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VIRGINIA TOBACCO REGION REVITALIZATION COMMISSION

701 East Franklin Street, Suite 501

Richmond, Virginia 23219

EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

9:00 a.m.

Homewood Suites
Richmond, Virginia

1

2 APPEARANCES:

3 Mr. Frank M. Ruff, Jr., Chairman

4 Ms. Gayle F. Barts

5 Mr. Ben Chafin, Jr.

6 Ms. Becky Coleman

7 Mr. Joel Cunningham

8 Ms. Alexis I. Ehrhardt

9 Ms. Sandy Ratliff

10 Mr. Cecil Shell

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13 COMMISSION STAFF:

14 Mr. Evan Feinman, Executive Director

15 Mr. Andy Sorrell, Deputy Director

16 Mr. Timothy S. Pfohl, Grants Program Administration

17 Director

18 Ms. Stephanie S. Kim, Director of Finance

19 Ms. Sarah K. Capps, Grants Program Administrator,

20 Southside Virginia

21 Ms. Michele Faircloth, Grants Assistant,

22 Southside Virginia

23 Ms. Sara G. Williams, Grants Program Administrator,

24 Southwest Virginia

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COMMISSION STAFF: (Cont.)

Ms. Jessica Stamper, Grants Assistant,
Southwest Virginia
Ms. Stacey Richardson, Administration Supervisor
Ms. Suzzette M. Patterson, Grants System Manger
Mr. David Bringman, Database and Performance
Metrics Manager

COUNSEL FOR THE COMMISSION:

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

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CHAIRMAN RUFF: Welcome to this morning's Education Committee. We don't have a heavy schedule, but we have a necessary schedule.

If you'll call the roll, please.

MR. FEINMAN: Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Ruff?

CHAIRMAN RUFF: Here.

MR. FEINMAN: Ms. Coleman?

MS. COLEMAN: Here.

MR. FEINMAN: Ms. Barts?

MS. BARTS: Here.

MR. FEINMAN: Delegate Byron?

Senator Chafin?

MR. CHAFIN: Here.

MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Cunningham?

MR. CUNNINGHAM: Here.

MR. FEINMAN: Dr. Ehrhardt?

MS. EHRHARDT: Here.

MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Harris?

Ms. Ratliff?

1 MS. RATLIFF: Here.

2 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Shell?

3 MR. SHELL: Here.

4 MR. FEINMAN: Senator Stanley?

5 Delegate Wright?

6 You have a forum, Mr. Chairman.

7 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Thank you, Evan.

8 The minutes were published on the
9 website for the October meeting. Are there any
10 corrections, or is there a motion?

11 MR. SHELL: So moved.

12 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Move to approve
13 second?

14 MS. BARTS: Second.

15 CHAIRMAN RUFF: All in favor, say
16 aye. (Ayes).

17 Okay. Stephanie, I'll turn it over
18 to you for the Talent Attraction Program Update.

19 MS. KIM: Okay. Behind you --

20 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Awesome.

21 MS. KIM: I just wanted to give you
22 a brief update on where we are on the Talent
23 Attraction Program. I can't give you many
24 outcomes, because we just had the first round in
25 the fall, but I did want to let you know that the

1 Virginia Department of Health, State Loan Repayment
2 Program, who we partnered with for the health care
3 occupations, they are -- their application period
4 is open now until March 31st. They have been
5 marketing this program nationwide to all primary
6 care conferences and things where they would be
7 recruiting.

8 They did record an interview on
9 January 3rd for PBS and it's airing at various
10 places throughout the state this week and they will
11 be making their awards in, probably, April.

12 So, to summarize how our application
13 round went this past fall, we had a September
14 deadline. We received 140 applications, 120 were
15 eligible. We did have certain eligibility
16 requirements. They -- we didn't require that they
17 live and work in the region yet, but they did have
18 to be in certain occupations, they did have to
19 graduate, things like that.

20 But 120 were eligible. We made 92
21 awards and 91 of them accepted, totaling 1.6
22 million. So that averaged out to an award of
23 17,549. It is a two-year commitment, so we won't
24 really know the results of how many actually
25 received the money until the two-year period is

1 over and they submit all of their documentation.

2 Just to summarize, recall the
3 workforce areas. They generally followed the
4 workforce development areas, except we had to make
5 a few modifications where there was a county by
6 itself. So, these are our modified workforce
7 areas. Then the next slide you can see just a
8 chart of where the population was for those
9 workforce areas, how -- what percentage of them
10 lived in the area and worked in the area of the
11 applicants that received the awards.

12 And then just to give you an idea of
13 the occupation, you know, the majority of them were
14 special ed teachers and you'll notice that a large
15 percentage of them were also speech, OT and PT.
16 And I can provide these slides to you on paper, if
17 you'd like. It's small.

18 So, we're proposing a couple of
19 changes for this year's rounds. One is that we are
20 trying to be ahead of their graduation period, so
21 we're trying to move it from the fall to actually
22 early spring. We're looking at trying to open up
23 the next round shortly, closing March 31st and
24 hopefully that will help them make the decision
25 when they are looking for jobs and interviewing for

1 jobs and looking at where to locate upon
2 graduation. But this will help them decide to move
3 to our region.

4 We're having a requirement of the
5 graduation date to be between March 20, 2019 and
6 December 2020. So, some of these students will not
7 have graduated yet when they apply, but they will
8 have had to have graduated and worked and lived,
9 before they receive any money. We will make awards
10 based on future graduation dates.

11 And then no other changes, as far as
12 occupation or requirement for a two-year
13 commitment, or that they have to reside and work in
14 certain occupations. So that all will be the same.

15 The next slide, this is just to
16 remind you what we did approve last year and there
17 are no changes to this, but the occupations that we
18 felt were the hardest to fill across the regions.
19 Some have shortages in certain areas and not in
20 others, but in order to make this a little simpler
21 we just picked the ones that were across most of
22 the areas.

23 So, what we need to do today is
24 adopt program changes for FY20 and recommend
25 funding of \$1 million for the current year to fund

1 the TAP Program for this next cycle, which would be
2 this coming spring. And we had 1.38 million in
3 carryforward, so it would be a total of 2.38
4 million available.

5 Any questions?

6 MS. EHRHARDT: Mr. Chairman, may I
7 ask a question?

8 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Yes.

9 MS. EHRHARDT: Stephanie, can you
10 talk about the marketing. I know you said it's
11 marketed to employers, I'm just thinking of our
12 higher Ed institutions. Are they able to market it
13 to their graduating students as well, or to the
14 employer's who are coming to job fairs now?

15 MS. KIM: Yes. I think the timing
16 of the last cycle, because we were doing this in
17 August and September, it wasn't the best time. We
18 did hit some of the larger universities and career
19 development centers. I think with it being in the
20 springtime it will be a little bit easier as
21 students are, you know, looking at interviews and
22 job placement.

23 MS. EHRHARDT: Okay.

24 MS. KIM: But we do -- we will be
25 contacting all of the Virginia universities and

1 maybe some surrounding areas, just so that they can
2 have that available to them.

3 It's a little bit harder -- I mean,
4 we have notified, like, the school systems in
5 those -- in our region and I think they have used
6 that. They have -- but it was -- it was kind of --
7 we were already into the school year.

8 MS. EHRHARDT: Yeah.

9 MS. KIM: So they were just telling
10 their current teachers, but I think it can be used
11 as a recruitment for future hirings.

12 MR. FEINMAN: And, Mr. Chairman, Dr.
13 Ehrhardt are going to be working a lot with our
14 partners in the executive branch. So, SCHEV and
15 VCCS are both fully briefed on it this time.
16 They're aware, as well as the Secretary of
17 Education is very excited about it. He wants to
18 treat this like a model and I think if we can show
19 success in the next couple of years, the General
20 Assembly may take this off our hands for all of
21 rural Virginia, which wouldn't be the worst thing
22 in the world.

23 MS. EHRHARDT: And I'd love to
24 suggest the colleges, counsel of independent
25 colleges in Virginia as well, so we don't forget

1 our --

2 MR. FEINMAN: Absolutely. That is
3 an oversight and we will correct it.

4 MS. EHRHARDT: Great. Thank you.

5 MS. KIM: And we would appreciate
6 the commission's help too of any suggestions about
7 who to contact, or where to market.

8 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Have we in any way
9 defined or been given the guidance as to what the
10 civic involvement is?

11 MS. KIM: We have been very generous
12 about how we define that. We have, in the Email
13 that -- in the award letter talked about it being
14 for a nonprofit, government entity -- or government
15 entity. You know, it's basically volunteering.
16 So, if you will volunteer either in your community
17 or for nonprofit, and it just needs to not be part
18 of the requirements in your job.

19 Some people are required to go in
20 the community and do so many hours for their job,
21 so we were saying that it needs to not be part of
22 the requirement of their job, or recertification,
23 you know, but that it is truly voluntary. It could
24 be anything from, you know, volunteering to coach
25 baseball to, you know, volunteering in a government

1 committee. So, it's pretty -- pretty general.

2 CHAIRMAN RUFF: In that description,
3 can I encourage you to prominently put fire and
4 rescue squad?

5 MS. KIM: Okay.

6 CHAIRMAN RUFF: We're having an
7 awful hard time with fire departments losing
8 membership. If -- and I think once people got some
9 training and got involved, that might keep them
10 more interested in the community, 'cause they know
11 then that they're doing something of value and
12 they're not just putting in time.

13 MS. KIM: Right.

14 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Any other questions?

15 MS. RATLIFF: How are they reporting
16 their volunteers on hours?

17 MS. KIM: So, we are asking them at
18 the end of each 12-month period, even though it's a
19 two-year commitment, at the end of 12 months they
20 need to submit to us basically a number of hours
21 and signed off by the supervisor.

22 MS. RATLIFF: Okay.

23 MS. KIM: Or nonprofit, or whoever
24 was supervising their volunteer hours.

25 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Any other questions?

1 Thank you, Stephanie. Appreciate
2 it.

3 The next issue Tim will deal with.
4 If you imagine that there were no windows in this
5 room and the lights were off, we wouldn't be able
6 to see much. That's where we are on the two-year
7 programs. We do not know what will pass in the
8 General Assembly as to what the definition of free
9 two-year college is going to be. As proposed, it
10 will be several classifications of jobs and certain
11 elements of poverty. But what goes in in December
12 may not come out the same in March. So, we'll have
13 to guide -- we'll have to open it up, or we have
14 to -- we're going to probably have a meeting
15 sometime in late March to really get the community
16 colleges to be fully aware of what's going to be
17 available.

18 Tim.

19 MR. PFOHL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 The spring meeting cycle is the one
21 in which we have traditionally dealt with the
22 workforce financial aid for community colleges and
23 higher Ed centers and also concurrently the
24 Competitive Education Program. Competitive Ed is a
25 little more straightforward this year, as always.

1 That's for new and expanding programs in facilities
2 and we have a \$1.5 billion budget line for
3 competitive education.

4 As the Chairman said, the workforce
5 financial aid is a little more complicated this
6 year, because of the budget that's been proposed
7 and the potential for substantial new state support
8 for community college tuition and workforce
9 training.

10 At this point, the best we can
11 suggest is stay the course consistent with what we
12 have funded in the current school year, which was
13 an obligation, total obligation of about \$2.9
14 million, with a cap per institution of \$315,000,
15 under all the rank priorities we've been using for
16 the last several years; Stem H, short-term training
17 leading to nationally recognized credentials and so
18 forth.

19 So, typically we take applications
20 for workforce aid and competitive education
21 sometime in March. We may not have a clear picture
22 of what the state funding opportunity is at that
23 point, but folks are going to need to start working
24 on these proposals so they can have them to us in
25 March and we can act on them in May, so they can

1 begin to offer financial aid for the 2020-2021
2 school year.

3 So, I guess our suggestion is that
4 we announce that folks can apply at levels not to
5 exceed what we're currently funding this school
6 year, with the understanding that when the budget
7 situation becomes more clear, we may have to do
8 some revisions and so forth. So, I guess we're
9 just looking for some direction to give us a green
10 light to say that the community colleges and higher
11 Ed centers can apply for workforce financial aid,
12 not to exceed current levels and consistent with
13 the current guidelines.

14 CHAIRMAN RUFF: So if I understand
15 you correctly, you're fishing for a motion to
16 continue as we have, with the understanding that it
17 will probably be modified late March?

18 MR. PFOHL: Yes, sir.

19 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Would someone like
20 to make that motion?

21 MR. SHELL: So moved.

22 A SPEAKER: Second.

23 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Any discussion of
24 that motion?

25 Any discussion of the issue?

1 If not, all in favor, say aye.

2 (Ayes). All opposed? (No response).

3 That one passes.

4 Evan, do we have anything else?

5 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Chairman, if we do
6 need -- if we're going to be able to do what we
7 want to do, have a spring semester Talent
8 Attraction Program around this year, we've asked
9 for a motion to allocate \$1 million to add to carry
10 it for the last round, so we have the 2.38 that we
11 think we'll need to do the Talent Attraction
12 Program this year, so the staff has asked for a
13 motion allocating \$1 million to the TAP program for
14 this year.

15 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Is there a motion?

16 Is there a second?

17 MS. EHRHARDT: Second.

18 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Any further
19 discussion?

20 Hearing none, all in favor, say aye.

21 (Ayes). All opposed? (No response).

22 Okay. That passes.

23 All right. Anything else?

24 MR. FEINMAN: I have no other
25 business before you, except to thank the committee

1 for your work. You know, obviously we're all but
2 certain to have to call you all back for what could
3 be a complicated meeting after the General Assembly
4 is active. So, just keep your eyes peeled.

5 CHAIRMAN RUFF: Is there anyone in
6 the audience today that wishes to make any kind of
7 public comment?

8 Going once, going twice?

9 The meeting is adjourned.

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11 (The hearing is adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE OF THE COURT REPORTER

I, Jacqueline Barreto, 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 Virginia Region Revitalization Commission, Education Committee Meeting, when held on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, at 9:00 a.m., at the Homewood Suites, Richmond, Virginia.

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 15th day of January, 2020.

Jacqueline Barreto

Certified Court Reporter

Notary Public for the State of Virginia at Large

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES: October 31, 2022