



Region 8

*Cities of: Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Staunton, Waynesboro, & Winchester
Counties of: Augusta, Bath, Clarke, Frederick, Highland, Page, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, & Warren*

GO Virginia Region 8 Grant Review Committee Minutes

Tuesday, August 11, 2020, 1:00pm to 2:00pm
Virtual Committee Meeting
COVID-19 Crisis/Social Distancing Restrictions

FIRST	LAST	AFFILIATION	ATTENDED
Tracy	Fitzsimmons	Shenandoah University, Committee Chair	X
Devon	Anders	InterChange Group	X
Kathlynn	Brown	SRI International	
Ashley	Driver	Howell Metal Company	
Mike	Goertzen	Serco, Inc.	X
John	King	Virginia Poultry Growers Cooperative	X
Mark	Merrill	Valley Health System	X
Rick	Till	HR Dynamics LLC	X

Support staff participating included Brandon Davis (NSVRC), Ashley Shickle (NSVRC), Bonnie Riedesel (CSPDC), Elizabeth McCarty (CSPDC), Jay Langston (SVP & ED Ad Hoc Committee), and Jen Weaver (SVP & GOVA Administrative Coordinator). Chris Kyle, Region 8 Chair, also joined the meeting.

Call to Order

The August 11, 2020 Grant Review Committee meeting for GO Virginia Region 8 was called to order by Chair Tracy Fitzsimmons at 1:00p.m.

Virtual Meeting Guidelines

Chair Fitzsimmons noted all Grant Review meetings as of today would be made public, would be recorded, and would have minutes taken.

Chair Fitzsimmons then presented the three new members of the Committee: Ashley Driver, Mike Goertzen, and Mark Merrill. Mr. Driver was not in attendance but Mr. Goertzen and Mr. Merrill were each given time to introduce themselves.

A summary of the last Grant Review meeting was shared by Chair Fitzsimmons. That meeting had included an update on the Region 8 project pipeline priorities as well as the recommendation of the “Small Business Resiliency Teams (SBRT)” application to be funded through the Fast Access initiative. At that meeting, discussion had also begun on the site enhancement project being developed by Jay Langston, Executive Director of the Shenandoah Valley Partnership. Chair Fitzsimmons noted no action was scheduled to be taken at today’s meeting. Instead, this was a time to continue discussion on the site enhancement proposal and have questions addressed.

Dr. Langston then shared an overview of his application, noting the economic importance of increasing site competitiveness in Region 8. He did acknowledge, however, there are both pros and cons to this project. Chris Kyle, Region 8 Chair, added, per discussions with GO Virginia representatives from Richmond, the site enhancement idea was well received. Those representatives stressed, however, the decision needed to be made by the region.

Discussion then followed on several topics including the meaning of the various site “tier” levels and the variance in expected costs per acre. Questions were also raised on measuring the return on investment for such a project and the longevity before returns would be seen. Dr. Langston said he would formulate projections on number of jobs and potential wages for those jobs.

Per Chair Fitzsimmon’s request, Brandon Davis, Executive Director of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission, shared a spreadsheet summarizing committed/projected revenues and expenditures for Region 8. Mr. Davis noted the key to moving forward may be what the General Assembly decides regarding the FY21 budget when they reconvene for special session in August. If Region 8 does not receive the \$1 million appropriated for per capita funding in FY21, the budget would be significantly impacted. Chair Fitzsimmons agreed and said taking a vote on the site enhancement application would not be appropriate until after funding for FY21 was finalized.

Discussion then began on the possibility of breaking the project into phases or potentially reducing the number of sites included to decrease the funding request. A motion was made to move into closed session.

Motion to Enter Closed Session

A closed session was held in accordance with allowable closed meeting requirements, specifically for discussion or development of grant proposals by a regional council established pursuant to Article 26 (§ 2.2-2484 et seq.) of Chapter 24 to be submitted for consideration to the Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board.

A unanimous roll call vote in open session confirmed that the discussion conformed to the closed meeting requirements.

Public Comment

No one from the public participated.