



Region 8

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

Meeting summary for January Executive Committee Meeting (01/07/2025)

Quick recap

The team discussed various grant applications, updates on ongoing projects, and the formation of new committees for workforce development and growth. They also considered potential new members for the Grants Review Committee and the Growth and Diversification Committee, and discussed the roles of existing members. Lastly, Alison outlined her priorities for the next 30 days, which included wrapping up Page County, creating committees, and updating quarterly reports.

Next steps

- Mark to reach out to Emily Barlow Back about extending her term and potentially joining the Executive Committee or continuing on the Grants Review Committee
- Yolanda to contact potential new Grants Review Committee members to gauge their interest in joining
- Allison to form the Growth and Diversification Plan Steering Committee, starting with inviting Greg Hidgeons to chair
- Allison to organize the Talent Pathways Initiative ad hoc committee with John Downey, Bobby Hobbs, Tracy Llewellyn, and Eric Bond
- Brandon to execute the contract with Ann Cundee for the Growth and Diversification Plan
- Yolanda to decide how many new members to add to the Go Virginia Regional Council
- Allison to create a comprehensive directory of stakeholders for Go Virginia Region 8
- Allison to confirm Regional Council meeting locations for April, July, and October
- Allison to have a conversation with Jay Langston about his role as an ex-officio member
- Allison to update the committee assignment spreadsheet and send it to the Executive Committee for final approval

- Allison to add the brainstorming sessions for project ideas to the January Council meeting agenda
- Allison to update the project pipeline spreadsheet and provide it as a handout at the January Council meeting
- Allison to follow up with Sharon Johnson to get a breakdown of commuter patterns by industry and location
- Brandon to review Allison's CAMS quarterly report updates
- Mark to open the January 28th council meeting, conduct introductions and minutes, and oversee the election before Yolanda assumes the chairmanship role

Summary

Holiday Greetings and Meeting Agenda

The meeting began with Mark, Alison, Janet, Lai, Yolanda, and Kim exchanging greetings and sharing their holiday experiences. Mark then initiated the official meeting, acknowledging the presence of all committee members. The meeting's agenda included reviewing the minutes of the previous meeting, discussing grants, and addressing any other concerns. Alison clarified that there were no minutes from the Executive Board due to the absence of voting. Mark then proceeded to approve the minutes. The conversation ended with Alison preparing to provide an update on grants.

Grant Applications and Pipeline Updates

Alison provided updates on the status of various grant applications. The Clark County Camp 7 project has been approved and is nearing completion, with all signatures obtained. The Blue Mountain site extended project is also nearing completion, with a few discrepancies being addressed. The Page County meat processing grant application has been approved by the Executive Committee and is currently undergoing revisions. Once complete, it will be presented to the Grants Committee for final review. Alison also mentioned that she is working on changing the grant submission from a site development planning grant to a per capita grant. Mark and Alison discussed the two pots of money available for grants, with the per capita grant being the larger of the two. Alison also mentioned that she is aiming to maintain a 100% approval rate for Deborah. Lastly, Alison provided an update on the pipeline, stating that there are no other projects in the pipeline at the moment.

Alison's Follow-Ups and Brainstorming Sessions

Alison discussed her ongoing efforts to follow up with various organizations and individuals regarding potential projects. She plans to schedule three to four brainstorming sessions by the end of March and will update the team on the progress. Alison also mentioned her collaboration with Sharon Johnson on the Talent Pathways Initiative, aiming to identify gaps in stakeholders and supporters. The team agreed on the importance of understanding the types of jobs and industries people are commuting to, as suggested by Janet and Lai. Alison committed to asking Sharon to provide this information. The team also discussed the need for early communication about upcoming sessions to avoid confusion and ensure participation.

Workforce Development and Grant Opportunities

The team discussed the importance of internships and apprenticeships in workforce development, particularly in the Shenandoah Valley. They noted the challenges faced by companies in providing sufficient resources and staff for these programs. The team also discussed the potential for grant funding to support these initiatives. Additionally, they discussed the need for an ad hoc committee to review the TPI initiative and ensure it meets their needs and provides actionable grant opportunities. The team agreed to further explore these topics and consider potential partnerships with industry leaders.

Alumni and Committee Member Suggestions

Alison proposed the idea of bringing back alumni to the ad hoc committee, suggesting John Downey as a potential member. Mark and Janet agreed, suggesting other members such as Ashley, Kim, Conrad, and Marlo. They also considered Tracy Llewellyn, a new council member, and Bobby Hobbs, who will be on the Grant Review Committee. Mark suggested Eric Bond, a superintendent, for his connection to schools. The team agreed to invite John Downey, Bobby Hobbs, Tracy Llewellyn, and Eric Bond to the ad hoc committee.

Growth and Diversification Committee Formation

Alison proposed the formation of a Growth and Diversification Committee, which would be chaired by Greg Hidgeons. The committee would assist with the project's guidance, survey creation, and stakeholder involvement. The committee would also review past projects for potential growth and updates. Alison suggested that TPI Council members could be moved onto the Growth and Diversification Committee after their TPI commitments end. The committee would present updates at each Regional Council meeting. Brandon expressed satisfaction with the contract for the project, which was finalized and sent for review. The committee's next steps include creating an online survey and identifying stakeholders. The committee's ongoing responsibilities include presenting updates at each Regional Council meeting.

Grants Review Committee Leadership

Tracy suggested Carrie Nelson and Dottie Day for leadership roles on the Grants Review Committee, with Carrie as the top choice due to Dottie's increasing workload. The group agrees to have Ashley become the chair, with Carrie as vice chair after being involved in the January and April grant reviews. Emily Barlow will be approached about potentially joining the Executive Committee or continuing on the Grants Review Committee in a leadership role. New members being considered are Bobby Hobbs, Eric Bond from academia, and Anthony Tongan. Mark will discuss options with Emily, and Alison will prepare materials for Yolanda to extend invitations to potential new members.

Committee Assignments and Jay's Role

Alison updated the spreadsheet with recommendations and identified individuals who hadn't been assigned to committees. The team discussed the possibility of Bobby Hobbs joining the Growth and Diversification Committee instead of the Grants Review Committee due to his location and professional background. The team also discussed the role of Jay Langston, who had previously been involved in economic development but had expressed a desire to pull back from participation. It was decided that Jay would be included as an *ex officio* member, attending meetings as needed and providing updates. Alison agreed to have a conversation with Jay to clarify his role and expectations.

Alison's Priorities and Regional Council Meeting

In the meeting, Alison outlined her priorities for the next 30 days, which included wrapping up Page County, creating the TPI and the Growth and Diversification Committees, and updating the quarterly reports for CAMS training. She also mentioned working on website improvements and creating a directory of stakeholders. Mark suggested Alison check with Deborah about a directory of economic development directors, which Alison agreed to do. The team also discussed the upcoming regional council meeting and the need to find additional members from Rockingham to fill the slots of those rotating off the Go Virginia Council. Alison was tasked with reaching out to potential candidates for the council. The next council meeting was scheduled for January 28th, which would be virtual.