

Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission
Full Commission Meeting
DeBusk Veterinary Training Center, 203 Debusk Farm Drive, Ewing, Virginia
May 22, 2024
10:30 a.m.
Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present

Honorable Frank M. Ruff, Jr., Chair	Delegate Daniel W. Marshall, III
Delegate James W. Morefield, Vice-Chair	Secretary Caren Merrick
Senator Lashrecse D. Aird	Mr. Arthur Moore
Delegate Jonathan E. Arnold	Delegate Israel D. O'Quinn
Mr. Edward Blevins	Honorable William A. Pace
Ms. Gretchen Clark	Senator Todd E. Pillion
Ms. Amanda Cox	Deputy Secretary Jason Powell (for Sec. Cummings)
Mr. Watt R. Foster, Jr.	Ms. Sandy Ratliff
Delegate Thomas A. Garrett, Jr. (Remote)	Mr. Walter H. Shelton
Senator T. Travis Hackworth	Honorable Gary D. Walker
Delegate Terry G. Kilgore	Mrs. Sarah L. Wilson
Deputy Secretary Green (for Secretary Lohr)	

Absent

Mr. Joel Cunningham	Mr. Jay D. Jennings
Mr. Lee "Randy" Everett	The Honorable L. Louise Lucas
Mr. Richard T. Hite, Jr.	

Staff

The Honorable Director James Campos	Mr. Jordan Butler
Deputy Director Stephen Versen	Mr. Jerry Silva
Ms. Stephanie Kim	Ms. Adrian Chapman
Ms. Vicki Humphreys	Ms. Emily Van Pelt
Ms. Sara Williams	Ms. Hannah Franke-Fuller
Ms. Sarah Capps	Ms. Roz Stein

Counsel for the Commission

Ms. Elizabeth Myers

Vice-Chair Morefield opened the Full Commission meeting at 10:41 a.m., then handed introductions to Commissioner Pillion because Ewing, Virginia, is within his local jurisdiction. Pillion welcomed everyone present and gave a brief overview of the veterinary facility in which the Tobacco Commission has invested in the past. Campos called roll. Ruff moved to approve the remote participation of Commissioner Garrett and Deputy Secretary Green, representing Commissioner Lohr; Marshall seconded the motion; all members present voted “aye.”

Kilgore moved to approve the minutes from the previous Full Commission meeting on January 9, 2024; O’Quinn seconded the motion; all members present voted “aye.”

The meeting was opened to public comment, and there was none.

Morefield moved into discussion of the Executive Committee Report. Kilgore moved to accept the administration’s appointment of Campos as TRRC full-time director at his current salary rate. Ruff seconded the motion; all members present voted “aye.”

Kilgore moved to accept the approval of the 15% corpus invasion of the Tobacco Commission’s endowment. Ruff seconded the motion; all members present voted “aye.” Kilgore moved to accept the approval of the Executive Committee’s recommended 2025 Fiscal Year Budget. Hackworth seconded the motion; all members present voted “aye.”

Morefield handed the meeting to Commissioner Aird to discuss the Energy Ingenuity Committee recommendations. Aird moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for grant 4259; Kilgore seconded the motion; all members present voted “aye.” Aird moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for grant 4260; Kilgore seconded the motion; all members present voted “aye.” Aird completed her motions for the Energy Ingenuity Committee and handed the meeting back to Commissioner Morefield.

Morefield handed the meeting to Commissioner Pillion to discuss the Southwest Committee recommendations. Pillion moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for grant 4233; Aird seconded the motion; all members present voted “aye.” Pillion moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for grant 4245; Kilgore seconded the motion; all members present voted “aye” except for Hackworth who voted “nay.” Hackworth moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for grants 4238, 4236, 4246, 4189, 4244, 4232, 4235, 4241, and 4237; Aird seconded the motion; all members present voted “aye.” Hackworth moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for grants 3377 and 3530; Arnold seconded the motion; all members present voted “aye.” Hackworth completed his motions for the Southwest Committee and handed the meeting back to Morefield.

Morefield handed the meeting to Commissioner Marshall to discuss the Incentives & Loans Committee recommendations. Marshall moved to accept the motion decided upon in the

Committee meeting for grant 3177; Kilgore seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye." Marshall moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for the Economic Development Housing Incentive Pilot Program; Kilgore seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye." Marshall moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for the loan to Scott County IDA for development of a hotel; Kilgore seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye." Marshall completed his motions for the Incentives & Loans Committee and handed the meeting back to Commissioner Morefield.

Morefield handed the meeting to Commissioner Cox to discuss the Education Committee recommendations. Cox moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for Workforce Financial Aid grants 4258, 4231, 4252, 4249, 4257, 4250, 4254, 4253, 4255, 4251, and 4256; Ruff seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye." Cox moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for project 3647; Pace seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye." Cox completed her motions for the Education Committee and handed the meeting back to Commissioner Morefield.

Morefield handed the meeting to Commissioner Shelton to discuss the Southern Committee recommendations. Shelton moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for grant 4225; Ruff seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye." Shelton moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for grants 4215, 4223, 4217, and 4220; Pace seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye." Shelton moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for grant 4219; Ruff seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye." Shelton moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for grant 4221; Ruff seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye." Shelton moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for grant 4214; Ruff seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye." Shelton moved to accept the motion decided upon in the Committee meeting for grant 3011; Ruff seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye." Shelton completed his motions for the Southern Committee and handed the meeting back to Commissioner Morefield.

Morefield moved on to the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Commission. Ruff moved to appoint Commissioner Morefield as Vice-Chair of the Commission; Marshall seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye." Marshall moved to appoint Commissioner Ruff as Chair of the Commission; Garrett seconded the motion; all members present voted "aye."

Morefield congratulated Commission Chair Ruff and moved onto other business.

Kilgore wanted to remind the Commission that, while many decisions were made for the localities, the public may not be aware. He wanted to encourage everyone to go out and make

announcements of the decisions so that people and businesses would know where Commission funds were going.

Marshall followed with a question about whether there would be a cheat sheet created with all the motions listed out that Commissioners would have access to.

Pace recommended the use of Facebook as a way to advertise and promote the Commission's initiatives and decisions.

Merrick wanted to add that making announcements on social media is a good suggestion, but specifically for economic development projects; instead of creating a single press release with all the projects listed, it might be helpful to create an individual press release for each project. She elaborated that this would create more awareness for prospective businesses and for established businesses in the Tobacco Commission footprint.

Campos thanked Commissioner Morefield for taking on the role of Acting Chair before the vote for Chair and Vice-Chair took place. He reminded all present of the sheet that outlined the variety of ways the Tobacco Commission funds have been utilized over the years. He thanked everyone for coming out and attending the meeting in Lee and Wise Counties.

Versen let everyone know that the Commission has updated the Briefing Book, and if anyone needed a new one to please reach out. Versen gave the dates that have been set for the Fall Commission meeting on September 25 and 26 in Martinsville. The penciled-in dates for the Winter Commission meeting are January 6 and 7, 2025, in Richmond. That will also be the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Commission. Versen highlighted the travel voucher in the back of Commissioner booklets and the contributions of Ms. Stein for making this Commission meeting run smoothly.

Campos reminded Commissioners that the 501(c)(3) Foundation will be up and running shortly and that the grant writer position will soon be filled.

Kim updated the group of the change to the itinerary for lunch and the tour of the Veterinary School.

Pace made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded, and all members present voted "aye." Morefield adjourned the meeting at 11:18 a.m.