

**Virginia Rural Center**  
**Minutes for Council for Rural Virginia Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Martinsville Speedway, Ridgeway, Virginia**

**April 25, 2016 @ 11:00 a.m.**

- 1) **CALL TO ORDER:** Emmett Hanger (Introductions) and agenda adopted.
- 2) **ROLL CALL:** Nannette Thompson

**Present:** Emmett Hanger, Katie Frazier, Frank Ruff, Basil Gooden, Shannon Fedors, Bill Tucker, Jay Poole, John Meade, Ron Jefferson, Gayle Moody, Carlyle Wimbish, Laurie Moran, Brian Warner, Bryan David, Mary Rae Carter, Karen Jackson, Krystal Tyler Mackie, Cassidy Rasnick, Christy Morton, Nannette Thompson

- 3) **Approval of Minutes:** December 15, 2015 Council minutes approved and accepted.

- 1) **Presentations and Reports:**

- **Financial/Budget Review** – As of July 1 both Center and Council on same accounting calendar. \$75,000 USDA grant coming for project already completed.
  1. Quarterly P&L – See handout
  2. Quarterly Forecast – See handout

We are on the uptick from last year. Additional funds in our forecast that have not hit the bank yet. Show year over year in reports. Motion made to approve as is and move forward. Approved.

- **Executive Director Presentation:** Christy Morton

1. Completed Projects/Reports
  - a. **2016 Virginia General Assembly Session** – Rural Caucus meets weekly during session. Legislation tracked: Broadband, House Bill 912-broadband providers to lay cable or fiber on old roads that were hard to get to and passed by. GO Virginia, several pieces of legislation encompass this bill, moving forward and the opportunities it will bring to rural Virginia. Two other pieces of legislation, Virginia International Trade Corporation as a stand-alone agency. Education and Workforce bills will change the incentive system for the community college system.
  - b. **Rural Caucus Reception & Dinner** – Great location feedback. Held at the Omni this year. Over 200 attendees. Panel talked about the state budget and the bills before the General Assembly. Great event and we look forward to continuing the partnership with VACo.
  - c. **USDA Agricultural Development Boards Final Guide & Workshops** – Partnered with VAFAIRS and Matson Consulting, surveys sent to take a look at national and local ADB's. About a year-long project to create some best practices. Two regional workshops, one in Rockingham County and one in Bedford to present findings and discuss ADB opportunities.
2. Ongoing Projects/Initiatives
  - a. **2016 Governor's Summit for Rural Prosperity** – Contacted Boar's Head and Hotel Roanoke. October 12-13 at Hotel Roanoke is a conflict with another event. Will rework the dates and venue if needed. Our theme this year will be "Connecting Rural Virginia with the Global Economy". A good way to get the

business community involved and engaged. May add some workshops in the afternoon on the second day to target specific needs.

- b. **Broadband/Technology Initiatives** – House Bill 1347, a bill regarding siting procedures for wireless towers. There is a workgroup to look at various tower type technologies. Meeting again in May. Broadband Advisory Council and member of CIT Board, spent time with new president of CIT to get them more involved in rural Virginia. Starting to see an acceptance of allowing these towers in rural areas so that there can be access to 911. Secretary Jackson spoke unmanned systems and communications ability. Availability of broadband, everybody needs it. Tower Placement Bill and policy of placing towers on structures will continue to be discussed.
- c. **Economic Development/Workforce Development Initiatives** – Partner with GOVA to do some workshops. VEDP workgroup proposal for Cyber Technology Workforce Training Center in St. Paul. Will have onsite lodging as well as plenty of space for training rooms.
- d. **Healthcare Initiatives** – *Joint Commission on Healthcare* has allowed us to focus on this in 2016. At the end of session, leadership changes and proposed dates for meetings with a report in October. *We Work for Health*, a group that works on healthcare at the national level. Had a meeting a few weeks ago and talked about the *Medicare Part B project*, which could change the way doctors are paid. Could affect rural areas. Will keep an on what's happening in DC. *Sink or Swim Resource* project in Gloucester to create a website on drug and opiate addiction. The resources are for addicts, teachers, parents, law enforcement. A one-stop shop of resources. Once launched will send links to make your communities aware.
- e. **North Carolina Initiatives** – North Carolina Rural Center is in the process of rebuilding and rebranding with a campaign they have launched called NC Counts. Working on some of the same types of initiatives as we are. Proposed the idea of a cross border Summit. How do we work together versus compete? Looking at putting together a video for rural Virginia with other marketing tools. Christy will work with Shannon Fedors to develop a plan for this. Hope to get some corporate “friends” to help with this and board members. Motion to move forward with determining the cost and objective of the piece.
- f. **Research Proposals** – Working with USDA Rural Development on research projects. Dr. Basil Gooden and USDA have a Research Data and Policy Division, we collect data on the communities that come from local and federal development to collaborate with other entities that work in these rural areas. They are eager and willing to work with us on data analysis. Working now to create a Rural Prosperity Index to show how healthy and not so healthy some regions are.
- g. **Regional Rural Caucus Meetings** – Four regions: Valley, Southern VA, Southwest VA, Middle Peninsula/Eastern Shore. Goal for these meetings is to get these legislators involved and participating in Rural Caucus activities. Talk about meetings during session and their participation at the Rural Caucus Reception and Dinner. Hope to schedule these meeting in July.

## 2) New Business:

- 3) 2016-2017 Proposed Budget – (see handout) We asked the Ethics Committee to look at our organization as to whether food and beverages provided at the summit and rural caucus dinner are considered gifts. Informal guidance was provided to clarify that they are not gifts if purchased

by the Center, since the Center receives funding from the state. Center needs to pay for the Summit and any other events. The only revenue coming through the Council is any grants. Pretty much in line with last year. Provide comparative reports. Change in structure to be in line with the ethics committee. Motion to move with this change for both budgets. Second. No further discussion. Change in policy approved. Motion to adopt the proposed budget as presented. Second. Proposed budget is adopted.

- **Other New Business:** Develop work plan to focus specifically on regions. Something that these areas can benefit from the work of the VRC. Reach out to local legislators in the regions that we meet to invite them to attend our meetings.

4) **Old Business**

1. Officers & Directors Liability Insurance – Notion that requesting opinion from the Attorney General not needed at this time. No issue at this point, satisfied that we are operating as we should.
2. 2016 Meeting Schedule and Locations – Included in meeting packet. Thoughts on June meeting venue. Middle Peninsula? Fall meeting will be at the Summit and December in Charlottesville.
3. Other Old Business -

5) **MOTION ON TABLE TO ADJOURN:** Meeting Adjourned.