

1 **TOBACCO REGION REVITALIZATION COMMISSION**

2 701 East Franklin Street, Suite 501

3 Richmond, Virginia 23219

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9 **Education Committee Meeting**

10 Monday, May 21, 2018

11 4:00 P.M.

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 Longwood University

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 Farmville, Virginia

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1 **APPEARANCES:**

2 The Honorable Frank M. Ruff, Chairman

3 Ms. Becky Coleman, Vice Chairman

4 Ms. Gayle F. Barts

5 The Honorable A. Benton Chafin, Jr.

6 Mr. Joel Cunningham

7 Dr. Alexis I. Ehrhardt

8 The Honorable Franklin D. Harris

9 Mr. Cecil E. Shell

10 The Honorable Thomas C. Wright, Jr.

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1 **APPEARANCES (cont'd):**

2 COMMISSION STAFF:

3 Mr. Evan Feinman – Executive Director

4 Mr. Andy Sorrell – Deputy Executive Director

5 Mr. Timothy S. Pfohl – Grants Program Administration

6 Director

7 Ms. Sarah K. Capps – Grants Program Administrator,

8 Southside Virginia

9 Ms. Sara G. Williams – Grants Program Administrator,

10 Southwest Virginia

11 Ms. Jessica Stamper – Grants Assistant, Southwest Virginia

12 Ms. Stacey Richardson – Executive Assistant

13 Ms. Stephanie S. Kim – Director of Finance

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15 COUNSEL FOR THE COMMISSION:

16 Ms. Elizabeth Myers, Assistant Attorney General

17 Richmond, Virginia.

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1 SENATOR RUFF: Good afternoon,
2 welcome. Evan, would you call the roll?

3 MR. FEINMAN: Ms. Barts?

4 MS. BARTS: Here.

5 MR. FEINMAN: Ms. Coleman?

6 MS. COLEMAN: Here.

7 MR. FEINMAN: Senator Chafin?

8 SENATOR CHAFIN: Here.

9 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Cunningham?

10 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Here.

11 MR. FEINMAN: Dr. Ehrhardt?

12 DR. EHRHARDT: Here.

13 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Harris?

14 MR. HARRIS: Here.

15 MR. FEINMAN: Senator Ruff?

16 SENATOR RUFF: Here.

17 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Shell?

18 MR. SHELL: Here.

19 MR. FEINMAN: Senator Stanley?

20 SENATOR STANLEY: [No response.]

21 MR. FEINMAN: Delegate Wright?

22 DELEGATE WRIGHT: Here.

23 MR. FEINMAN: You have a quorum, Mr.
24 Chairman.

25 SENATOR RUFF: We'll begin the meeting

1 with the minutes are on the website. Do I have a motion for
2 approval? All right, I have a motion and a second to approve
3 the minutes of January 8, 2018. All those in favor say aye.
4 (Ayes.) Opposed? (No response.) The minutes are approved.
5 Tim, would you lead us in the recommendations? What we
6 will do is we'll go through all the recommendations. If anyone
7 wishes to pull out as it's described by Tim.

8 MR. PFOHL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
9 We received twenty some proposals this year and one has
10 been subsequently withdrawn. The Commission budgeted
11 \$2.5 million and we received \$4.2 million in requests and our
12 recommendations total about \$2.2 million. For the benefit of
13 those that are new with this Education go around, the staff
14 report includes the executive summary provided by the
15 applicant and then staff comments and recommendations.
16 Those have been available on our website since Friday. Our
17 primary metric in this program is the attainment of nationally
18 recognized workforce credentials from GED, National Career
19 Readiness Certificate, a welding certification, an associate's or
20 bachelor's degree. Certifications will be provided on programs
21 in this funding cycle. So that applicants can walk into an
22 employer and will have a credential to present. We've got
23 nineteen of these to go through and this is a twenty page staff
24 report and if it sounds like I'm glossing over your project,
25 that's not the case because the Committee has an abundance

1 of information and copies of the allocations. So with that, I'll
2 start off.

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4 NOTE: MR. PFOHL GIVES A SUMMARY OF REQUEST
5 NUMBER 3417, 3418, 3306, 3424, 3425, 3426, 3415, 3419,
6 3422 (WITHDRAWN), 3410, 3413.

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8 SENATOR RUFF: We just spent quite a
9 few dollars on the GED program, do we have any correct
10 records as to how this has helped people getting jobs?

11 MR. PFOHL: We see paperwork as it
12 comes in while people are taking GED testing. But we haven't
13 seen any job figures. Kathy Hodges is a current grant
14 administrator.

15 MS. HODGES: Good afternoon. We
16 track as many people as we can and sometimes we lose track
17 of them like a change of phone or a change of address but I
18 can tell you we have a high percent because of this. I can say
19 at least eighty percent. I know we had an 82% pass rate and
20 out of the last several years that we've been administering this
21 program, we had approximately 5,100 pass. And the total
22 recently is 500 GEDs attained. We most recently have a
23 young lady who was in section eight housing and we got her a
24 work experience at her local library while she was working on
25 finishing up her GED.

1 Just last week, she was sitting for the
2 GED and she has employment now in the library locally but
3 she's able now to take care of her child and work during hours
4 the child is in school. There was a death in her family and she
5 was trying to raise money to handle that and her family.
6 We've got about six hundred jobs we can't fill but we've got so
7 many people working already. The prospect is very good. I
8 don't have an accurate account with me but 82% is pretty
9 good.

10 SENATOR RUFF: I don't question that
11 it's not good but my question would be, would it be better to
12 give them a workforce credential and get them a job as a CNA
13 or truck driver where they actually have a career rather than
14 back on the street.

15 MS. HODGES: Well, they do need a
16 career, not just a GED. But many of the employers we serve
17 in Franklin County, a GED alone will give them a ticket to get
18 in the door to get a job. And we've got a shortage of employees
19 right now especially with manufacturing companies that we
20 serve.

21 SENATOR RUFF: Thank you. Any
22 questions? Keep going, Tim.

23 MS. COLEMAN: Mr. Chairman, we're
24 entering a stretch of projects that we're not recommending,
25 recommending no funding. I just want to be sure, does

1 somebody want those projects read? Anyone here from the
2 Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center Foundation?

3 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you for your
4 consideration.

5 SENATOR RUFF: Any other questions?
6 Keep going.

7 MR. PFOHL: 3414.

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9 NOTE: MR. PFOHL HAS NOW COMPLETED THE REVIEW OF
10 ALL THE GRANT REQUESTS.

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12 SENATOR RUFF: Well, there's not many
13 questions. This will be a short Education Committee meeting.

14 DR. EHRHARDT: We talk about a lot of
15 costs per credential and if you run the numbers for programs
16 and it strikes me if there was some way to identify what that
17 target is and considering a variable to help our applicants.
18 Just like early childhood, low impact, versus a high impact
19 and I think we should focus on how can we help our
20 applicants in that process. There are many variables to
21 consider.

22 MR. FEINMAN: We have tried to be as
23 metric driven as we can and pushed hard to get those
24 numbers but the challenges, unlike say the broadband
25 program, there's no way to do it. The whole universe of

1 credentials is available for applicants who approach us. For
2 example, we get the GED version but then the Chairman's
3 right, you know, what are the results. If we know for example
4 there's a high demand in a certain field or in a particular
5 industry depending on the demand, if you take a look at what
6 our value is per industry code and value the credential by or
7 you could say here's our cost per credential per industry and
8 see how those contrast with national figures. I think it will be
9 a while to be able to really identify that number.

10 DR. EHRHARDT: Maybe on an interim
11 basis we can –

12 MR. FEINMAN: Yes –

13 SENATOR RUFF: At this time, I'm going
14 to ask for a motion for all these projects in a block. We'll read
15 the number of each item and if you wish to pull it out of the
16 block, you may do so.

17 DELEGATE MARSHALL: So moved.

18 DELEGATE WRIGHT: Second.

19 SENATOR RUFF: 3417, 3418, 3306,
20 3424, 3425, 3426, 3415, 3419, 3422, 3410, 3413, 3411,
21 3420, 3414, 3416, 3421, 3423, 3442, 3412, and 3427.

22 MR. PFOHL: On 3415, the exact
23 number, that number is \$141,047.

24 SENATOR RUFF: It's been moved and
25 seconded, any further discussion? Hearing none, all in favor

1 say aye. (Ayes.) Opposed? (No response.) That motion
2 carries.

3 The next piece of business is an
4 extension for Southside Virginia Community College
5 Foundation implement a physical therapy assistant program,
6 number 3024 and that's a request for a fifth year extension.

7 MS. CAPPS: We made a grant award in
8 2013 to start the physical therapy assistant program and
9 there's been some delay due to accreditation and the number
10 of applications coming in each year and the staff therefore
11 recommends approval of a fifth year extension to May 21,
12 2020.

13 SENATOR RUFF: We have a motion and
14 a second, any further discussion? All those in favor say aye.
15 (Ayes.) Opposed? (No response.) That motion passes. Thank
16 you. Evan, do we have anything else?

17 MR. FEINMAN: The workforce financial
18 aid, page 43 in your book.

19 SENATOR RUFF: In the notebook
20 beginning on page 43 and 44. We have a request from the
21 various community colleges and the staff has broken it down,
22 each request as to how it's going to be used. And in the past
23 we haven't pushed it that much detail and I think it speaks to
24 some things that have been mentioned to me, be as
25 professional as we can in this process. Evan, you want to talk

1 about anything?

2 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'll just
3 say this. In the past, I have expressed some frustration with
4 our partners in these grants as regards to their deference to
5 the priorities that we outlined. In the past, they really haven't
6 really paid much attention to our preferences and we used
7 some of this language last year in our discussion. If you go
8 through on an institution by institution basis but now it's
9 much better aligned with the priorities laid out by this
10 Committee. There is some double dipping because some
11 people worked on multiple of the priorities but I don't think
12 that's necessarily a bad thing. I'm still working on beefing up
13 the data and we have some broken down in two categories but
14 all things being equal, we're moving positive in that direction.

15 MR. PFOHL: If I could add a footnote,
16 Mr. Chairman, the last line on page 43, it says the requests
17 anticipate serving a total of 2,394 students, but it's more than
18 2500 students, 2018-19 school year of whom more than 1700
19 will attain a credential within that school year. Those are the
20 current numbers. We're reaching more students at a slightly
21 reduced funding level within the school year.

22 SENATOR RUFF: Thank you. Any other
23 comments? Is there a motion to approve –

24 SENATOR CHAFIN: It's come to my
25 attention that some of the community colleges or maybe all of

1 them that are in Southwest Virginia have other resources for
2 obtaining these types of monies through ARC, Appalachian
3 Regional Commission. Their needs are being met in that way
4 but their needs are not being met as far as the longer
5 credentialed courses, six months or less are these
6 credentialed courses. That's been brought to my attention by
7 a number of the community of presidents of the community
8 colleges. That the one size fits all does not fit. I just wondered
9 with regard to Southwest if you could look at that and provide
10 some additional guidance for Southwest where there are ARC
11 monies available. I might ask Evan to look at that, too.

12 SENATOR RUFF: I thought you were
13 suggesting that we drop funding.

14 SENATOR CHAFIN: I'm sorry you
15 misunderstood that.

16 MR. FEINMAN: Senator and Mr.
17 Chairman, I've heard some concern regarding over-focus by
18 the Committee on the shorter term credentials. I think that's
19 an expression of, but the fact that we certainly have a
20 longstanding historic support for training credentials and
21 trade credentials. The prioritization that this Committee puts
22 forward does say we ought to start at the top of the list but
23 you can always move down. The fifth priority is programs and
24 places. I expect they were probably a little gun-shy about
25 when you consider the priorities after strong language

1 expressed the year prior.

2 I think staff would be very happy to hear
3 that the higher priorities were being met from the funding
4 sources and we could reflect that in our reports to this
5 Committee if, in fact, they are meeting the priorities this
6 Committee laid out with other funding and then continue to
7 use our funding for students in the region.

8 SENATOR RUFF: One of the
9 requirements for ARC is not available for various programs.

10 SENATOR CHAFIN: It's not and that
11 money is, of course, only allowed in the Appalachian Region or
12 that's where the grants from ARC go and that's my
13 understanding. If they are only available in those counties,
14 the monies are available and being used by us but there was
15 some thought process that that prioritization that our
16 Committee had was forbidding them from using these
17 additional monies and money allocated to the Southwest
18 community colleges for the purpose of longer training and
19 longer credentials. It's my understanding that that would not
20 be, that the policy of this Committee then would not prohibit
21 that.

22 SENATOR RUFF: There'd probably be
23 some questions by staff and if somebody wanted to go all the
24 way back to where we were before and all that money and let
25 them pick and choose what they want to do. I think there has

1 to be some way to evaluate whether they're using Tobacco
2 Commission money.

3 SENATOR CHAFIN: Just as a follow-up
4 question, if I understand it correctly, if they keep good records
5 and that could reflect how they're using these ARC monies for
6 the shorter credential programs then that would set the stage
7 for them to use those funds for the longer credentials?

8 SENATOR RUFF: I think the staff would
9 see that as a good tradeoff.

10 MR. FEINMAN: Maybe we need a motion,
11 no, we don't.

12 SENATOR RUFF: Yes, the motion is to
13 approve the dollar amount on page 43. Is there a second?

14 SENATOR CHAFIN: Second.

15 SENATOR RUFF: Excuse me, page 44.
16 It's been properly moved and seconded. Any further
17 discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor say aye. (Ayes.)
18 Opposed? (No response.) That motion carries.

19 Now, do we have any comments from the
20 public? You all are very agreeable today. Hearing none, we
21 are adjourned.

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23 PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED.

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1 CERTIFICATE OF THE COURT REPORTER

2
3 I, Medford W. Howard, Registered Professional
4 Reporter and Notary Public for the State of Virginia at large,
5 do hereby certify that I was the court reporter who took down
6 and transcribed the proceedings of the **Tobacco Region**
7 **Revitalization Commission Education Committee meeting**
8 **when held on Monday, May 21, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. at**
9 **Longwood University, Farmville, Virginia.**

10 I further certify this is a true and accurate
11 transcript, to the best of my ability to hear and understand
12 the proceedings.

13 Given under my hand this _____ day of June,
14 2018.

15
16 _____
17 Medford W. Howard

18 CCR #0313137