



### GO Virginia Region 8 Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 23, 2017 | 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Shenandoah University | 1460 University Drive, Winchester, Virginia 22601

FIRST	LAST	AFFILIATION	ATTENDED
Jon	Alger	James Madison University	X
Devon	Anders	InterChange Group	X
Stacy	Barrett	Barrett Machine, Inc.	X
Kathlynn	Brown	SRI International	X
John	Downey	Blue Ridge Community College	X
Joanie	Eiland	Elk Trucking, Inc.	X
Tracy	Fitzsimmons	Shenandoah University	X
Frank	Friedman	CornerStone Bank/City of Lex Mayor	
Dilton	Gibbs	Kraft Foods	X
Mike	Goertzen	Serco, Inc.	X
Mike	Keyser	BARC Electric	
John	King	Virginia Poultry Growers Cooperative	
Chris	Kyle	Shentel	X
Connie	Loughhead	Des Champs Technologies	*via phone
Gwen	Malone	Retired K-12 Educator/Planning Commission	X
Keith	May	Cottonwood Commercial	X
Jill	McGlaughlin	Classic Kitchen & Bath	X
Mark	Merrill	Valley Health System	X
Kathy	Moore	Moore Public Relations	X
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	
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 May 23, 2017, meeting for GO Virginia Region 8 was called to order by Chairman George Pace at 10:05 a.m.

## **Welcome & Introductions**

Tracy Fitzsimmons, President of Shenandoah University, welcomed all Council members and guests and provided a brief overview, history and update on the University's work and impact in the region. All Council members introduced themselves.

## **GO Virginia Statewide Orientation Recap**

Carrie Chenery, Executive Director of the Shenandoah Valley Partnership, provided a brief recap of the statewide GO Virginia Orientation Session held in Richmond, Virginia, on April 20<sup>th</sup>. Council members were encouraged to refer to the Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council's "Guide to the Freedom of Information Act for Members of Boards, Councils, Commissions, and other Deliberative Public Bodies". Members were also informed to stay tuned for a pending training session from the state on applicable provisions of the Conflicts of Interest Act for all regional council members.

## **Region 8 Baseline Data Overview**

Spencer A. Shanholtz, Research Associate in the Center for Regional Analysis in the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University (GMU) provided a thorough overview of Region 8 baseline economic data gathered by GMU as part of a statewide study/analysis with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and GO Virginia leadership. In summary for the Council's efforts going forward, the presentation noted that Region 8 is growing slower than the state in both employment and population; that creating/attracting jobs paying more than \$40,000 will be necessary to raise the region's average wage; and the region has relatively low levels of educational attainment. Overall, however, Region 8 still attracts domestic in-migrants as opposed to the state and many of its regions.

## **Region 8 Draft Budget**

Bonnie Riedesel, Executive Director of the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, and Brandon Davis, Executive Director of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission, provided an overview of a draft budget for Region 8 to be submitted to DHCD by Friday, May 26<sup>th</sup>. The budget provides a 15-month plan of the allocated \$650,000 for the region, with the bulk of the spending to cover the Growth & Diversification Plan consultant and future project resources/reserves.

Dr. John Downey made a motion to approve the budget as presented, with a second by John Neff. The motion carried unanimously.

## **Growth & Diversification Plan Consultant Process/Proposal Update**

Bonnie Riedesel, Executive Director of the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, provided an update on the RFP process for a Growth & Diversification Plan consultant. Six proposals were submitted to the CSPDC for the Region 8 plan ranging in cost from \$56,000 to \$240,000. Bonnie shared two concerns with the Council: (1) the expected state timeline for plans to be submitted by late August is too aggressive and may result in a subpar regional plan; and (2) Region 8 needs to be mindful of contracting with a consultant who may have submitted and been selected for plans in other region(s) of the state, inhibiting their capacity to meet our deadlines.

Chairman Pace requested that members of the Growth & Diversification Committee respond to Bonnie ASAP if they are interested in participating in the consultant selection process; otherwise, the Region 8 Executive Committee will make the selection.

### **Update on Input from Local Economic Developers**

Council member Robin Sullenberger provided an update on outreach he's been conducting to economic development directors and points of contact in all localities within the Region 8 footprint. He sought to gather (1) each locality's top three priorities for economic development and (2) announcements in the past 12 months from new/emerging business startups in each locality, excluding retail. Sullenberger noted that 2/3 of the economic developers responded to his request with varying levels of detail. Site development emerged as a top priority, with workforce, retail/tourism, and rural broadband coverage all ranking as top priorities in the Region 8 footprint overall. All respondents also expressed a concern about low wage rates in the region. Sullenberger will remain a Council liaison and point of contact to engage all local economic developers throughout Region 8.

### **Staff Update**

Carrie Chenery, Executive Director of the Shenandoah Valley Partnership, provided an update to the Council on the hiring process for an Administrative Coordinator to split duties between SVP and the regional council. Four candidates have been identified from a pool of 28 applicants and interviews will be held on Wednesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>. Representatives from both the SVP Board and the Region 8 Council will participate in the interview panel. Region 8 funds are being budgeted to fund half of this full-time position, with SVP funding the other half.

### **Next Steps**

Chairman Pace reviewed next steps for the Council, including the urgent need to select a Growth and Diversification Plan Consultant, and to note that the statewide GO Virginia Board meets on June 13<sup>th</sup> to review applicable submissions from each region, including Region 8's proposed budget.

### **Next Council Meeting**

Chairman Pace reminded members of key dates for the remainder of the year, including an upcoming meeting on Tuesday, July 18<sup>th</sup>, at a location in the southern part of the region to be announced. Subsequent meetings are currently scheduled for August 18<sup>th</sup>, September 20<sup>th</sup>, and November 21<sup>st</sup>, all at various locations in the region to be announced.

### **Public Comment**

Sally Michaels with the Frederick County Economic Development Authority commented on the organization's extensive work with existing business outreach and workforce development, and offered to brief the entire Council at a future time on the work of Frederick County in their jurisdiction and throughout the surrounding region.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Council, Chairman Pace adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m. with a motion for adjournment by Gwen Malone and a second by Mark Merrill.