



## GO VIRGINIA REGION ONE Executive Committee Meeting

January 8, 2018  
Minutes

The GO Virginia Region One Executive Committee held its second meeting on January 8, 2018 at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, Room 104, Abingdon, Virginia. Members present were Allan Funk, Donna Henry, and Mike Quillen.

**Welcome and Opening Remarks:** Mike Quillen, Chair of the Region One Council presided over the meeting. Ms. Becki Joyce and Mrs. Martha Necessary recorded the meeting minutes. Chairman Quillen called the meeting to order.

### **Agenda Items:**

#### **Recap of Chair/Vice Chair Meeting and Support Organization Call on January 4, 2018**

- Shannon Blevins reported 12 proposals were submitted to the GO VA State Board during the first round of applications. Five proposals were approved for funding.
- Board policy discussions include:
  1. All broadband infrastructure proposals have been tabled pending the conclusion of the 2018 General Assembly Session. Discussions will center on the appropriate role of broadband, i.e. return on investment, private sector role and leverage of investment. It was recommended that the GO VA regional councils form a coalition to advocate for a decision to be made before the end of the 2018 Session. Region One has a broadband infrastructure proposal from the Virginia Coalfield Coalition and the concern is the possibility of a one year delay in approval and funding. Shannon will contact Jim Baldwin to advise him that broadband projects are on hold at this time.
  2. There were two Talent Development scholarship proposals submitted to the GO VA Board for funding. Both proposals were rejected, as there were concerns of funding resources and sustainability. The Board recommended the revision of the proposals to include stipends or loan forgiveness.
  3. Discussions concerning non-traded sectors, particularly healthcare as it does not generate revenue from out-of-state were held. Shannon Blevins noted the GO VA guidelines specifically cautioned regions not to consider healthcare proposals.
  4. State statute prohibits the use of state funds to invest in a private entity. It was noted that GO VA funding could possibly be used for SEED funds or to enhance capacity. With this guideline removed, it will be difficult to determine what an enhanced capacity project would look like.
  5. Feasibility Study proposals, included in the original GO VA guidelines have been removed. Shannon Blevins explained that the state wants projects in the

development stage, with feasibility studies already completed. Chairman Quillen cited the Carroll County Meat Processing project has already completed a feasibility study and is an application that could be submitted to the GO VA Board. He also recommend expanding this proposal regionally, exploring additional markets to be included in the proposal.

6. Shannon Blevins stated the State Board and DHCD will need several funding cycles to get a better understanding of what they are looking for in proposal submissions. The Board is also fine tuning their thought process, not rushing to make funding decisions until they fully understand the project proposal. DHCD will also provide training to GO VA Board members, something we may consider offering to Region One council members during the spring 2018 meeting.
7. Lessons learned from the first round of applications:
  - Turn around time was a challenge.
  - Stronger communication between applicants and support organizations, i.e. technical assistance; ensuring all sections of application are fully completed. DHCD staff will be available to offer support as well.
  - Region One will require a Letter of Intent to assist applicants with questions prior to the application submission deadline.
  - Mixed message from GO VA Board; encourage regions to submit multiple applications, but do not expect applications to be funded. Board emphasized the strong regional “competition” in project funding at the state level; Donna Henry suggested “prioritizing” as a more suitable description of funding strategies.
  - The GO VA Board was not aware that regional councils vetted proposals prior to their submission to the state. Vetting is a critical component of the application process.
  - Councils should notify DHCD of all projects in the pipeline.
  - Regional communication of all aspects of GO Virginia is vital; potential stakeholders, including elected officials, do not know its purpose.
  - Allan Funk inquired about the role of economic developers as it relates to securing funding for localities. Chairman Quillen noted there is usually one individual assigned to administrative duties and that jurisdictions are responsible for administrative costs. With limited Region One per capita funds available, localities have access to a higher level of funding from the Tobacco Commission, ARC, VCEDA, etc. Representatives from Washington County Virginia were asked to provide a brief overview of their project application submission process.
  - Shannon Blevins noted it is crucial that regional councils maintain a good working relationship. Chairman Quillen mentioned that he called Bill Shelton, Director of DHCD and thanked him for his service and support of Region One. The Council will invite the incoming director of DHCD to visit Region One in the near future.

### **Budget and FY 19 Projected Budget Allocations**

The GO VA State Board requested \$75 million in funding for the 2019-2020 biennium.

- Governor McAuliffe recommended a budget of \$53 million – each region will receive at least \$1 million in base funding.
- The GO VA Board will continue to lobby for the requested funding of \$75 million.
- Administrative funding in the amount of \$250,000 will be allocated to each regional council.
- Year-to-date expenditures for Region One total \$88,000.
- The position for the Program Director for Region One has been advertised. Review of applications will begin next week. Search committee members are Shannon Blevins, Kathy Still, Huda Aden and George Cridlin, and Region One representative.

### **Update on Work Groups**

Becki Joyce presented an update on the Region One Work Groups.

- The purpose of the work groups is to assist with the implementation of the Growth and Diversification Plan in collaboration with Subject Matter Experts (SME's) to encourage regional collaboration.
- The IT Work Group met in early January with six people in attendance. Southwest Virginia Technology Council's Esther Bolling will Chair this group.
- Agriculture will meet on January 17, 2018 at the VCEDA offices. David Eaton will serve as Chair of this group. Virginia Tech will present their recent agriculture study to the group.
- Advanced Manufacturing will meet on January 18, 2018. Southwest Virginia Advanced Manufacturing will lead the group. The Advanced Manufacturing Blueprint Implementation Team will be absorbed by the working group.
- Energy and Minerals have not scheduled a meeting at this time.
- Becki will provide a roster of working group members.

### **General Discussion Regarding GO Virginia Objectives**

Chairman Quillen noted that the vetting of project applications must be completed prior to submission to the GO VA Board. Region One Chair/Vice Chair will present approved proposals to the GO VA Board via phone or in person. Chairs will also send a letter of endorsement for the projects, if approved by the Council.

### **Communication – GO Virginia Website**

Shannon Blevins reported the development of the Region One website is moving forward.

- UVa-Wise is using the College's existing website contract with TWG Plus Marketing.
- Website outline has been submitted to TWG staff for the development of the wireframe and we are waiting on a cost quote from TWG. The anticipated cost will range between \$10,000-\$15,000. Other GO VA websites were canvassed for content and design ideas. Links to state, regional and local websites will include; GO VA Board, DHCD, Commonwealth of Virginia, Planning District Commissions, Economic Development sites, County Administrators, towns, and other localities. A first draft of the website design is planned to be presented at the Regional Council meeting in March 2018.
- An article about GO Virginia Region One will be published by the Bristol Herald Courier in the next 7-10 days. Chairman Quillen was interviewed for this piece and is available to meet with other media outlets, county boards, IDA's, town councils and PDC's.

## **Review of 2017 Per Capita Applications**

Shannon Blevins presented to the Committee 2 project applications:

- Broadband – wireless infrastructure – project has merits and staff has requested additional information.
- Tech Facility Acquisition – project has potential and will require additional information prior to submission.
- Neither project will be submitted to the GO VA Board in the second round of applications. Support staff will work with applicants in preparation of future submission.
- Staff also received 7 inquiries.

## **Application Process Changes for 2018**

- The grant application will remain in effect until December 31, 2018 or until GO VA guidelines are revised per the State Board or DHCD. Applicants are advised to check the GO Virginia Region One website for updates.
- Letters of intent will be required from all applicants and must be submitted 60 days prior to the scheduled Region One Council meetings
- During the review process, applicants may be asked to provide additional information or documents either in person or in writing.

## **Other Business**

- The FY2018 Building Capacity contract between DHCD, UVa-Wise, and the Region One Council has been signed and the first reimbursement request from DHCD will be submitted.
- Chairman Quillen will be meeting with Ben Davenport from Region 3 to discuss possible project collaborations.
- New General Assembly members support response of GO Virginia.

## **Public Comment Period**

Representatives from Washington County Virginia presented an overview of their application submission process.

## **Plan for 2018 Regional Council Meetings**

- The next Region One Council Meeting will be held on March 6, 2018, Russell County Conference Center, Lebanon, Virginia
- Discussion concerning meeting locations and logistics, i.e. telephone or video conferencing to accommodate the needs of Council members as it relates to travel will be held at the next meeting.

## **Adjournment**

Chairman Quillen adjourned the meeting