

VIRGINIA TOBACCO REGION REVITALIZATION COMMISSION

701 East Franklin Street, Suite 501

Richmond, Virginia 23219

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, January 5, 2023

9:00 a.m.

Homewood Suites by Hilton Richmond Downtown

700 East Main Street

Richmond, Virginia

1 APPEARANCES:

2 Senator Frank Ruff, Jr., Chairman
3 Delegate Will Morefield, Vice Chair
4 Delegate Leslie Adams
5 Edward Blevins
6 Delegate Kathy Byron
7 Julie Hensley
8 Delegate Terry Kilgore, Vice
9 Chair Senator L. Louise Lucas
10 Delegate Danny Marshall
11 T. Jordan Miles, III (by phone)
12 Walter Shelton

13 Staff:

14 Mr. Andy Sorrell, Deputy Director

15 Others present:

16 The Honorable James E. Campos, Deputy Secretary of
17 Commerce & Trade and Acting Executive Director
18 Ms. Stephanie Kim, Finance Director
19 Ms. Sara Williams, Southwest Regional Director
20 Ms. Liz Myers, OAG Counsel
21 Mr. Jordan Butler, Public Relations Director
22 Ms. Suzette Patter, Grants System Administrator
23 Ms. Joyce Knight, Meeting Coordinator
24 Ms. Adrian Counts, Grant Assistant
25 Ms. Emily Van Pelts, Grant Assistant

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

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CHAIRMAN RUFF: Come to order. We're running behind here. Welcome and thank y'all for coming.

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Andy, call the roll please.

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MR. SORRELL: Yes, sir, Chairman Ruff.

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Senator Ruff. Delegate Morefield. Delegate Adams. Mr. Blevins. Delegate Byron. She just went to get some coffee. We'll call her again. Ms. Hensley. Delegate Kilgore. Delegate Lucas. Delegate Marshall. Mr. Miles, remotely. Mr. Shelton.

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You have the floor, Mr. Chairman.

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DELEGATE MOREFIELD: I move that Chairman Ruff's approval of Commissioner Miles' request to participate remotely in this meeting is in conformance with Commission's adopted electronic meeting policy, and that the voices of the remote participating members will be heard by all persons at the primary meeting location. Thank you.

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UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

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CHAIRMAN RUFF: All in favor, say aye.

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(Response.)

1 CHAIRMAN RUFF: All opposed?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIRMAN RUFF: The next item is the
4 approval of the October 5th meeting, which was
5 published on the website. Any updates or changes to
6 that? If not, is there a motion for that to be
7 approved?

8 DELEGATE KILGORE: So moved.

9 DELEGATE MARSHALL: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Properly moved and
11 second. All in favor, say aye.

12 (Response.)

13 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Opposed?

14 (No response.)

15 CHAIRMAN RUFF: We now have time for
16 public comment. Since the only person I see in the
17 back is Jordan, I'll assume no. Then we will move on.

18 We are delighted that we again have
19 this morning have our acting newly-acting executive
20 director, James Campos. Not compost. I'm bound to do
21 that more than once. I apologize.

22 He comes to us with a lot of
23 experience from several government -- He's work with
24 state legislatures on issues regarding workforce
25 investment, economic development, and education, and

1 energy development. So all issues important to the
2 Tobacco Commission.

3 Welcome. We'll give you a more
4 formal introduction at the Full Commission Meeting
5 after this.

6 The agenda that calls for a
7 discussion of compensation, we will not have that on
8 the agenda this morning.

9 Any other business?

10 MR. SORRELL: I didn't have any other
11 business, other than the introduction of Director
12 Campos.

13 CHAIRMAN RUFF: In full disclosure,
14 I've been concerned over the last number of years that
15 some of our smaller communities have not been as
16 involved in the Tobacco Commission, as we believe they
17 need to be.

18 My concern is that they, either, do
19 not community with them properly, or we're talking
20 different languages. So I have asked three members to
21 act as an in hoc committee to work with the two
22 Sara(h)'s and their folks to try to have conversations
23 with these counties, and see if we can't make sure if
24 we are not doing something right, we are listening to
25 their issues, rather than them having to listen to our

1 issues.

2 Is that a fair summary?

3 MR. SORRELL: Yes, sir. I'll add
4 that, I guess, November, Chairman Ruff sent out a
5 letter to about 20 of our localities that haven't
6 accessed programs in recent years, and indicated that
7 we would be reaching out to them, and that we would be
8 doing some work, proactive outreach, to find out what
9 projects are going on in the communities, but also
10 making sure they are aware of our current programs,
11 and that they are up to date on what our grant cycles
12 are and things of that nature.

13 Now, I will say that our regional
14 staff does a great job of connecting with the folks.
15 Sometimes, you know, with a changeover of staff and
16 things, things sometimes get lost, and to what
17 programs might be a good fit for a particular project.

18 So I'm looking forward to jumping
19 into this task in the new year. And I was hoping to
20 get a little more done in December, but preparing for
21 this meeting took my attention away. We will make
22 sure -- I think Chairman Ruff was interested in having
23 the action of Ms. Dunn.

24 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Thank you.

25 Any there any other members that want

1 to bring up any issues?

2 DELEGATE MARSHALL: Yes,
3 Mr. Chairman. I would like to put on the table that
4 we look at reinstating a stand-alone Ag Committee.
5 Members here, look Page 10 and 11 from the Southside
6 Economic Development. We had a project there
7 yesterday from Virginia Cattleman's Association that
8 was assigned to Southside, but it also included
9 Southwest.

10 I think that Ag, at least in my part
11 of the state, Ag in Pittsylvania County is the Number
12 1 industry, and in the state is the Number 1 industry.
13 I think that sometimes that would, putting them in
14 economic development, it doesn't quite fit.

15 Just for the Southwest boys and
16 girls, I just want y'all to understand that, if you
17 look on Page 11, there are several projects there that
18 we are funding that are actually in Southwest
19 Virginia.

20 So we are going to need an IOU from
21 y'all to get that money back.

22 DELEGATE BYRON: Mr. Chairman, I
23 second that.

24 DELEGATE MARSHALL: Here's one for
25 Russell County, Wythe County --

1 DELEGATE KILGORE: Just go ahead and
2 give us your credit card.

3 DELEGATE MARSHALL: Mr. Chair, I
4 think we might want to look at a stand-alone Ag
5 committee in the future.

6 CHAIRMAN RUFF: I'm not a hundred
7 percent sure why we did away with the g Committee. I
8 think that's a legitimate point. And I think maybe as
9 we go through the strategic update, that might be the
10 time to deal with that.

11 DELEGATE KILGORE: I think we were
12 getting a lot of applications, and I think that is why
13 it was all combined with one. The Ag was combined
14 because we weren't getting enough applications, but
15 Danny has to do it.

16 MR. SORRELL: Mr. Chairman, I'll be
17 happy to address that for a moment, if you like.

18 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Please.

19 MR. SORRELL: The ideal time to
20 address that would be part of the strategic planning
21 process. That's good timing, because we are going to
22 have Strategic Planning Committee meeting directly
23 after this meeting.

24 If you note in your strategic plan,
25 that is where we talk about our committees and the

1 particular structures of that. I think part of the
2 reason they were combined was to just simplify things
3 so that projects that were occurring in Southern
4 Virginia, whether it was agribusiness or
5 infrastructure, or something of that nature for staff
6 committee, which make a good point, and just covering
7 the footprint, and perhaps there is some other option
8 that needs to be considered.

9 That is a good point. Thank you. I
10 just wanted to let you know the strategic plan meeting
11 is taking place.

12 DELEGATE MARSHALL: I'm not sure
13 whether Danny made a motion or he bade a statement.
14 But there was a second. Whether there is a motion.
15 It was a statement.

16 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Properly moved and
17 seconded.

18 Any further discussion on the issue?

19 MR. SHELTON: We look into this
20 further, or we do this? What are we voting on?

21 DELEGATE MARSHALL: I think,
22 listening to Andy, I think strategic plan is getting
23 ready to have a meeting, and they're going to make a
24 recommendation.

25 CHAIRMAN RUFF: So the motion is that

1 this be referred to strategic planning.

2 DELEGATE MARSHALL: Yes. We have
3 some people with their arms half up. Or are you just
4 resting?

5 MR. FOSTER: I wanted to say
6 something, but I totally agree with what you're
7 saying. If we can get enough applications to justify
8 it, which I think we can.

9 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Any further
10 discussion?

11 MR. SHELTON: Chairman Ruff, one
12 thing while we have this on the table, is probably to
13 be considered is, in my tenure of working for
14 Bedwith(SP) when the Agribusiness Committee was here,
15 we had multiple projects that were specific to one
16 region or the other.

17 Then obviously the one we were
18 talking about yesterday was structured, and the plan,
19 hopefully, for some of the matching funds is for it to
20 be a statewide project. All of that kind of needs to
21 be, I guess, considered. We are going to have both.
22 We are going to have some that need to blanket the
23 whole coverage of both regions, and then we're going
24 to have some that are going to be specific to one
25 region or the other. So it is not going to be a one

1 size fits all probably.

2 That is just something to consider as
3 it goes before strategic planning.

4 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Thank you. Any
5 further comment?

6 (No response.)

7 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Hearing none, all in
8 favor, say aye.

9 (Response.)

10 CHAIRMAN RUFF: All opposed?

11 (No response.)

12 CHAIRMAN RUFF: All right. Still
13 nobody to comment. We'll adjourn this meeting and
14 move forward.

15 (Pause.)

16 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Let me un-adjourn for
17 a minute. I did not want to get into the compensation
18 of the executive director because James is the acting
19 executive director. And I'm not sure that I think it
20 is proper to go into a full discussion of that at this
21 point.

22 But Stephanie tells us we have to do
23 something or James doesn't get a check.

24 DELEGATE MARSHALL: It only takes one
25 person.

1 DELEGATE KILGORE: We are sorry.

2 CHAIRMAN RUFF: So I would accept a
3 motion to compensate James at the rate of the past
4 executive director.

5 DELEGATE KILGORE: So moved.

6 CHAIRMAN RUFF: There is a motion.
7 Is there a second?

8 DELEGATE MOREFIELD: Second.

9 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Properly moved, and a
10 second.

11 Any further discussion?

12 (No response.)

13 CHAIRMAN RUFF: All in favor, say
14 aye.

15 (Response.)

16 CHAIRMAN RUFF: All opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Thank you. Now we're
19 adjourned.

20 CONCLUDED.

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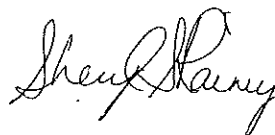
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CERTIFICATE OF THE COURT REPORTER

I, Sheryl Rainey, Certified Court 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 Executive Committee, when held on Thursday, January 5, 2023, at 9:00 a.m., at Hampton Inn & Suites, Richmond, Virginia.

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

Given under my hand this 30th day of January, 2023.



Sheryl Rainey
Certified Court Reporter
Notary Public
for the State of Virginia at Large

My Commission expires: April 30, 2026

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