



Technology Working Group

Minutes of July 30, 2018

The Go Virginia Region One Working Group met on July 30, 2018, at 2:00 PM at the Mountain Empire Community College in Big Stone Gap, Virginia.

In attendance: Esther Bolling, Dan Minahan, Jeff Rowlett, Jim Baldwin, Ash Ravin, Shannon Blevins, John Grimes, Mary Trigiani, Becki O'Quinn, Rob Beavers, Stephen Mullins, *Via telephone:* Marquetta Horton, Chris Horton, Tom Griffin, Karen Jackson

Immunization technology

Chris Horton with Commonwealth Organic, along with Tom Griffin representing Publix summarized the immunization technology discussed in the June meeting. Chris provided the background information of the technology and discussed its use with cattle, and how it could track the health of the cattle from birth to plate. Tom from Publix market spoke about the ability for SWVA beef to market its grass fed beef to markets, showing the health and quality of the beef. Chris indicated that some preliminary study data from Australia would be in soon and he would share the data with the group. The group questioned cost of the technology and also how the testing of the animals would be done routinely and effectively.

HUBLink Enhanced Capacity Grant Application

Esther Bolling, chair, updated the group on the HUBlink application and indicated it was still with DHCD going through the approval process. Esther said there are some additional questions that need some clarification and once those are addressed she felt the application would go through. Esther said the Southwest Virginia Technology Development Council had a meeting scheduled and would be discussing the details of the implementation of the grant and she would report back to the group at the next meeting.

National HUB Zone Conference Update

Marketta with VCEDA gave an update on the HUBZone Conference on October 11 and 12th. Confirmed attendees were: Charlotte Mullins, VCEDA Marketing Ambassador, Tom Lester with SWCC, Vicky Ratliff or Ash with MECC, Esther Bolling and Becki O'Quinn were confirmed as attending the conference. Meetings are being arranged with companies attending to discuss the HUBlink and HUBzone opportunities in the region. Vicky and Shannon are working on a one page informational flyer to provide as well.

SDDC Site Link

Ash provided an update on the SDDC Site Link and recommended we take a 50 state approach when considering marketing efforts. Doug suggested we reach out to VEDP.

GO VA Update

Shannon provided an update on the GO Virginia and reviewed the role of the Information and Emerging Technology Working Group as it relates to project ideas. The project ideas should propel the region and provide the highest yield for fundable projects. The group should take into consideration who the applicant could be and how the project could connect to the underpinning strategies. She reminded the group that the projects need to create higher paying jobs and promote regional collaboration. The group asked questions regarding what entities could be eligible applicants and Shannon provided an information sheet that share eligible applicant information and other data.

New Members & Ideas

New members. Rob Beavers of SAIC attended the meeting and discussed SAIC, and how to attract employees to the region. Breweries, eateries and entertainment are important to recruiting IT Workers, as well as IT networking groups. Rob said Work, Live and Play are very important factors for IT professionals and suggested we look at Oregon's work in the Work, Live, Play recruitment utilizing the outdoor recreational assets. Finding ways to connect IT professionals will be important as we continue to work with startups and companies to come to the Oxbow and the region. He also recommended that we work at the local education levels to continue to improve soft skills. Shannon provided an overview of a project idea around the coalfield land rush as a way to gauge whether incoming IT professionals would be interested.

Tourism Grant and Pilot Program As a follow up to Dan's project idea from the last meeting, the Virginia Tourism AML grant was discussed as a potential means for funding the marketing of the project. Dan stated he felt the pilot program could be a good preliminary recruitment tool that compliments the coalfield land rush. Dan suggested we find a way to work with some Northern Virginia companies to do a "work experience" tour and invite employees to come stay here for 3-5 days and work remotely. The group discussed how costs would be covered and additional elements of the visit, such as hiking, ATV rides, and the tourism/quality of life experience. Becki agreed to follow up with Virginia Tourism to discuss the idea and confirm if the project would qualify for AML grant funds.

Agriculture and Technology

Karen Jackson gave an update on Agriculture and Technology and the top 3 areas that are growing in the agriculture and technology arena: 1. Broadband, 2. Solar and 3. Wind. Innovative Testing Farms with data collection, data hubs and data analysts are provide information on cattle, soil and precision agriculture. Karen felt the nano technology Chris Horton introduce would fit nicely into the agriculture and technology strategy. Karen updated the group on the USDA Initiative for a bill working the Congress to fund precision agriculture applications and help get broadband out to the farms.

Next meeting date and location

The next meeting date was scheduled for September 10, at 2:00 PM at SAIC in Clintwood, Virginia.

Esther adjourned the meeting.

Action items for the next meeting are:

1. Communicating with prospective new members and inviting to join the meeting on July 30th.
2. Ash will share SDDC site link for HUBzones.
3. Jonathan will check on open registrations available for the National HUBzone conference.
4. Becki will add Robyn to the July agenda to update on GO Virginia.
5. Becki will work with Shannon to provide a discussion on how the HUBlink would work at the next meeting.
5. Becki will discuss tourism grant and its application to the pilot program and report back to the group.

The next meeting will be held on July 30, at 2:00 PM at Mountain Empire Community College, Phillips-Taylor Hall, Room 232.

Esther adjourned the meeting.

