



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 February GO Virginia Region 8 Executive Meeting (02/04/2025)

Quick recap

The committee members discussed their personal lives, reviewed progress on various grants, and planned for upcoming meetings and collaborations. They also discussed the setup of a 2-factor authorization system, the Talent Pipeline Initiative, and the formation of a State Board Advisory Council. Lastly, they discussed the process of identifying potential candidates for the executive committee, the importance of creating a stakeholder directory, and the need for a newsletter to keep stakeholders informed.

Next steps

- Alison to send out the Talent Pipeline Initiative PowerPoint presentation to the Executive Committee.
- Alison to forward the View and V-Top documents to the Executive Committee.
- Alison to check with DHCD about the ability to change bylaws regarding term limits for council members.
- Yolanda to reach out to Tracy regarding her recommendation for a Shenandoah University representative.
- Janet to reach out to Thermo Fisher Scientific about potential representation on the council.
- Alison and Yolanda to create a priority list for new council member candidates.
- Alison to send out an email to those who recommended potential council members for follow-up confirmation.
- Alison to include former council members in the newsletter distribution list.
- Alison to work with Jen Weaver and others to compile a list of all past council members for the Stakeholder Directory.

- Alison to include information about serving on Go Virginia, including term lengths and eligibility to return, in the first newsletter.

Summary

Casual Greetings and Meeting Updates

The committee members greet each other and engage in casual conversation about their personal lives, including recent travels and family updates. Yolanda notes that there are no votes or executive summaries to review in this meeting. It is mentioned that Conrad, a new member, is traveling and will attend the next meeting. The group discusses the absence of meeting minutes from the previous session and questions when they should expect to receive them.

Grant Progress and Upcoming Meetings

Alison agreed to send out meeting summaries for the last and current meetings, ensuring all important discussions are captured. She also discussed the progress of various grants, including the completion of the kickoff meeting with Brandon and Gretchen, and the ongoing work on the Page County grant. Alison also mentioned a potential grant for Frederick County and Shenandoah County, which she is working on. Janet brought up the upcoming meeting of the Frederick County Economic Development Authority (EDA) and the potential alignment of their agenda items with Go Virginia's work. Mark suggested the food processing and distribution industry as an opportunity. Alison committed to reviewing the EDA's agenda and keeping the team updated. She also mentioned an email from Chris Lloyd, the Go Virginia Legislative representative, which contains updates on the General Assembly's initiatives and the ready sites program.

Project Updates and Collaboration Challenges

The team discussed their ongoing projects and collaborations. Alison shared her work with Ken Blosser's team, scheduled for March 24th at Laurel Ridge, and her plans to host sessions in the Shenandoah Valley on the 31st and in Buena Vista on the 26th to 28th. She also mentioned her efforts to compile a stakeholder directory for the Shenandoah Valley and her work with Mary Sullivan from Vtop. Alison also faced challenges with accessing a database, which she hoped to resolve with the help of Brandon and Rick. Brandon offered his assistance for any economic development needs and Mark suggested Alison meet Jeff Bittner, the EDA developer for Winchester. The team also discussed the potential of using Hubspot for their website and database management.

2-Factor Authorization and Meeting Schedules

The team discussed the setup of a 2-factor authorization system that would go to the Go Virginia phone number, ensuring continuity for future directors. They also planned to send out newsletters to the entire list, allowing for additions if necessary. The team agreed on a meeting schedule from 9 to 11 AM, before lunch, and planned to send out calendar invitations for the Executive Committee meetings. Alison shared updates on the pipeline, highlighting a promising project with VMI, Mountain Gateway, and other organizations around semiconductor training facilities. The team agreed to keep at least one grant for each quarter and to be open for feedback.

Talent Pipeline Initiative and Data Package

The meeting focused on the Talent Pipeline Initiative (TPI) and the data package for the FY 2025 Growth and Development. Alison discussed the transition of the TPI to Sharon and the need to send out the TPI PowerPoint. She also mentioned the Shenandoah Valley Council's data collection and analysis, which identified gaps and required surveys. Alison added two new members to the TPI initiative, Joe Sprangel and Andre Dacko, who have expertise in manufacturing and STEM education, respectively. The conversation ended with a discussion on the alignment of the TPI with other Go Virginia initiatives, such as Go Tech.

Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Updates

Yolanda and Alison discussed updates on the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development and the Talent Pathways project. Alison mentioned that she would send a summary of the next meeting's outcomes and the action items. She also shared that the next meeting would focus on reviewing a draft survey for the Growth and Diversification plan, which would be sent to the Executive Committee for feedback. Alison emphasized that the plan was still in its early stages and expected changes to the survey. Janet requested to review the document before providing feedback, and Alison agreed to send it to her. The team also discussed the possibility of Alison and Yolanda providing feedback in person during a future meeting.

Valley Internship Connect Program Challenges

Alison discussed the Valley Internship Connect program, which provides matching funds for internships at companies with less than 50 employees. She noted that the program has not seen significant results and suggested that Go Virginia needs to be a better partner in terms of outreach and support. Yolanda and Janet shared their experiences with the program, highlighting concerns about transparency and the placement agency's fees. Brandon offered to help with accessing the program's documents. Alison also mentioned the Valley Internship Top (VITOP) initiative, which she has been involved in, but expressed concerns about its effectiveness.

State Board Advisory Council Formation

Alison, Yolanda, and Janet discussed the formation of a State Board Advisory Council, which will meet quarterly to provide feedback to the Go Virginia State Board. Yolanda was initially identified as the representative from their region, but it was decided that Janet could also participate and share the responsibilities. The group also discussed the challenges faced by larger regions, particularly in the DC area, in securing grants and the potential for collaboration in training the workforce for the growing data center industry. Alison agreed to follow up with the executive director of the DC region to explore potential competitive grants that could benefit both regions.

Regional Council Seats and Candidates

The team discussed the upcoming opening of Regional Council seats in April. Alison mentioned that she would send an email with the current council members and potential candidates, including Eric Terry, Mark Jornell, and Chris Weaver. The team agreed to follow up with those who had recommended potential candidates to check their decision status. They also discussed the importance of having representatives from various industries, such as agriculture, construction, aviation, food processing, and manufacturing. The team decided to explore the interest of healthcare representatives from Valley Health or Augusta.

Go Virginia Council Service and Representation

The team discussed the potential for individuals to serve on the Go Virginia council for extended periods, with some members suggesting a limit of 8 years. They also considered the possibility of changing the bylaws to allow for longer service or to retain representation from specific institutions. The team agreed to reach out to Tracy from Shenandoah University to discuss potential replacements and to check with the state about the possibility of changing the bylaws. Additionally, they discussed the potential for representation from Thermo Fisher Scientific, a local business.

Executive Committee Candidate Selection

In the meeting, Alison, Yolanda, and Mark discussed the process of identifying potential candidates for the executive committee. They agreed to reconvene in March to finalize the list and make the ask in April. They also discussed the importance of creating a stakeholder directory to keep track of past members and their interests. Mark suggested limiting the allocation of funds for document delivery to avoid negative publicity. The team also discussed the need for a newsletter to keep stakeholders informed and the possibility of including information about serving on the executive committee in the first issue.