council members were also included. Ms. Chenery brought special attention to a one page Region 8 "Progress Report" that has been created. This is a summary of Regions 8 accomplishments and should be shared with colleagues, legislators, etc.

Project Solicitation Process

The project scoring criteria from the DHCD has not been released but is due soon. As well, further guidelines on the collaborative piece are expected.

Chairman Pace noted that a working committee has been formed focusing on healthcare and the nursing shortage. A second meeting is scheduled for August 25th.

Next Council Meeting

Chairman Pace reminded members of the next Council meeting on Wednesday, September 20, 2017, at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, College of Health & Behavioral Studies Building, 5th Floor Conference Room. The meeting is scheduled from 10:00 until 12:00.

Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Council, Chairman Pace adjourned the meeting at 12:28p.m.