

TOBACCO REGION REVITALIZATION COMMISSION

FULL COMMISSION MEETING

Friday, January 7, 2022

11:15 A.M.

LOCATION

Richmond Marriott

500 East Broad Street

Richmond, Virginia 23219

1 APPEARANCES: (Some appearances masked)
2
3 Edward Owens, Chair
4 Sec. Brian Ball/Cassidy Rasnick
5 Edward Blevins
6 Gretchen Clark
7 Joel Cunningham
8 Delegate James Edmunds
9 Dr. Alexis Ehrhardt
10 Richard Hite
11 Delegate Terry Kilgore
12 Senator Louise Lucas
13 T. Jordan Miles
14 Senator Joseph Morrissey
15 Edward Owens
16 Delegate Sam Rasoul
17 Sec. Bettina Ring
18 Senator Frank Ruff
19 Evan Feinman, Executive Director
20 Andy Sorrell, Deputy Director
21 (Staff Members)
22
23
24
25

1 CHAIR OWENS: Call to order the Full
2 Commission meeting. Welcome everybody here. Thank
3 you for coming today. Thank to all the members
4 showing up to help with the quorum.

5 (Roll Call).

6 CHAIR OWENS: The minutes of the
7 9/21/21 meeting are published at the website.

8 DELEGATE KILGORE: I make the motion
9 to approve.

10 SENATOR LUCAS: I second that motion.

11 CHAIR OWENS: Any discussion?

12 (No response.)

13 CHAIR OWENS: Hearing none.

14 All those in favor, say aye.

15 (Affirmative response.)

16 CHAIR OWENS: All those opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 CHAIR OWENS: Minutes are approved.

19 At this time, is there any public
20 comment? Anybody in the public want to come forward?

21 (No response.)

22 CHAIR OWENS: Being none, we'll go to
23 the Committee reports. I'll start off with the
24 Executive Committee Reports.

25 The Executive Committee met about an

1 hour ago. We had one recommendation. I can't make
2 the motion. I can read the --

3 MR. FEINMAN: I'll read the motion
4 that the Committee recommended. The Committee
5 recommends that the Commission accepts the Executive
6 Committee's recommendation to delegate authority to
7 the Executive Director to negotiate and execute any
8 documentation necessary to release Grant 2275, and
9 notwithstanding security interest associated CCAM
10 property prior to its transfer to Virginia Department
11 of General Services.

12 DELEGATE KILGORE: I so move.

13 MR. MILES: Second.

14 CHAIR OWENS: Move is properly
15 seconded. Anything on the second motion?

16 (No response.)

17 CHAIR OWENS: Hearing none, all those
18 in favor, signify by saying aye.

19 (Affirmative response.)

20 CHAIR OWENS: Opposed?

21 (No response.)

22 CHAIR OWENS: They ayes have it. The
23 motion is approved. That is the report of the
24 Executive Committee.

25 The Education Committee, Senator

1 Lucas, you are going to make that report.

2 SENATOR LUCAS: Mr. Chairman, for the
3 reassessment of workforce financial aid of funding.
4 Do you want me to give the entire motion or just do
5 the motion?

6 MR. FEINMAN: That's up to you.

7 SENATOR LUCAS: I'd like to move the
8 Commission accept the Education Committee's
9 recommendation to approve a tiered reduction for
10 workforce financial aid funding starting at 30 percent
11 for the upcoming fiscal year and 50 percent for the
12 next fiscal year. That is my motion.

13 DELEGATE KILGORE: Yes.

14 MR. MILES: Second.

15 DELEGATE KILGORE: I was just going
16 to say that I got calls from some of the western
17 community colleges who are very concerned about this
18 reduction. I just wanted to bring that to the
19 members's attention that they were concerned that it
20 was going to affect the skills areas, such as welding,
21 things of that nature. That was a concern that they
22 had. They couldn't get here because they were worried
23 about getting here with the snow. They wanted me to
24 bring to you all's attention.

25 MR. MILES: I would echo similar

1 sentiment from Southside Virginia Community College
2 and communications that I have had too.

3 SENATOR RUFF: Mr. Chairman, I
4 understand some of the concerns that dealt with this
5 related to the state program, Fast-Forward Program,
6 that gave 100 percent tuition for some programs, that
7 don't think it took into consideration the fact that
8 there are programs that are offered at the various
9 community colleges that are regional. An example
10 would be the truck driving program at Southside. They
11 are one of the very few community colleges that do the
12 truck driving direct. Most community colleges
13 contract with private employers. For that reason, the
14 state has chosen not to include that.

15 But if you have seen the news, there
16 is a desperate need for truck drivers.

17 I don't know how much it dealt with
18 the medical community. There are needs for nurses,
19 for all the associate fields of medicine at that
20 level.

21 If we are going to bring the
22 Commonwealth, this region, up to the standards we
23 need, we need to bring those people into the workforce.
24 Community colleges is the best for them.

25 CHAIR OWENS: Anybody else have any

1 comments?

2 DR. EHRHARDT: For the benefit of the
3 members who weren't here, the 30 percent approach was
4 a compromise from the original. Evan, correct me, if
5 I'm wrong. I think what we demonstrated, it could be
6 reduced to up to 70 percent through G3 funding. To
7 give the community colleges more leeway, Delegate
8 Rasoul suggested a tier approach, where we start with
9 the 30 percent.

10 I view that as a pilot. Let's see
11 how a year goes. If they are short, we can go back
12 and change that.

13 I think the challenge that I'm having
14 trouble reconciling, the fact we are seeing from our
15 analysis that students are able to get both sets of
16 funds, but we have the community college saying that
17 is not the case. But we don't have that data on an
18 individual student level. Until we do, I think we
19 need to go with the 30 percent, as we discussed
20 yesterday, and see how it goes.

21 SENATOR RUFF: Mr. Chair, I
22 understand and I appreciate that, but I think it is
23 better to get facts before we make the cut, rather
24 than make the cuts and say, look, we shouldn't have
25 done that.

1 DR. EHRHARDT: Senator Ruff, I agree
2 with Mr. Chairman. I agree, but I think it may be
3 fair to allow, and you can speak to this, about the
4 analysis they have done. We have some facts in that
5 we could reduce it by 70 percent and still cover it.

6 MR. FEINMAN: The staff spent months
7 working with the community colleges and doing analysis
8 on the workforce financial aid that we have already
9 done. What we found was confirmed by our colleagues,
10 which was that G3 covers about 70 percent of what we
11 were supporting with our workforce financial aid. Now
12 G3 exists.

13 The question is, do we continue
14 funding at the level we were funding prior to G3
15 existing, or do we recognize that G3 has entered the
16 funding mix, and re-task. No one is suggesting that
17 we remove these funds from the higher ED or community
18 college. Rather, we are saying, can we move some of
19 these funds into another category that is higher
20 priority, given that G3 has assumed some of the
21 responsibility. The Commission, frankly, led the way.
22 That is the theory.

23 Get the community colleges to support
24 more apprenticeships and work study programs, or other
25 things, wraparound services like childcare and

1 transportation, and non-traditional time instruction.

2 CHAIR OWENS: Mr. Blevins?

3 MR. BLEVINS: Yes, sir. I received
4 several calls from the western part of our footprint.
5 I was asked to share that this might be premature,
6 until we have had time to discuss policy and provide a
7 better understanding, the community colleges. I just
8 wanted to share that with you.

9 SENATOR RUFF: Mr. Chairman, I would
10 move that we table this, and instruct the community
11 colleges in the footprint to pull together the data as
12 to what they actually need, and then we can take a
13 more appropriate action at our next meeting.

14 MR. MILES: I'll second that.

15 MS. CAPPS: Mr. Chair, I just want to
16 clarify --

17 CHAIR OWENS: Hold on. We've got a
18 motion and a second.

19 MR. MILES: Subject to.

20 CHAIR OWENS: Okay.

21 MS. CAPPS: I just wanted to clarify
22 that part of the decision making had to do with our
23 ability to take applications in the spring, so that so
24 we could submit or have financial aid funds for the
25 next school year.

1 CHAIR OWENS: So it is not this
2 fiscal year?

3 MR. FEINMAN: Financial aid for the
4 academic year beginning August of 2022. So we have to
5 fund. They have to let them know what financial aid
6 is going to be. We have to accept applications for
7 that program. So if we don't resolve that today,
8 we're not going to be able to, unless we have a
9 special meeting, we are not going to be able to take
10 in applications ahead of the May meeting and still get
11 them their funds, because they won't know what they
12 are applying for. I suppose they could apply for
13 either the full amount or the reduced amount, and not
14 just know what the total value of the award is going
15 to be appropriated. I'm looking there. I want to
16 make sure we can do that.

17 MS. KIM: I think it would be a much
18 more difficult evaluation process, because if people
19 are applying for a lot more than is available, the
20 staff would have to really closely evaluate. You
21 could accept the application and then make the
22 decision based on our available budget the next May
23 meeting.

24 CHAIR OWENS: Are you suggesting --

25 DELEGATE KILGORE: She answered my

1 question.

2 CHAIR OWENS: It looks like the
3 simplest way to handle this would be to not make any
4 changes right now. Come back with the data for an
5 Education Committee meeting in May, and then make the
6 decisions for the next --

7 MR. FEINMAN: I'd say I'm not sure
8 what additional data there is to consider. We know
9 what G3 funding is. We know what our level is. We
10 know what we have paid in the past. We know what we
11 would be funding in the future.

12 CHAIR OWENS: Okay.

13 MR. FEINMAN: I certainly believe in
14 for small seat conservative being careful and cautious
15 when we maintain the landscape. To be honest, I'm
16 just not sure what we have, the staff.

17 DELEGATE KILGORE: Mr. Chairman,
18 wouldn't a meeting for the Education be before the
19 May. Can we set up something before the May meeting,
20 in April or something, just so see what is going on?

21 Couldn't the Education Committee meet
22 before the May meeting?

23 CHAIR OWENS: Mr. Morrissey?

24 MR. MORRISSEY: Thank you, Mr.
25 Chairman.

1 It may very well be, as Mr. Feinman
2 said, there is little or no additional information
3 that we'll gather. But I agree with Senator Ruff. I
4 think it is prudent to seek that information, seek
5 that data before a decision is made. I don't know if
6 it has to be put off until May. They have these new
7 Zoom meetings without having to gather, without
8 gathering like we are now in person.

9 When the motion to table comes up for
10 vote, I will be in support of that.

11 DELEGATE RASOUL: Mr. Chair, this was
12 a robust conversation yesterday, and clearly, there is
13 a lot of politics involved. The staff has presented
14 pages and pages of pretty objective information. I
15 know it is tough. Trust me, I know the community
16 colleges are doing work for us.

17 I think what really helped us
18 yesterday in the conversation is that the money is not
19 being taken away. It is being repurposed into, what
20 we had suggested was, there were staff suggestions,
21 was to apprenticeships, and insuring that we could
22 bridge the gap further. Because the whole point was
23 to further retention efforts. I mean, if we can
24 transition some of these students into
25 apprenticeships, we can help bridge them with the

1 industries that they need.

2 I hope as we move along in the
3 process here, that we think long and hard about, not
4 only the data that is very clear and objective in
5 front of us, but also, how can we be innovative in
6 insuring that we're serving the students the best, and
7 not just allowing for some protection around some of
8 these dollars. We have got to innovate, if we are
9 going to move forward. I'll stop there. Thank you,
10 Mr. Chairman.

11 CHAIR OWENS: Thank you.

12 SENATOR LUCAS: Mr. Chair, perhaps I
13 should have completed the motion, but there is a Part
14 B to it. If you look on Page 25, you'll see that the
15 second motion would have been that the Commission
16 accept the Education Committee's recommendation to
17 focus funding award, that is Option B on Page 25,
18 which also addresses the expansion for apprenticeships
19 or other work study programs that support employers in
20 the region. That way, the community colleges would
21 be, as I understand, they would make applications for
22 those. Am I correct?

23 MR. FEINMAN: That's correct.

24 CHAIR OWENS: Any other discussion?

25 (No response.)

1 CHAIR OWENS: Are we ready for the --

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is that the
3 primary motion?

4 CHAIR OWENS: The two motions.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Was there a
6 second to the motion to table, or had that motion been
7 made?

8 CHAIR OWENS: It was made and the
9 second.

10 SENATOR LUCAS: Okay. Just wanted to
11 know how I'm going to vote.

12 CHAIR OWENS: Substitute motion was
13 to table it, and have another Education Committee
14 meeting for more information back.

15 SENATOR RUFF: Right.

16 CHAIR OWENS: Do we need to have a
17 roll call?

18 SENATOR RUFF: I think we need to.

19 CHAIR OWENS: All those in favor of
20 the substitute motion.

21 (Roll Call, 8 to 6).

22 MR. FEINMAN: The motion carries,
23 8-6.

24 CHAIR OWENS: We are going to
25 schedule a meeting.

1 MR. FEINMAN: We will schedule a
2 meeting prior to -- We regularly have Executive
3 Committee meeting well in advance of the May meeting
4 so that we can prepare the dockets. We can schedule
5 an Education Committee simultaneous to that, and we
6 can invite our community college partners to join us.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Does that mean
8 late March?

9 SENATOR LUCAS: Mr. Chairman, does
10 that mean that the second part of the motion, is that
11 moot?

12 CHAIR OWENS: Yes.

13 MR. FEINMAN: Yes.

14 MR. OWEN: Do we have any other
15 report?

16 SENATOR LUCAS: No, sir. I just had
17 those two. That concludes my report.

18 CHAIR OWENS: Thank you.

19 I understand Mr. Miles is going to
20 take care of the Southern Virginia Committee.

21 MR. MILES: Yes, sir. Thank you,
22 Mr. Chairman. We had a busy, but short meeting
23 yesterday for the Southern Virginia Committee
24 yesterday. I have several motions.

25 The first motion regards to table

1 applications -- I'm sorry. The first motion regards
2 Campbell County, Southern Virginia Precision
3 Agriculture and Farm Efficiency Grant Number 3891.

4 I would move that the Commission
5 accept the Southern Virginia Committee recommendation
6 to approve a \$505,000 grant award for Project Number
7 3891 Conditional Cost Share Funding being limited to
8 only first time recipients for practices previously
9 funded by the Tobacco Commission.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

11 CHAIR OWENS: Any other objections?

12 MR. FEINMAN: If I may make a request
13 of the secretary. If we could do these in a block,
14 and then vote the full.

15 MR. MILES: Continue with the block.
16 Project Number 3895, Martinsville-Henry County
17 Chambers, Partnership for Economic Growth,
18 Startup/Grow Martinsville-Henry County Expansion. I
19 would add that to the block, in terms of the
20 Commission accepting the Southern Virginia Committee
21 recommendation to approve \$103,575 grant award project
22 for 3895, for expanded on leadership, training and
23 business incentives for startup MHC&E/MHC program. So
24 I would put those in a block as they are tabled.

25 CHAIR OWENS: Thank you. We are

1 going to vote on these in a moment.

2 Does anyone want to take these out of
3 the block?

4 (No response.)

5 CHAIR OWENS: We will vote on the
6 block. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

7 (Affirmative response.)

8 CHAIR OWENS: Opposed?

9 (No response.)

10 CHAIR OWENS: Next?

11 MR. MILES: My second motion,
12 Mr. Chairman, regarding extension and modification for
13 the Town of Brodnax, Depot Renovation Project, Number
14 2975. I'd move, Mr. Chairman, that the Commission
15 accept the Southern Virginia Committee recommendation
16 to include a final extension for 18 months, to June
17 30, 2023. Project 2975. Conditioned on the
18 identifying the source for any additional funding,
19 construction bids are over budget in order to allow
20 the project to remain on schedule for completion.
21 That would be my motion, Mr. Chairman.

22 CHAIR OWENS: Motion. Is there a
23 second?

24 DELEGATE RASOUL: Second.

25 CHAIR OWENS: Final; right?

1 MR. MILES: Final. Yes, sir.

2 CHAIR OWENS: Any other discussion on
3 it?

4 (No response.)

5 CHAIR OWENS: All those in favor,
6 signify by saying aye.

7 (Affirmative response.)

8 CHAIR OWENS: Opposed?

9 (No response.)

10 CHAIR OWENS: Ayes have it. Motion
11 carried.

12 Anything else, Mr. Miles?

13 MR. MILES: No, sir. That concludes
14 the Southern Virginia Committee performance.

15 CHAIR OWENS: Southwest?

16 DELEGATE KILGORE: Yes, sir.

17 Mr. Chairman, we had our meeting yesterday. We
18 approved staff recommendations on all the projects. I
19 would move that the Commission accept the Southwest
20 Virginia Committee recommendations taking the actions
21 recommended by staff as listed in Pages 30-34, which
22 states Project 3928, 3930, 3922, 3927, 3932, 3923,
23 3926, 3929 and 3925.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

25 CHAIR OWENS: Any conflicts with that

1 block?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIR OWENS: Vote in block. All
4 those in favor of Southwest Committee recommendation
5 say aye.

6 (Affirmative response.)

7 CHAIR OWENS: Opposed?

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIR OWENS: Ayes have it.

10 DELEGATE KILGORE: I have one other
11 motion. I have an extension and modification for
12 Grant 3377, The Carroll, the Wired Road Connector
13 Project. I would, after discussion yesterday, we
14 agreed that the Commission accept the Southwest
15 Virginia Committee recommendation, and ask you to
16 accept our committee recommendation and approve a one
17 year extension through March 8, 2023, for Project
18 3377, Wired Road Connector Project.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

20 CHAIR OWENS: Any other discussion on
21 the extension?

22 (No response.)

23 CHAIR OWENS: Hearing none, all those
24 in favor, signify by saying aye.

25 (Affirmative response.)

1 CHAIR OWENS: Opposed?

2 (No response.)

3 MR. KILGORE: That completes my
4 report for the Southwest Committee.

5 CHAIR OWENS: It is you again?

6 DELEGATE KILGORE: Yes, Incentives &
7 Loans Committee. I'm subbing in for Aird. Southwest
8 was for Hurst.

9 Incentives & Loans Committee, we met
10 this morning. We had numerous extensions and
11 modifications. I know that I will take up the one
12 that would be taken out of the block. I'll do that.

13 The first extension would be Grayson
14 County 3032. I'd have to do these one at a time
15 because they have different extensions and things of
16 that nature. Grayson EDA, McAllister Mills 3002. I
17 move the Commission accept the Incentives & Loans
18 Committee's recommendation to approve a final
19 performance extension through June 30, 2020 for
20 Project 3002.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

22 CHAIR OWENS: Proper second. Any
23 discussion on this one?

24 (No response.)

25 CHAIR OWENS: Being none, all those

1 in favor, signify by saying aye.

2 (Affirmative response.)

3 CHAIR OWENS: Opposed?

4 (No response.)

5 CHAIR OWENS: All right.

6 DELEGATE KILGORE: Wise County,
7 NorrisBuilt Fabrication LLC, 3049. I move that the
8 Commission accept the Incentives & Loans Committee
9 recommendation to approve a final performance
10 extension through June 30, 2020.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

12 CHAIR OWENS: Any discussion on this?

13 (No response.)

14 CHAIR OWENS: Hearing none, all those
15 in favor, signify by saying aye.

16 (Affirmative response.)

17 CHAIR OWENS: Opposed?

18 (No response.)

19 CHAIR OWENS: Motion carries.

20 DELEGATE KILGORE: The next, Wise
21 County, I don't think we need to make on that one
22 because staff handled that.

23 CHAIR OWENS: Okay.

24 DELEGATE KILGORE: Henry County
25 Performance Livestock & Feed, 3171. I move the

1 Commission accept the Incentives & Loans Committee
2 recommendation to approve a final performance
3 extension through March 31, 2022.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

5 CHAIR OWENS: Moving second.

6 Any other discussion or questions?

7 (No response.)

8 CHAIR OWENS: Hearing none, all those
9 in favor, signify by saying aye.

10 (Affirmative response.)

11 CHAIR OWENS: Opposed?

12 MS. CLARK: Abstain.

13 CHAIR OWENS: One abstention.

14 DELEGATE KILGORE: City of
15 Martinsville, Virginia Mirror Corporation, 3398. I
16 move that the Commission accept the Incentives & Loans
17 Committee recommendation to approve a final
18 performance extension through December 31st, 2020.

19 MR. MILES: Second.

20 CHAIR OWENS: Moved second. Any
21 other discussion or questions?

22 (No response.)

23 CHAIR OWENS: Hearing none, all those
24 in favor, signify by saying aye.

25 (Affirmative response.)

1 CHAIR OWENS: Those opposed?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIR OWENS: All right.

4 DELEGATE KILGORE: Brunswick County
5 IDA, Project TRANSCO/Williams Pipeline Company,
6 Project 2506, 2706 and 2864. We had a robust
7 discussion on this. I move that the Commission accept
8 the Incentives & Loans Committee recommendation to
9 pursue Carrier facilities for refund amount from
10 Carrier facility grantee as outlined for Projects
11 2506, 2706 and 2864. For those members of the public
12 who were not here for that, the reason we did that was
13 because we got more tax, more investment, more tax
14 assessment than we would have had normally anyway. So
15 we come out on the good end on this one.

16 SENATOR RUFF: Second.

17 CHAIR OWENS: Proper second. Any
18 other questions or discussions?

19 (No response.)

20 CHAIR OWENS: Hearing none, all those
21 in favor, signify by saying aye.

22 (Affirmative response.)

23 CHAIR OWENS: Opposed?

24 (No response.)

25 CHAIR OWENS: Ayes have it.

1 DELEGATE KILGORE: Finally,
2 Mr. Chairman. Pittsylvania County, Grant #3376. I
3 move the Commission accept the Incentives & Loans
4 Committee recommendation to approve a final
5 performance extension to June 30, 2023 for Project
6 3376.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

8 CHAIR OWENS: Moved second. Any
9 other questions or discussion?

10 (No response.)

11 CHAIR OWENS: Hearing none, all in
12 favor of the motion, signify by saying aye.

13 (Affirmative response.)

14 CHAIR OWENS: Those opposed?

15 (No response.)

16 CHAIR OWENS: Ayes have it.

17 DELEGATE KILGORE: That completes my
18 report, Mr. Chairman.

19 CHAIR OWENS: Thank you.

20 TROF & CBL Loan Updates, Mr. Sorrell?

21 MR. SORRELL: Thank you,

22 Mr. Chairman.

23 I'll give you a quick update where we
24 are with our Tobacco Region Opportunity Fund and our
25 Community Business Lending Program Fund.

1 If you recall at our last meeting in
2 September, the Commission requested that we receive a
3 regular update, just like you'd receive a TROF. So on
4 Page 63 in your packet, you'll see detailed
5 information on our current TROF projects and programs.
6 Projects under the TROF Program, you'll notice that we
7 had two projects approved so far in fiscal year 2022.
8 That is the same number we had back in September, but
9 we are continuing to work through several more. We
10 have six active estimates that could be potentially be
11 utilized. We're at application that is down some from
12 where we were in September, but I expect that to pick
13 up as the year rolls on.

14 We had 13 TROF projects approved in
15 fiscal year 2021 compared to 9 for fiscal year 2020.
16 That is just a comparison. So far for fiscal 2021, we
17 had a thousand jobs promised with projects that were
18 approved at over \$170 million capital investments.

19 You will notice on Page 64 and 65,
20 status of TROF loans that we have. We have 25 active
21 loans, with \$5.1 million approved for loan funds, and
22 about half of that remain to be repaid. All of those
23 are regular, in terms of their repayment. As we get
24 payments in, we continue to take those down.

25 Pages 67 and 68 reflect the status of

1 49 TROFs that remain active with concluded performance
2 periods. I believe in September, we are at 59 active.
3 So we continue to bring that, whittle this number down
4 as performance concludes and we get all the
5 performance data, we need to close the project and do
6 so. It is a regular thing that we work on. This is
7 where we gather the performance data and negotiate
8 payment terms, and bring it to you, if you need to
9 weigh in on them. Get those moving along.

10 Regarding the community based lending
11 program, we currently have four applications that have
12 been submitted and approved, and are under review. We
13 still have several in draft form. Currently, we have
14 about \$12 million offered in CDL loans.

15 If you recall, too, at the September
16 meeting, I think you approved CDL loans that are over
17 \$5 million and need to come back to the full
18 Commission for approval.

19 We haven't had any of those at this
20 point to do that. If we do, you would hear of them.

21 Before that, we have all of them
22 are -- I think one of them is very close to being
23 concluded. I think the loan terms have been accepted,
24 and we're just working on signing off on the
25 agreement. That is for our telecom application by the

1 local government for \$4 million. That would likely be
2 the first one to completely close and be done.

3 We also have one in the agriculture
4 industry that is continuing on, and one in the
5 automotive industry that was submitted since our last
6 meeting in September. That is secured by a private
7 company. That one is progressing rapidly as well
8 with, hopefully, terms to be completed shortly to the
9 company.

10 Then, of course, we have one that was
11 submitted this time last year for hospitality. I
12 don't believe that has progressed further yet. I
13 don't believe they have rejected the offer yet. So
14 still is sort of in a holding pattern.

15 I think that is all I have for my
16 updates. Like I said, you can see them all listed on
17 Page 66 of your packet as well. I'd be happy to
18 answer any questions.

19 CHAIR OWENS: Any questions?

20 (No response.)

21 CHAIR OWENS: Thank you for your
22 report.

23 Other business, Mr. Feinman.

24 MR. FEINMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I
25 have a couple pieces of other business for you.

1 First, a minder all citizen members
2 of the Commission should have gotten an email
3 regarding the online filing of your financial
4 disclosure. That is due February 1st. If you did not
5 receive that email, let the staff know. We will make
6 sure you get it. It is not fun to fill that thing
7 out, but you absolutely have to do it.

8 If you don't do it, the Commonwealth
9 will fine you and deduct it from your tax return. So
10 go ahead and get it done. It is a dumb way to spend
11 \$200 not to do it.

12 Second piece of information I have
13 for you is the Virginia Department of Health State
14 Loan Repayment Program for healthcare professionals.
15 It is open now, and remains open through March 31st.

16 If you are aware of someone who is
17 considering moving to the footprint and would like to
18 get a little support in paying their loans, please
19 direct them to that program. The Commission supports
20 funding for that program to attract more talented
21 medical professionals. We get that done, and they do
22 a great job.

23 Relatedly, the Commission's own
24 Talent Attraction Program, which of course focuses on
25 engineering, IT, and a variety of other professions

1 for people who are interested in moving, working and
2 being typically engaged in the footprint, will begin
3 accepting applications on January 15th. That
4 application period runs through March 31st.

5 The Commission will pay up to \$12,000
6 a year or a quarter of your outstanding loan balance,
7 whichever is the lesser, each year for two years. You
8 are eligible to reapply for an additional two years.
9 This has been a very successful program. We've gotten
10 a lot of talented new leaders across Southwest
11 Virginia who joined our community as a result of this.
12 Spread far and wide, and certainly let eligible
13 businesses that you're in communication with, know
14 that they can leverage this program as a recruiting
15 device so they can go seek out new college graduates
16 to come work for them. It is a great program. We
17 encourage folks to pursue it. We have all the details
18 on the Commission website.

19 Last, if I may take a moment of
20 personal privilege. There has been new
21 administration, or there will be shortly. I do not
22 know for certain whether or not I'll be carrying on
23 with the Commission or not. If I am, it will be a
24 pleasure to continue to work with you all. If I am
25 not, I just want to say that it has been an absolute

1 privilege to serve as a member of the Commission and
2 working with each of you. I believe we have done an
3 awful lot of important work to support the region.

4 I also want to say that I stepped
5 into this role as somebody a lot of folks didn't know,
6 either on the staff or the Commission. Everyone
7 welcomed me with incredibly open arms. The staff, in
8 particular, is not heralded often enough. Everyone
9 who is on this very small, very high performance
10 agency staff does incredible work. It has been a true
11 privilege to lead each and every one of y'all.

12 So if we do not move forward
13 together, I just want to say publicly that I have
14 never worked with a greater or more talented set of
15 people, and I have enjoyed every minute of it.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. FEINMAN: That's all I have,
18 Mr. Chairman.

19 CHAIR OWENS: Before I open up for
20 public comment -- You stole a little of my thunder
21 here, because I had in my notes to thank the staff for
22 the wonderful job they do every time.

23 It is difficult to set up a meeting.
24 In these times, it is ten times more difficult. I
25 appreciate what you do. The Commission what you do

1 and have done over the years, and look forward to
2 working with each and every one of you. It is going
3 to be the last time for some folks, our last official
4 meeting.

5 We thank administration for all they
6 have done in helping us through this process. Again,
7 change is good, and then change is not always good.
8 Need institutional knowledge where you are. We
9 accumulated some.

10 Mr. Feinman, I don't what is going to
11 happen, but I know it has been a pleasure to work with
12 you.

13 MR. FEINMAN: Likewise.

14 CHAIR OWENS: I tell people all the
15 time, not a matter right or wrong. It is just your
16 point of view. Always the right time to do right. If
17 you have the same point of view, it would help. We
18 thank you for what you have done.

19 Senator Lucas, did you want to say
20 something?

21 SENATOR LUCAS: I just echo what you
22 said.

23 MR. SORRELL: I just wanted to
24 mention real quick that the Commission's Annual Report
25 is completed and is up on the Commission's website.

1 Let us know -- We didn't get it printed and ready for
2 you for this meeting, but it is ready in electronic
3 form. We'll have it printed probably next week by the
4 Department of General Services. As soon as it is
5 available, we'll be happy to mail copies. Just wanted
6 to let you guys know.

7 DELEGATE RASOUL: Mr. Chairman, I'm
8 going to defer to the second chair, as I was going to
9 thank the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary for their
10 service.

11 (Applause.)

12 SECRETARY: Thank you for. It has
13 been a real joy and a true honor as Secretary of
14 Agriculture, working more closely with the team at
15 Commerce and Trade. I just want to echo the remarks
16 from Mr. Chairman. Thank Evan for his leadership and
17 the team. You all have done a tremendous job. We ask
18 lots of hard questions, and sometimes we have
19 challenging discussions. Appreciate all that you have
20 done and will continue to do moving forward.

21 I would also just like to mention, we
22 have been able to advance so many agriculture projects
23 together, and I thank you all, not only staff, but the
24 members around the table that have helped us do that.
25 Our number one industry and being third largest

1 industry, we have had 57 facility grants just in this
2 administration. Many of those, we have been able to
3 leverage to Commission funding. We have one more to
4 come that will be announced soon. We are just really
5 excited about what we have been able to do.

6 I regret that I couldn't be with you
7 yesterday for more discussions that were in the
8 committee meetings. Really excited, the projects we
9 funded just today to approve and move those forward.
10 We actually have someone out in the field looking at
11 an AG project, and a great feature to one of our
12 schools for the next generation and what you have been
13 doing to educate. We know have a great future. I
14 just want to thank you and enjoyed the work with all
15 of you, and look forward to what is to come with the
16 future.

17 CHAIR OWENS: Thank you.

18 Anybody else?

19 (No response.)

20 CHAIR OWENS: Hearing none. Public
21 comment? Is there anybody in the public that has any
22 comments they want to make?

23 (No response.)

24 CHAIR OWENS: Motion to adjourn?

25 DELEGATE KILGORE: So move.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

2 CHAIR OWENS: All those in favor, say
3 aye.

4 (Affirmative response.)

5 CHAIR OWENS: Opposed?

6 (No response.)

7 CHAIR OWENS: Meeting adjourned.

8 CONCLUDED at 11:55 a.m.

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CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

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I, Sheryl S. Rainey, hereby certify that I, Sheryl Rainey, was the 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 Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, Full Commission Meeting, when held on Friday, January 7, 2022, at 11:15 a.m.

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

16

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Given under my hand this 3rd day of February, 2022.

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Sheryl S. Rainey
Court Reporter

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My Commission Expires: April 30, 2022
#260655

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