

1 **TOBACCO REGION REVITALIZATION COMMISSION**

2 701 East Franklin Street, Suite 501

3 Richmond, Virginia 23219

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8 **Education Committee Meeting**

9 Monday, May 18, 2020

10 9:00 o'clock a.m.

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14 (By Conference Call)

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1 APPEARANCES:

2 Ms. Rebecca Coleman, Chairman
3 Dr. Alexis I. Ehrhardt, Vice Chairman
4 Ms. Gayle F. Barts
5 The Honorable A. Benton Chafin, Jr.
6 Mr. Joel Cunningham
7 Ms. Sandy Ratliff
8 The Honorable Frank M. Ruff
9 Mr. Cecil E. Shell
10 The Honorable William M. Stanley, Jr.

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12 COMMISSION STAFF:

13 Mr. Evan Feinman, Executive Director
14 Mr. Andy Sorrell, Deputy Director
15 Ms. Joyce Knight, Administrative Supervisor
16 Mr. Timothy S. Pfohl, Grants Program Administration Director
17 Ms. Michele Faircloth, Grants Assistant - Southern
18 Ms. Jessica Stamper – Grants Assistant - Southwest
19 Ms. Stephanie S. Kim, Director of Finance
20 Ms. Sara G. Williams, Grants Program Administrator - Southwest
21 Mr. Jordan Butler, Public Relations Coordinator

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23 COUNSEL FOR THE COMMISSION:

24 Ms. Elizabeth B. Myers, Assistant Attorney General
25 Richmond, Virginia 23219

1 May 18, 2020

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3 MR. FEINMAN: Andy, why don't you go first and
4 explain the digital makeup.

5 MR. SORRELL: All right, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 A few ground rules for the Commission meeting. And
7 now that we're doing this electronically. First off, if you have any
8 devices or anything like that for the meeting, go ahead and mute
9 those so that they don't disturb the meeting.

10 To everybody's knowledge, we are recording this
11 meeting, and the meeting will be transcribed, as well, like we
12 usually do with our minutes. So, that information will be
13 available. Typically, it takes about ten days for the meeting to
14 be converted and we have it uploaded on the website, but we get
15 that done very quickly. So that information will be available for
16 folks to look at.

17 All participants are typically going to be muted at the
18 beginning of the meeting, and if background noise or something
19 like that or disruptions occur, we will, we will need to remove
20 that particular person from the meeting. But we'll try to resolve
21 that before that would occur.

22 For everybody's knowledge, we will have public
23 comment at the end of each of the Committee meetings, and all
24 of our other Commission meetings. So, if a member of the public
25 does desire to address the commission, please reserve those

1 questions until that portion of the meeting when the moderator
2 will ask for any comments from the public at that time and you
3 can use the raised-hand feature or you can use the chat-box
4 feature, or however way that you would like.

5 At the time of the public comment, please state your
6 full name and your location, and the organization that you
7 represent, and keep your comments to about two minutes. So if
8 you have any other comments or questions relating to the
9 meeting or anything like that, please submit them in that
10 feature. Some couldn't hear, so when you're speaking, make
11 sure that you're speaking as loud as you can so that folks can
12 hear you. Thank you.

13 MR. FEINMAN: Thank you very much, Andy.

14 With that, one other thing I'd ask that we do, and
15 Andy will be our digital bouncer for this meeting. If any
16 particular dial-in gets too noisy, he will mute that person, and if
17 it's disruptive just like we would in a public meeting if someone
18 was disruptive, will be digitally escorted out. Please try to avoid
19 that turn of events.

20 With that, I will call the roll. Members of the
21 Committee, please unmute yourself for the purpose of making
22 yourself known.

23 Ms. Coleman.

24 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Here.

25 MR. FEINMAN: Dr. Ehrhardt.

1 DR. EHRHARDT: Here.

2 MR. FEINMAN: Ms. Barts.

3 MS. BARTS: Here.

4 MR. FEINMAN: Senator Chafin.

5 SENATOR CHAFIN: Here.

6 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Cunningham.

7 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Here.

8 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Harris.

9 MR. HARRIS: (No response).

10 MR. FEINMAN: Ms. Ratliff.

11 MS. RATLIFF: Here.

12 MR. FEINMAN: Senator Ruff.

13 SENATOR RUFF: Here.

14 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Shell.

15 MR. SHELL: Here.

16 MR. FEINMAN: Senator Stanley.

17 SENATOR STANLEY: Here.

18 MR. FEINMAN: You have a quorum, Madam

19 Chairman.

20 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Thank you.

21 (Unintelligible). For folks on video, they'll need to gain the

22 attention of the Chair in the same way you would in a public

23 meeting, which is interrupt and ask to be recognized. Okay.

24 Next will be the motion for the minutes.

25 SENATOR RUFF: I move to accept as sent out.

1 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: All in favor, say aye.
2 (Ayes). Opposed? (No response).

3 All right. First up is the Financial Aid Proposal, and I'll
4 turn it over to Tim.

5 MR. PFOHL: Thank you, Ms. Chairman. Last year in
6 June at the Commission meeting, your Committee recommended
7 and the Commission approved \$2.9 million for 11 requests from
8 community colleges to serve students in the current 2019-2020
9 school year, with a maximum request of \$315,000 per
10 institution. For this current funding round that serves students in
11 the 2020-2021 school year, Staff instructed those recipients at
12 the new request should not exceed the current year's award,
13 again with a maximum request of \$315,000.

14 At the April due date, we received 11 proposals for
15 2021, \$2,901,000. As always, the last dollar award to students,
16 it must be matched per the Code of Virginia at least dollar for
17 dollar.

18 In the Staff report, we have the five ranked priorities
19 that have been in place for three years now, and a couple of
20 asterisks on those. Certifications that can be completed in six
21 months or fewer, which is our top priority. We will provide
22 assistance to recipients of the State Workforce Credential to the
23 extent of one-sixth of the cost of training and certification, which
24 is half of the one-third share the student is responsible for.

25 A new twist is the recently approved "Get a Skill, Get

1 a Job, Give Back”, a G3 funding, which was introduced by the
2 Governor and approved by the General Assembly for students
3 with household incomes that qualify for G3, and we’re still a little
4 bit up in the air about to what extent that funding is going to be
5 available for the colleges, but we’re taking a position that
6 Commission assistance should not be used before those eligible
7 students receive the G3 funding.

8 The applicants, again, are making good progress,
9 adjusting to the focus of bank priorities. All of the requests
10 generally comply with the Committee’s longstanding objectives of
11 providing last dollar assistance to students working to obtain a
12 nationally recognized workforce academic credential.

13 The requests this year anticipate serving nearly 2,200
14 students and resulting in nearly 1,300 of those students
15 obtaining credentials in the coming school year. The proposals
16 also estimate matching funds of more than \$5.3 million for
17 students receiving Commission support in these priority
18 categories.

19 Staff recommends approval of these requests as
20 submitted for last dollar Workforce Financial Aid for Tobacco
21 Region students in the 2020-21 school year and are contingent
22 on at least dollar-for-dollar matching funds.

23 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: If the Committee members
24 would look over what’s been provided, and are there any
25 questions on the recommendation? Any questions on the

1 Workforce Financial Aid?

2 DR. EHRHARDT: Becky, I have a question. As we
3 consider the impact of the pandemic, I think the community
4 colleges, thank goodness, are well-positioned to be working
5 virtual as needed. But do you see the pandemic impacting any of
6 these specific Workforce Financial Aid, any consideration to need
7 to think about that, or do you feel pretty good about these
8 investments in light of where we are today?

9 MR. PFOHL: I wish I could hazard a guess about the
10 effect of the pandemic. We just don't know where that's going to
11 lead us. If students are registered, that money does not go out
12 the door, so we hold onto it until it is needed.

13 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any further questions?

14 SENATOR RUFF: Madam Chairman, if there's no
15 further questions, I would move that the Staff recommendation
16 be approved.

17 MR. SHELL: Second.

18 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any further discussion: All
19 in favor, say aye. (Ayes). Any opposed ? (No response).

20 That would take the full amount away from Financial
21 Aid. And under our former Chairman and progress
22 (unintelligible) . And there's still a significant gap.

23 Next up is Competitive Education.

24 MR. PHOL: Thank you. The Competitive Education
25 awards were also received for their annual in April, and

1 guidelines are posted on the Commission's web page for the
2 Education Program. We received 16 requests, that included two
3 that were referred from other committees in previous
4 Commission meetings. The request total \$4.3 million dollars.
5 We estimate we have just shy of \$2.8 million, available to fund
6 these.

7 Staff recommending just shy of \$2.5 million so that
8 hopefully there would be some carry-forward funds to fund
9 projects in the next year.

10 The Executive Summary that's provided by the
11 applicant in their application is included in the Staff Report. I'm
12 going to try to focus on the Staff's comments and
13 recommendations, move very quickly, because I can't imagine
14 anyone wants to hear me go out at great length about these. I'll
15 pause after I describe each project. If Committee members have
16 any questions, please feel free to stop me if you do.

17 For the applicants, if the Committee members have
18 questions for you, hopefully you can get on the line and mute
19 yourself and then identify yourself to respond to Committee
20 member questions.

21 Leading off with, and the first one is Center for Rural
22 Virginia, requesting \$100,000, to establish a Virginia Rural
23 Leaders Institute. Funds are requested to support three annual
24 cohorts of public and private sector participants, 30 per cohort
25 annually, from rural communities across Virginia for the new

1 program that will focus rural community and economic
2 development leadership. Four sessions would be held annually
3 for each cohort, including one in the Tobacco Region.
4 Commission funds are requested to provide \$45,000 of tuition
5 assistance for participants from the Tobacco Region, \$45,000 for
6 costs to conduct the sessions, including meals, lodging,
7 transportation, material, and so forth, and, of course, the cost to
8 hire a Program Director.

9 This is an ambitious, commendable, and expensive
10 undertaking for the Center. They have consulted with similar
11 programs, such as LEAD Virginia for guidance. However, the
12 Rural Leadership Institute would not offer nationally recognized
13 workforce credentials, which is a primary outcome for the
14 Competitive Education Program. To allow the Center additional
15 time for their advisory committee to be formed for the
16 development of curriculum, which are steps outlined in their
17 milestones and for the Center to explore resource sharing
18 partnerships with other organizations that conduct similar
19 institutes, including LEAD Virginia, Cooperative Extension, and
20 Appalachian Regional Commission that would make the institute
21 more sustainable.

22 Staff suggests this proposal be referred to the Special
23 Projects Committee, where this project better aligns with
24 program outcome metrics, which has an available balance for
25 consideration of this request at a future Commission meeting.

1 So, Staff's recommendation is this proposal be
2 referred to the Special Projects Program.

3 SENATOR RUFF: What's the timeframe on Special
4 Projects?

5 MR. FEINMAN: We not yet have scheduled a Special
6 Projects meeting. And according to the Strategic Plan, maybe
7 one of the newly developed committees, but we could put that
8 off over the summer. We don't believe that -- --

9 SENATOR RUFF: The reason I'm asking that is there
10 are similar groups that are willing to be part, they don't want to
11 be the first, we're not talking until 2021 --

12 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: We'll defer your comments
13 until that time.

14 MR. PFOHL: Next up is the Central Virginia
15 Community College Educational Foundation, requesting \$120,189
16 for Machining and Manufacturing Equipment Update. The request
17 seeks funding for half of the costs to replace six pieces of
18 equipment in the College's machining program. The college
19 states that the current training equipment is, quote, worn and
20 dated, end quote, and provided a list of current equipment with
21 the dates that they were put in service, mostly ranging back to
22 the early 2000s.

23 The college states that it graduates 200-plus students
24 annually, with a variety of stackable industry-recognized
25 machining credentials, with a 100 percent hire rate upon and

1 sometimes even prior to graduation. This request shows no net
2 new gain above the current enrollment and graduation, which is
3 the principal limitation of the request. However, the current
4 number of graduates and their job-hiring rate is most impressive.
5 It is reasonable to accept the college's premise that the current
6 equipment, most of which is 15 to 20 years old, has been heavily
7 used and lacks state-of-the-art training capabilities.

8 So, Staff is recommending an award of \$115,000,
9 that's with a small deduction, where CVCC notified us that they
10 thought they could reduce the installation costs. So, \$115,000
11 for up to 50 percent of replacement equipment acquisition and
12 installation. And that's our recommendation.

13 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any questions?

14 MR. PFOHL: If there are none, we'll move forward.

15 Second request from CVCC Educational Foundation for
16 \$91,667 for New Radiologic Technology Program, Overhead X-
17 Ray System, as stated in the Executive Summary, CVCC's
18 Radiologic Technology Program has successfully graduated and
19 placed 750 graduates over the past 50 years.

20 It's a two-year program, with 16 students per cohort
21 gaining an Associate's Degree. The equipment replacement does
22 not expand the annual cohort, but provides training on X-ray
23 equipment, offering current technology via replacement of
24 equipment put in service in 2007. This program has a 100
25 percent job placement for graduates.

1 The program’s longevity and successful job placement
2 speak volumes for the success and sustainability of this program,
3 which is validated by a support letter from the Centra Health
4 System CEO, noting that Centra hired four of the 16 graduates in
5 the 2019 cohort.

6 Staff is recommending an award of \$91,667 for 50
7 percent of new equipment costs.

8 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Questions or comments?

9 MR. PFOHL: If not, moving on. Going to take a little
10 more time with the Emory and Henry proposal. Request for
11 \$298,770, to support the development of a new Master of
12 Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program at the
13 Emory and Henry School of Health Sciences, which, you may
14 recall, is in the former hospital in Marion, in Southwest Virginia.

15 Funds are requested over two years for Personal
16 Services, \$260,000 to support the Program Director and two core
17 faculty positions, as well as an Admin. Assistant position. Thirty-
18 eight thousand is requested for contractual services. The initial
19 enrollment will consist of 18 students per cohort, although future
20 classes will expand to allow 24 students per cohort.

21 Because the Program Director has already been hired,
22 starting July 1, it appears the funding may already be in place to
23 for this position. We’re suggesting it’s not necessary to allocate
24 grant funds for this staff member. Additionally, the recruitment
25 and professional development expenses presented in the budget

1 are better suited to be paid using matching funds.

2 The Staff, during the review process, proposed to E
3 and H that they revise their budget to reallocate these expenses
4 to better fit the program's funding priorities. And the college has
5 submitted a revised budget and agreed to focus Commission
6 support on salary and benefits for the part-time Admin. Assistant
7 and the two faculty positions, and they will be hired next year.

8 They've also revised their request to seek Commission
9 support of one-time equipment, each \$48,000, and stock the
10 program's library with books and other training educational
11 materials.

12 Staff suggests these are more appropriate expenses
13 to support, and E and H is also requesting general lab supplies
14 and student recruitment costs, \$21,000, which the Staff feels
15 would be a lesser funding priority that could, could and should be
16 conducted using matching funds.

17 The application cites 15 open positions for clinical,
18 medical, licensed mental health professionals just in the
19 Marion/Smyth County area. Similar demand exists throughout
20 Virginia with more than 2,000 open positions looking for this
21 licensed credential.

22 The need for health care providers is especially high in
23 the Tobacco Region and similar rural areas to assist in the
24 treatment of those affected by the opioid epidemic.

25 Staff suggests the new program will result in

1 significant numbers who earned graduate level degrees, careers
2 in high demand fields that serves the mental and physical health
3 needs of the Southwest Virginia workforce. As such, this
4 proposal tied for the top score in this funding round.

5 Staff is recommending a slightly reduced award of
6 \$288,405 per the revised budget, excluding supplies and student
7 recruitment.

8 I'll pause because I know that was a lot.

9 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Questions or comments?

10 MR. PFOHL: Moving on, let's move on to Ferrum
11 College, which is a \$40,000 request to establish a new Internet
12 of Things Lab at Ferrum College, primarily for the cost of 25
13 business laptops for establishing the lab, to support the ability of
14 students in Computer Technology and Information Systems Major
15 and to receive professional certifications in several IT-related
16 fields. We can give you a list of some of those different
17 credentials.

18 The outcomes are projected to serve 28 students
19 annually and increasing the number for nationally-recognized IT
20 certifications to 160 to 224 certifications, based on 28 students
21 each receiving up to eight different certifications.

22 Strong employer support letters were provided,
23 including McAirlands, a manufacturing facility in Franklin County,
24 and Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital indicating needs for
25 graduates with these skills. A modest request to expand the

1 offerings of a long-standing program appears to better prepare
2 Ferrum computer science students for a wider range of
3 employer-demanded career options.

4 Staff recommends an award of \$40,000.

5 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any questions or
6 comments? You're doing a great job, Tim.

7 MR. PFOHL: Thank you. The next one is from
8 Hampden-Sydney College, we're going to take a little more on,
9 as well. Request for \$366,732, entitled Preparing Technology
10 Leaders for Southside Virginia. The project is focused on
11 increasing enrollment and graduates in Hampden-Sydney
12 Computer Science Program, as well as students studying
13 economics and business, with a secondary focus on Data Science
14 and Data Analytics.

15 The proposal emphasizes a plan for increased
16 recruitment of students from Southern Virginia and placement of
17 those students in work-based learning opportunities with the
18 employers in the region. Grant funds are requested to support
19 \$195,000 of personnel costs for the hiring of two new Computer
20 Science faculty.

21 There's \$171,000 and change budget for the new
22 computer laboratory which would be housed in the new \$30
23 million Pauley Science Center, expected to open on campus next
24 year.

25 Employer letters were provided by an IT firm, a

1 regional bank, and so forth, and letters of support were provided
2 by Southside Community College, expressing an interest in
3 working with Hampden-Sydney on a two-plus-two agreement for
4 students to articulate to the computer program at Hampden-
5 Sydney. Outcomes are projected at increasing the annual
6 number of Computer Science majors from the current baseline of
7 four per year to 20 students annually.

8 Staff notes that the \$195,000 of this request would
9 fund the refilling of two Computer Science faculty positions, upon
10 the expected retirement of two incumbents, and using
11 Commission funds to supplant funding that is already in the
12 college's faculty budget. It would be contrary to the
13 Commission's guidelines and funding policies.

14 Furthermore, having those requested hires matched
15 by two new positions and admissions and career counseling
16 whose percentage of time dedicated to this project would be
17 enormously difficult to track and verify and less than ideal as
18 required match.

19 Staff suggests offering half of the \$171,000 expense
20 to equip a new state-of-the-art Computer Sciences lab as a one-
21 time cost, is more consistent with recommendations on other
22 equipment requests within this cycle, as well as countless
23 education grants over the years to support creation and
24 expansion of health sciences, computer sciences, and other
25 STEM-H educational facilities at public and private universities in

1 the region, including Averett, Emory and Henry, Longwood, and
2 UVA-Wise, as well as community colleges.

3 Staff feels that it's important that the college follow
4 through on its stated intent to work closely with Southern
5 Virginia Community College, as well as other Tobacco Region
6 community colleges to enroll and to provide IT intern/apprentice
7 opportunities to students from the Tobacco Region, who are
8 somewhat more likely to pursue employment within the region
9 upon graduation, and with potential student debt assistance
10 through the Commission Talent Attraction program.

11 Staff recommends an award of \$85,866 for 50 percent
12 of the computer hardware required to establish and initiate the
13 new computer sciences programs and laboratory.

14 That's a mouthful, so I'll take a pause.

15 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Questions or comments
16 from the Commission?

17 DR. EHRHARDT: Madam Chair, I'm just curious
18 whether Tim had spoken with the representatives from
19 Hampden-Sydney and what their reaction is to the reduced
20 award amount?

21 MR. PFOHL: Ms. Ehrhardt, I don't know what their
22 reaction is, but we have spoken with the President of the college,
23 he's reached out to several staff members, as well as some of
24 the development staff at the college. They have stated that they
25 feel like they can accelerate the development of the Computer

1 Science program and expansion into new areas of education by
2 bringing on these replacements, if you will, faculty, while the
3 current incumbents are still onboard, and that's their justification
4 for that.

5 Acknowledged that it would be difficult for us to
6 attract new admissions and career counseling positions. Their
7 percent of dedication, they require a match.

8 DR. EHRHARDT: Thank you.

9 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any further questions? All
10 right, next, but I will offer Hampden-Sydney --

11 MR. PFOHL: Next up is first of two requests from
12 Institute for Advanced Learning and Research in Danville. The
13 first one is \$260,674 for the Work Ready Community Expansion
14 Phase II. The request would expand a regional effort to support
15 testing for the National Career Readiness Certificate, which tests
16 for a job candidate's competencies in applied math, graphic
17 literacy, and reading/comprehension of workplace documents.

18 As a sufficient number of tests are passed in a locality,
19 it is then certified as a national work-ready community. This has
20 been supported by two previous competitive education grants,
21 most recently in May of 2017, which has a small balance, and
22 they requested an extension on that.

23 Since the 2017 funding was approved, the annual
24 NCRCs that have been granted have grown from 385 in 2017 to
25 more than 1,250 in 2019, and was on track in the first quarter of

1 calendar 2020 to reach a yearly total approaching \$2,500 before
2 the COVID lockdown.

3 Participating school divisions have grown from six in
4 2017 to sixteen, and 12 localities have achieved and maintained
5 workforce-ready community status.

6 The current request would assist those 12 Southern
7 Virginia localities in maintaining their certification, while
8 supporting five new counties and gaining initial certification.
9 Funds are requested primarily for the NCRC tests at an expense
10 of \$200,000 and for half of the salary and benefits for the current
11 Program Coordinator, which is about \$60,000.

12 Companies, such as Owens-Illinois, Eastman
13 Chemical, Ten Oaks, and Nucor Buildings Group have adopted
14 the NCRC as part of their job applicant pre-screening, and
15 several letters from regional employers who use NCRC in their
16 applicant screening provide a strong endorsement of the value of
17 this initiative.

18 Outcomes are truly significant, including almost 7,700
19 individuals tested and more than 5,500 certificates expected in
20 the two-year project period, with five new initial certified work-
21 ready communities and 12 cities and counties, maintaining that
22 status, covering the majority of the Southern Region in the
23 Tobacco Footprint.

24 This request builds on a strong and collaborative
25 established regional partnership that has demonstrated

1 measurable growth to better position thousands of job candidates
2 across most of Southern Virginia, within an employer recognized
3 and valued credential and will greatly assist these localities in
4 marketing the competencies of their workforce to existing and
5 prospective employers.

6 Staff is recommending an award of \$260,674.

7 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any questions?

8 MR. PFHOL: The second request from the Institute for
9 Advanced Learning and Research is to establish a Sonography
10 School and Healthcare Apprenticeship Pilot in partnership with
11 Sovah Health, at the request for \$238,775. Startup costs for
12 the development of Virginia's first Healthcare Apprenticeship
13 Program to address the need for qualified sonography
14 professionals. These are effectively ultrasound technicians.

15 The Institute's request is in partnership with Danville
16 Regional Medical Center, School of Health Professions. An annual
17 cohort for the one-year program is expected to be seven
18 students, with five of those completing the program and gaining
19 national certification. Starting wages are nearly \$26 an hour and
20 open Sonography positions were identified for all hospitals in
21 Danville, Martinsville, Halifax, and Gretna. Commission funds are
22 primarily for new personnel, with \$175,000 allocated for hiring
23 the Sonography Director and Associate Director faculty. And
24 \$63,775 for equipment, which is an ultrasound machine and
25 laptops.

1 The project is designed to address a critical training
2 need that does not currently exist in the region. Staff notes that
3 the success of the School of Health Professionals Radiologic
4 Technology Program, which graduates about 11 students
5 annually, and since its inception in 2004, has succeeded in
6 addressing the occupational demand and has transitioned the
7 hospital away from having to contract with national vendors for
8 providing those critical services, which is the same challenge as
9 the School of Health Professionals seeking to address with the
10 Sonography Program.

11 While this might appear to principally benefit Sovah
12 Health, support letters were provided from Sentara-Halifax
13 Regional Hospital, from PATHS, which is a federally qualified
14 clinic with several locations in Southern Virginia, and a local OB-
15 GYN practice, all expressing a need for ultrasound technicians
16 and endorsing this request.

17 As a private organization, Sovah Health has agreed as
18 the primary beneficiary of this project to be a party to the grant
19 agreement to assure completion of approved outcomes and to
20 protect the Commission's security interest in equipment. Annual
21 outcomes are admittedly low by nationally certified technicians
22 and the documented demand for these graduates and the School
23 of Health Professions' long track record of success with its
24 radiologic technician training speak to the sustainability and
25 demand for this training. As such, this was the third highest

1 scoring proposal in this funding round.

2 The Staff recommends an award of \$238,775
3 contingent on Sovah Health being party to the executed grant
4 agreement.

5 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Are there any questions or
6 discussion? All right.

7 MR. PFOHL: Moving forward, the next one is fairly
8 straightforward and should be brief. Medical Solutions Academy,
9 is applying for \$12,500, to establish a Practical Nursing
10 Simulation Lab, and requests to support 50 percent of the cost
11 for a high fidelity mannequin to use in training simulations for
12 students enrolled in their Practical Nursing Program.

13 Medical Solutions Academy is a non-profit based in
14 Danville, launched in 2011 and offers short-term healthcare
15 training programs in nursing, medical assistants, medication aid,
16 medical office assistants, and pharmacy technician, in addition to
17 the practical nursing program.

18 We provided a modest grant to Medical Solutions in
19 2016 for the startup of their LPN Program. Mean annual wages
20 for LPNs in Virginia are listed as \$44,030.

21 The Academy has been operating successfully for
22 nearly a decade, and is certified through SCHEV, the Virginia
23 Board of Nursing, and the National Healthcare Association.
24 Following an additional accreditation process that they're going
25 through right now, which will allow for financial aid eligibility to

1 support tuition costs, the Academy plans to extend annual
2 enrollment from 10 students currently to 40 students.

3 Area employers with ongoing needs to fill LPN
4 positions include Piney Forest Health and Rehabilitation Center,
5 Riverside HRC, Stratford Nursing Home, and SOVAH Health. An
6 employer letter from Piney Forest Human Resources Director
7 indicates that graduates from the Academy fill a majority of their
8 nurse positions,. While outcomes are very modest, eight LPN
9 graduates annually, but potentially growing to 40, this very
10 modest request will provide state-of-the-art simulation
11 equipment that's become a standard teaching technique at
12 nursing programs across the Tobacco Region and has been
13 supported with a number of education grants to acquire
14 simulation mannequins, including community colleges and
15 several universities.

16 Staff is recommending an award of \$12,500 to
17 support 50 percent of equipment costs.

18 Then we'll move on to Mountain Empire Community
19 College, requesting \$308,593 for their Power Lineman, CDL,
20 Dental Assistant Program Expansion.

21 The request to continue development of Mountain
22 Empire's Center for Workforce and Innovation in Appalachia,
23 resulting in the expansion of both the Power Lineman and CDL
24 programs. This facility opened in late 2018, and has received
25 support from the Commission's Special Project Committee, two

1 years ago to our staff, was the location in a former Wise County
2 elementary school in the Town of Appalachia.

3 In the current proposal, funding is requested for the
4 equipment to allow the expansion of the Lineman and CDL
5 Program \$137,000. Funds are also requested for electrical
6 upgrades for the building to support the Dental Assistants
7 Program, specifically to allow the use of digital X-ray equipment
8 that has been placed in the building, but did not have sufficient
9 electrical service to operate.

10 Commission funds, \$81,000, also requested to
11 complete those electrical upgrades to allow the use of dental X-
12 ray equipment. The Dental Assistants Program will produce 36
13 graduates annually and that number will not increase, it will just
14 give those dental assistants the opportunity to work on state-of-
15 the-art X-ray equipment. The benefits in terms of new outcomes
16 are primarily associated with expansion of the Power Lineman
17 and the programs.

18 Commission funds of \$137,000 will be used to
19 purchase several pieces of equipment needed for those two
20 programs to allow the ability to train more students on different
21 equipment using alternating training schedules. Enrollment in
22 the Power Lineman Program will increase by ten students per
23 cohort, 30 annually, and the commercial driving will increase by
24 four students per cohort to 40 annually. The Center in
25 Appalachia is rapidly emerging as an effective new facility to add

1 and expand Mountain Empire Skilled Trades Programs to allow
2 students to gain well-paying jobs, and the applications provided
3 strong letters of support from local employers, documenting the
4 need for graduates from these programs. An example being
5 Scott County Telephone Cooperative saying they hire folks who
6 are trained both as Power Lineman, as well as a Commercial
7 Driver so they can operate the big trucks. And they have great
8 demand for these graduates.

9 The proposed budget also allocates Commission funds,
10 such as recurring costs for the center's utilities, which is
11 \$25,000, and instructional supplies and materials, \$30,000.
12 Staff suggests these recurring expenses should typically be
13 supported through program revenues.

14 There's also a request for \$35,000 to repair a leaking
15 roof. This repair was noted to be the responsibility of the
16 landlord, which in Wise County, according to their lease
17 agreement with Mountain Empire. However, the County has
18 stated in writing that the roof repairs are not funded in its five-
19 year capital improvements budget. Staff supports the urgent
20 need for roof repairs and electrical upgrade to allow use of the
21 Dental Assistant X-ray equipment, but not recurring operating
22 expenses, such as utilities and class supplies and materials.

23 So, the Staff recommendation is \$253,593 for
24 program expansion costs, including electrical upgrade and roof
25 repair, but excluding recurring annual costs, such as utilities and

1 supplies and materials.

2 I'll pause there for questions.

3 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Are there any questions?

4 All right, moving on.

5 MS. GREER: This is Amy Greer, Mountain Empire
6 Community College. I'm sorry, we could not hear that question.

7 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: (Unintelligible).

8 MS. GREER: Thank you. Yes, we agree with the
9 recommendation and we are grateful for the continued support
10 for this project. Thank you.

11 MR. PFOHL: I'll move on to New College Institute,
12 request for \$100,000 for implementing the Amazon Web Services
13 re/Start Program, requesting \$100,000. This is a pilot project for
14 delivery of a proprietary foundational level cloud-based
15 information technology skills training program, known as the
16 AWS Cloud Practitioner Certification. Grant funds are requested
17 to support \$100,000 towards the costs for an Amazon Web
18 Services Instructor, which would be an employee of NCI.
19 Outcomes are 100 participants in Year One coming from four
20 cohorts of 25 students, with projections for 90 individuals
21 receiving the AWS Cloud Practitioner Certification.

22 Listed criteria for participation are relatively minimal,
23 requiring only a high school diploma or a GED, and NCI plans to
24 use an on-line math/logic assessment for assuring individuals
25 selected have the required aptitude for success. Once the four

1 initial cohorts are completed and success of that program is
2 assessed, the Master Service Agreement with Amazon Web
3 Services allows for training to be repeated as long as both parties
4 agree. NCI addressed our Staff questions regarding
5 sustainability and longevity of the program with a couple options
6 for future funding cycles and future funding support.

7 AWS is one of the most prevalent Cloud service
8 providers in the world and is committed to assisting every
9 student that finishes the program. And it's a path to certification
10 with the opportunity to interview for positions for job placement.

11 The Cloud Practitioner Certification provides
12 foundational skills for jobs in one of the highest demand IT fields
13 and can lead to advanced AWS certification that can be layered
14 to provide career progression and long-term opportunities.
15 While graduates, there's pretty high starting average salary
16 listed, we don't expect graduates to be starting at \$131,000, but
17 it does open a career pathway with an Amazon credential that
18 can be life-changing for the participants in partnership with a
19 deeply resource global partner. This should be viewed as a
20 unique pilot opportunity for the region and reassessed to see if
21 initial cohorts can be filled and that completers from the Region
22 ultimately gain better employment.

23 So, with that in mind, Staff recommends an award of
24 \$100,000.

25 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any questions or

1 discussion?

2 MR. PFOHL: Next up is New River/Mount Rogers
3 Workforce Development request for \$234,864. The request
4 increases the promotion of the National Career Readiness
5 Certificate in the nine Tobacco Region localities of the New
6 River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board service area.
7 By increasing access to the NCRC testing, each of these localities
8 will be better positioned to become certified as a Work-Ready
9 Community, as we discussed in the Southern Virginia project.
10 While the application presents a primary goal of expanding
11 access to NCRC testing in the service region, the budget appears
12 to support a variety of other functions, such as incumbent worker
13 training.

14 An additional two years of funding is planned for a
15 future application to further broaden the scope of the project.
16 Although a portion of the application requests support directly
17 related to the testing fees, there appears to be a large portion,
18 which is not directly related to the testing project, but appears to
19 be allocated for percentages of established, recurring operating
20 expenses for the Workforce Board, such as salaries, rent,
21 utilities, et cetera. For example, \$106,000 is requested to
22 support percentages of three current staff members. Despite the
23 questions concerning using Commission funds and matching
24 funds, the project does align with the Southern Virginia
25 Community, Certified Work Ready Community Initiative and

1 presents strong estimated outcomes with a total of 499
2 participants, of which the vast majority, 444, anticipated to
3 receive the NCRC.

4 Staff feels that a reduced level of Commission support
5 focused on NCRC and WorkKeys testing as opposed to existing
6 staff and operating expenses would have a positive impact on
7 this initiative and advance the goal of having a credentialed
8 workforce and certified Work Ready communities in a large swath
9 of Southern and Southwest Virginia.

10 Staff recommends an award of \$41,240 for the NCRC
11 and WorkKeys testing and related expenses, such as the annual
12 curriculum license and software, and excluding existing staff
13 compensation, equipment, and operating expenses.

14 We have heard back from the applicants, I don't know
15 if they want to speak to it, they have expressed concern about
16 not having the funding for those positions.

17 MR. PFOHL: Apparently they're not on the call. So at
18 that point then, I'll move on to Patrick Henry Community College
19 Foundation, request for \$608,395 for Welding Training
20 Expansion. This request is to support 100 percent of the costs
21 for welding booth and robotic welding equipment for expansion of
22 the welding program to be relocated to Patrick Henry Community
23 College's Manufacturing and Engineering Technology Complex.
24 The project is a plan to increase from the 16 welding booths to a
25 total of 44 to 45. PHCC currently runs two cohorts serving 70 to

1 80 welding students annually, and they have waiting list with 66
2 students on it due to limits on class size.

3 Employer letters were provided by Thomas Industrial
4 Fabrication, which expects to hire ten welding positions in coming
5 years and Deere-Hitachi Construction Machinery Corp and
6 Mechanical Designs of Virginia, who did not provide hiring
7 projections. A list of dozens of employers in the Patrick Henry
8 Community College service area and beyond, were listed as
9 having hired welders from PHCC's program in the past.

10 The Commission has previously supported PHCC's
11 welding program through several hundred thousand dollars of
12 funding through the Phase I Center of Excellence grant, the New
13 College Institute, as well as funding from an FY18 education
14 award for the costs of the welding program in Patrick County and
15 at their satellite facility.

16 Following inquiry from Commission Staff, PH clarifies
17 that the net new outcomes that were provided in the application
18 were conservative, and reported 57 welding credentials awarded
19 last year and the projection that that would double to 114
20 credentials awarded annually with the welding booth expansion.

21 This project will unquestionably result in significant
22 numbers of net new certified welders annually to address the
23 annual wait list and meet regional employer demand. However,
24 in light of substantial previous Commission investments in this
25 program and the admittedly large matching funds that have been

1 used to match previous Commission grants, Staff would suggest
2 that support for 50 percent of this new expansion request is
3 appropriate.

4 So, Staff's recommendation is \$224,200 for 50
5 percent of the \$448,395 welding booth equipment, contingent on
6 Commission funds only being used for new booths, as opposed to
7 replacement of existing booth equipment.

8 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any questions or
9 comments?

10 MR. HANBURY: This is Jack Hanbury. We want to
11 express our appreciation to the Commission for supporting our
12 welding program.

13 MR. PFOHL: Thank you. We'll move on to Southside
14 Virginia Community College Foundation, request of \$347,651 to
15 expand their Industrial Technology Programs. This project is
16 focused on increased enrollment and expanded learning
17 environments for three Industrial Technology programs, and
18 that's for the expansion of the electrical technology, solar
19 photovoltaic installation, and heating, ventilation, and air
20 conditioning at the Community College's satellite campus in
21 South Hill.

22 Grant funds are requested to support partial funding
23 for a new full-time Instructor to lead additional cohorts and a
24 part-time Lab Assistant to be able to extend hours for the lab
25 operation. The funds are also requested for hand tools and

1 equipment costs for HVAC, an electrical training labs, as well as
2 interior and exterior renovation for new learning stations lab.
3 Detailed cost estimates were provided, and the Commission
4 share a personal cost are reduced over the three-year project
5 period, as additional new cohorts bring in tuition revenue to
6 support those instructor and operating costs.

7 New industrial, electrical, and HVAC training labs will
8 be created at Lake Country Advanced Knowledge Center, an
9 interior training prop with six training cubicles, allowing
10 instructors to replicate installation and repair tasks for different
11 scenarios.

12 An exterior space will be upfitted with a roof serving
13 two purposes: HVAC training units will be below the roof, and the
14 lower profile roof surface will include a working solar photovoltaic
15 system installation for training purposes.

16 The project presents significant outcomes with
17 enrollment in the programs expanding from 55 to 105 annually,
18 and 102 students to be enrolled in the Solar Technology Program
19 increasing from 39 to 55 certifications, including NCCER, which is
20 a national construction certification training.

21 While this is a relatively larger request amount, but
22 the potential outcomes across Southern Virginia Community
23 College ten-county service region and across multiple in-demand
24 career pathways argues for significant financial support to enable
25 expansion of these programs and in long lived training facilities.

1 As such, this proposal ties for top score in this funding round.

2 And Staff is recommending an award of \$347,651.

3 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any questions or
4 comments?

5 MR. PFOHL: I always suggest an approach that Staff
6 shares with applicants to reduce our support for personnel and
7 cohorts are added and additional tuition revenue is secured.

8 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Thank you.

9 Now, for our last couple here. Southwest Virginia
10 Higher Education Center Foundation, requesting \$700,000 to
11 fund the Rural Information Technology Apprenticeship Pilot
12 Program. This was submitted to the Special Projects Program
13 last year and was referred to the Education Committee in
14 January. The application requests funding to initiate a pilot for
15 paying entry-level salaries for the first cohort of 12 IT
16 apprentices, to be employed and mentored by small rural IT
17 businesses for an 18-month period.

18 With the funding to support programs for rural IT
19 apprenticeship grants, funds created by the General Assembly in
20 2019, however, no state funding was approved in 2019 to initiate
21 the program, which further Code of Virginia is to be administered
22 by the Southwest Higher Ed Center.

23 Commission funds would be used in a cost-sharing
24 approach as an annual pilot in lieu of state funding to reimburse
25 participating employees for 70 percent of the proposed \$58,333

1 annual salary and benefits for the apprentices. The proposed 70
2 percent reimbursement rate seems extremely generous
3 compared to other Commission-supported cost-share programs,
4 for instance, in Agribusiness where we support up to 33 percent
5 of reimbursement.

6 The exact details of the cost-sharing arrangement,
7 including commitments from both the employer and apprentice
8 beyond the 36-month period, were not provided in the
9 application, which states that final policies and procedures are
10 still being developed with the assistance from the
11 Commonwealth's Chief Workforce Development Officer. These
12 details are not yet available, and the May, 2020 update noted it
13 appears likely that this program will receive state funding,
14 however, that's not been finalized and may be affected by the
15 pandemic's impact on state revenues.

16 Prior to consideration of any Commission funding
17 support, we feel that the state appropriation funding should be
18 allowed to play out in the General Assembly's budget
19 deliberations. We will further note that support from the
20 Commission at this time could be viewed by the General
21 Assembly as a message that the Commission is willing to be the
22 primary funder of this program in future years, including
23 apprentices in non-Tobacco Region counties, which would be a
24 costly and ultimately unsustainable drain on future Commission
25 budgets.

1 And Staff is, therefore, recommending no award.

2 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any questions or
3 comments?

4 SENATOR CHAFIN: Madam Chair, this is Ben Chafin,
5 Madam Chair, I wonder if Staff would be amenable if this was
6 simply tabled, and as he indicated, allowed to be, and let the
7 funding issue play out in the General Assembly?

8 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: That sounds reasonable,
9 we can pull it out of the block.

10 SENATOR CHAFIN: I wanted the Staff to provide on
11 that issue.

12 MR. FEINMAN: Madam Chairwoman, the question of
13 whether or not to table a proposal is the Committee's
14 prerogative. I think it's somewhat unlikely that there will be
15 additional General Assembly funding for any programs this year,
16 given the likely impact of the pandemic on the state budget,
17 which, you know, I'm sure the Senator is aware. Our
18 recommendation is that we not fund this, it is at the discretion of
19 the Committee to do what you will.

20 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: We'll put that aside, pull it
21 out of the block and we'll discuss it.

22 MR. PFOHL: I'll move on to our final request. The
23 University of Virginia, UVa-Wise for the Southwest FOURSight
24 Program. This was a project that was submitted to Southwest
25 Economic Development and tabled in October.

1 In January, the Southwest Committee referred it to
2 the Education Committee, it was initially submitted as a
3 \$750,000 request, and later increased in the Southwest round to
4 over a million. Subsequent changes based on a number of
5 communications the Staff has had with UVA-Wise and their
6 private partner and has resulted in a reduced request for
7 \$482,292. The funds are requested for a roughly one-year
8 project period that would support cybersecurity training and
9 intern experiences for an initial cohort of nine technology UVA-
10 Wise students recruited from psychology, business, and criminal
11 justice majors.

12 The larger objective is to establish a UVA-Wise
13 program at the center in Saint Paul that would annually train 20
14 to 25 students for remote teleworking positions with federal
15 contractors, local communities, and private businesses to hunt
16 for and defend against cybersecurity attacks. The private sector
17 partner is a cybersecurity company based in Northern Virginia,
18 which was identified based on its work on a current ARC-funded
19 parallel effort in Eastern Kentucky, as well as projects in South
20 Louisiana, focused on protecting small businesses from
21 cyberattacks.

22 The intended outcomes in the project are to identify
23 25 participants in the initial pilot cohort and provide hybrid on-
24 line and face-to-face training and work-base internships.
25 Program completers would sit for the nationally recognized top

1 PIA Security Plus certification and be awarded a UVa-Wise six
2 hours certificate. They anticipated that the 12 highest
3 performing students would then be given three months
4 apprenticeship with employers to be identified during the project
5 while the other 13 completers will begin entry-level IT jobs.

6 As I noted, since being tabled, Staff has been in
7 frequent communication with both UVa-Wise project leadership
8 and FOUR18 to discuss changes in particular to the budget as
9 noted, to better align the objectives of the project with
10 Commission-funding priorities and budgetary constraints.
11 Slightly more than half of the current requests or \$246,000 will
12 be used to contract with FOUR18 to deliver cyber training,
13 candidate recruitment, and apprentice job placement with local
14 Southwest Virginia localities.

15 Funds totaling \$236,000 will also be allocated for UVa-
16 Wise personnel, equipment, supplies, and material and tuition for
17 student stipends.

18 There's a long discussion about income-sharing
19 agreement. Staff would note that these are students that are
20 already at UVa-Wise, and they can also be associated with the
21 Commission's Talent Attraction Program.

22 Sustainability will be accomplished through a variety
23 of sources that are listed there. Completors may also be able to
24 access the Talent Attraction Program should they need to take on
25 student loan debt. The project should be viewed as a pilot

1 staged public private venture bringing strategies and lessons
2 learned from the aforementioned Kentucky and Louisiana pilots
3 to benefit Southwest Virginia students and employers.

4 Initial outcomes are modest 25 students in the pilot
5 cohort, but the objective is to make this an annual program led
6 by UVA-Wise using the FOURSight-licensed curriculum. While
7 there is a moderate level or risk with any pilot initiative regarding
8 achieving the intended outcomes and sustainability, UVA-Wise's
9 stewardship mitigates that somewhat, and the reduction of
10 funding from the initial request that is being requested limits the
11 Commission's exposure.

12 Staff's recommendation is an award of \$370,000,
13 excluding the UVa tuition and stipends.

14 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any comments or
15 discussion from UVA-Wise?

16 DR. EHRHARDT: Madam Chair, I have a couple of
17 clarifying questions for Tim. Do we have any letters from
18 employers supporting the program or that they would hire or
19 have hired these graduates in the past, types of graduates?

20 MR. PFHOL: I don't think we have support letters. I
21 might ask Sara Williams and/or Shannon Blevins if we have any
22 of them.

23 MS. BLEVINS: Tim, did you want me to answer that,
24 this is Sara.

25 MR. PFOHL: Please do.

1 MS. WILLIAMS: This information kind of trickled in
2 over several months from the original submission last summer.
3 We got additional information in December for the budget, but I
4 don't remember seeing letters, they may be there, but most of
5 the information that we're using came in, in December, in the
6 form of a revised budget. But like Tim, I'm not sure.

7 DR. EHRHARDT: Just another point of clarification.
8 The certification would be for existing students, I know we also
9 think about investment per student, so we're talking about
10 almost \$15,000 per student for certification when they're already
11 earning that degree, I just wanted to clarify that.

12 MR. PFOHL: Yes, this would be additional course work
13 that they would take outside of their major, targeting
14 nontechnology majors that showed some aptitude for IT and
15 cybersecurity. So, this would result in an additional six credit
16 hours, certificate from UVa-Wise, for current student. And then
17 as we also noted the plan is that this would just be the initial
18 cohort, and then UVa-Wise faculty would be licensed to instruct
19 additional cohorts in the future.

20 DR. EHRHARDT: Okay, that's helpful, thank you.

21 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any comments from UVa-
22 Wise?

23 MS. BLEVINS: Madam Chair, thank you for the
24 opportunity to continue to talk about this project. And I'm
25 Shannon Blevins with UVa-Wise. It certainly leverages the

1 Tobacco Commission and renovations are complete. Thank you
2 for the consideration of this project.

3 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any further comments or
4 discussion?

5 Going to Project 3646, Hampden-Sydney College.

6 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you. Can you hear me now?

7 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Yes.

8 UNIDENTIFIED: I apologize, there was some sort of
9 technology glitch on my end that prevented me from being able
10 to speak when you were reviewing our proposals specifically. I
11 want to offer a couple of clarifying points. One is our request for
12 a faculty position was merely to accelerate a hire. We're in an
13 interesting position where we have three faculty lines for
14 computer science. The faculty members have all served nearly
15 30 years here at the college, and we are replacing one of those
16 faculty members this year and a new faculty member starting in
17 the fall.

18 The other two faculty members have indicated that
19 they plan to retire within the next couple of years. Our request
20 was for funding to accelerate those hires, to bring on a critical
21 mass of new hires in this department earlier. We would not ask
22 the Tobacco Commission to fund their salaries longer term, only
23 to accelerate their hire by a year. And that was a request, and I
24 just wanted to clarify that point. We're not asking the Tobacco
25 Commission to replace operating fund dollars, only to accelerate

1 their hire.

2 We recognize that the admissions and career
3 professionals that we want to hire, it's difficult to track their time
4 to know how much time they would be spending specifically on
5 Southside Virginia. That's why we promised that the funding for
6 those positions would be the matching dollars that we would
7 provide. It's very, very difficult for some students to get through
8 the college application process, there was an article just last
9 week talking about the difficulty of completing the form to be
10 eligible for financial aid. So, we see somebody working with
11 students intensively and working with the community colleges in
12 the region, we see that as absolutely essential to recruiting
13 students from this area.

14 Then the same way with the career professional, yet
15 this person would wear many hats, but the key hat that we see
16 this person wearing would be to work with employers in
17 Southside Virginia to develop internship opportunities for
18 students. We think that unless we have somebody working with
19 employers in the area, it's highly unlikely that those job
20 opportunities will just materialize on their own. So, that's why
21 that was very important.

22 Two additional points I'd like to add. One is that we
23 already have an existing articulation agreement with the
24 community colleges throughout the Commonwealth. We're very
25 eager to develop a two plus two or even one plus three

1 arrangement with Southside Virginia Community College.

2 The last point I'd like to make, all of this about the
3 urgency for us is heightened by the fact that Prince Edward
4 County just last week that it's spending \$1.5 million to acquire
5 300 acres approximately, or we hope to attract data storage and
6 Cloud storage companies to our backyard, and we very much
7 want to be a contributor to the economic development of this
8 region. Thank you very much.

9 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any questions or further
10 discussion? All right, thank you for reaching out.

11 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

12 MR. FEINMAN: Madam Chair, Kristie Proctor from the
13 Center of Rural Virginia also had some technical excuse early on,
14 I believe she's here now and would like to speak to 3632.

15 Kristie.

16 MS. PROCTOR: Yes, thank you so much, Madam
17 Chair and Evan. Just wanted to take an opportunity and thank
18 everyone for reviewing our application and we stand ready for
19 any questions you all may have along the way, and we're very
20 excited about this possibility. Thank you all very much.

21 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any questions? All right,
22 hearing none, are there any requests to pull any out of the
23 block?

24 DR. EHRHARDT: Madam Chair, I request that we pull
25 3648 from the block.

1 SENATOR RUFF: Madam Chair, I would request that
2 3646 be taken out of the block.

3 SENATOR STANLEY: Madam Chair, I'd ask that 3643
4 please come out of the block.

5 SENATOR CHAFIN: This is Ben Chafin, Madam Chair.
6 I'd like to see the Southwest Higher Ed. request taken out of the
7 block. I don't have the number, I'm sorry.

8 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: That is 3595?

9 SENATOR CHAFIN: Yes, the Apprenticeship Program.

10 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Any further requests? So,
11 3632 is being referred to Special Projects. So, in the block is
12 3641 in the amount of \$115,000; 3629 in the amount of
13 \$91,667; 3633 in the amount of \$288,405; 3636 in the amount
14 of \$40,000; 3642 in the amount of \$260,674; 3650 in the
15 amount of \$12,500; 3640 in the amount of \$253,593; 3631 in
16 the amount of \$41,240; 3635 in the amount of \$224,200; 3647
17 in the amount of \$347,651; and 3571 in the amount of
18 \$370,000. Can I have a motion that we approve those?

19 UNIDENTIFIED: I move that we approve these
20 according to the Staff recommendations.

21 MS. RATLIFF: Second.

22 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: All in favor, say aye.
23 (Ayes).

24 MR. FREEMAN: Can we ask if any are opposed to
25 that?

1 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Yes, any opposed? (No
2 response).

3 MR. FREEMAN: Thank you. Usually, I can look
4 around the table, but I don't have that option available to me
5 today.

6 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Moving along to starting
7 with 3646.

8 SENATOR RUFF: Madam Chairman, if the President is
9 still on the line. Is it doable with this amount of money? I know
10 it's not the amount that he wanted, but is it doable?

11 MR. STIMPERT: This is Larry Stimpert from
12 Hampden-Sydney. We would certainly be grateful for any
13 support we receive. As Tim noted, this is about half of the
14 amount of funding we requested for our computer labs in the
15 new science building we're building. And by the way, the
16 planning for our new science building was funded by the Tobacco
17 Commission.

18 So, this is an opportunity for us to build on previous
19 funding that we received. Certainly bringing the new faculty
20 hires that I mentioned onboard, that was about \$200,000 of our
21 request, bringing those faculty members onboard much more
22 quickly, the fresh perspective they would bring, the information
23 they would have of our courses that our graduates or students
24 need to be effective employees for higher organizations we hire
25 them. I see that as a really essential part of the project. We'll

1 be grateful for any funding we receive, but those hires would be
2 incredibly helpful to us.

3 SENATOR RUFF: Madam Chairman, if we could pass
4 that one by temporarily.

5 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Passing by. Let's go to
6 3648.

7 DR. EHRHARDT: I'm sorry, Madam Chair, I asked to
8 pull it, I need to abstain from that.

9 SENATAOR RUFF: Madam Chair, I would move that
10 would be approved.

11 MR. OWENS: Second.

12 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: All in favor, say aye.
13 (Ayes). Opposed? (No response).

14 DR. EHRHARDT: One abstention, please.

15 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: One abstention, Dr.
16 Ehrhardt.

17 Request Number 3643. I'm sorry, who asked that be
18 pulled from the block?

19 SENATOR STANLEY: I'm sorry, Madam Chair, this is
20 Senator Bill Stanley. Being that I'm chairman of the New College
21 Institute Board of Directors, I wanted pulled out of the block
22 simply for purposes of abstaining.

23 SENATOR RUFF: I'd move that the proposal be
24 accepted as recommended.

25 UNIDENTIFIED: Second.

1 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: All in favor, say aye.
2 (Ayes). Opposed? (No response). And one abstention.
3 Then Request Number 3590.

4 SENATOR CHAFIN: Madam Chair, is that the
5 apprenticeship program?

6 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Yes.

7 SENATOR CHAFIN: Madam Chair, I'd like to move
8 that that be tabled at this time. And the reason I'd like to see it
9 tabled is that I think Staff's thinking that the General Assembly is
10 going to, but I think we'd be premature to just turn it down
11 based on the status at this time. It did withstand the veto
12 session. I have an optimistic view that it might get funded, but
13 I'd certainly like to wait to see.

14 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: (Unintelligible).

15 MR. FEINMAN: It does not.

16 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Do we have a motion to
17 approve that? All right.

18 MS. RATLIFF: Second.

19 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: All in favor, say aye.
20 (Ayes). Opposed? (No response).

21 So, Senator Ruff, going back to 3646.

22 SENATOR RUFF: Madam Chair, I would ask, first of
23 all, do we have any funds left after we've approved the ones
24 we've approved?

25 MR. FEINMAN: Madam Chair, Senator Ruff. I think

1 she is totaling up the approved amount right now, and if she will
2 indicate when that's done, we will have a balance. It's happening
3 right in front of us.

4 SENATOR RUFF: As that is occurring, is there
5 anything that Tim saw that could be adjusted to help Hampden-
6 Sydney at all?

7 MR. PFOHL: With the Southside Community College
8 proposal where they were reducing the percentage of
9 Commission support personnel, new cohorts were being added
10 over a three-year period, if there was a way to nip at that
11 \$195,000, which we do have funding available for. We have a
12 balance of \$2.8 million and change, so we're about 400 and
13 some shy of the total available balance.

14 MR. FEINMAN. I tried to reinforce the Staff
15 recommendation and we certainly appreciate the outreach from
16 the college and the outcomes here look good.

17 The challenge we really have is that the Staff positions
18 that we were being asked to support are staff positions that have
19 been supported within the regular budget of college for many
20 years. This spending would accelerate briefly the hiring of new
21 faculty prior to the retirement of the previous faculty, but at the
22 end of the day, three years hence, there will be the same
23 number of computer science faculty as there are today.

24 Given that the purpose of our funds is to create new
25 capabilities, the Staff didn't feel it was appropriate to spend the

1 premium, simply to get those new faculty in a little early, but we
2 leave it to the will of the Committee.

3 MS. STAMPER: Evan and Madam Chairwoman. The
4 current \$2,983,512 is totaled at the bottom.

5 MR. FEINMAN: Thank you, Jessie.

6 UNIDENTIFIED: Is there a difference between the
7 Staff recommendation from the -- recommendation? I didn't see
8 where anything changed.

9 SENATOR RUFF: Madam Chairman, not hearing that
10 there seems to be any great interest in upping that amount, then
11 I would move that the Hampden-Sydney one, which is whatever
12 number, be approved as recommended, 3646, be approved as
13 amended.

14 MR. OWENS: Second.

15 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: All in favor, say aye.
16 (Ayes). Opposed? (No response).

17 That concludes the action on the requests.

18 Do we have any public comments at this point?

19 MS. FITCHER: This is Ms. Lou Fitcher from Emory and
20 Henry College. I would just like to say thank for the support from
21 the Commission. We're very pleased to be able to move forward
22 with this new counseling program, and I appreciate your support.
23 Thank you.

24 MS. KAREN JACKSON: Likewise, this is Karen
25 Jackson from The New College Institute, and I'd just like to thank

1 the Commission for their support of the pilot project and we're
2 very excited to have Amazon doing a rural project in Virginia.

3 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Thank you.

4 MR. PFOHL: Madam Chairman, this is Tim, and I
5 would be negligent if I didn't acknowledge the great work of Sara
6 Williams in preparing these for you, and Sarah Capps. And they
7 bring a lot of wonderful experience and wish them all well.

8 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Thank you, and we
9 certainly wish you well, Tim.

10 Any further comments? Motion that we adjourn?

11 MR. OWENS: I move that we adjourn. (Second).

12

13 NOTE: It's moved and seconded, adjourned.

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15 CHAIRWOMAN COLEMAN: Thank you all. We are
16 adjourned.

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PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED.

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CERTIFICATE OF THE COURT REPORTER

I, Medford W. Howard, Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public for the State of Virginia at Large, do hereby certify that I was the Court Reporter who took down and transcribed the proceedings of the **Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, Education Committee Meeting**, when held on Monday, May 18, 2020, at 9:00 o'clock a.m., (By Conference Call).

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

Given under my hand this _____ day of June, 2020.

Medford W. Howard

CCR