

**Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission
Incentives and Loans Committee Meeting
Hilton Richmond Downtown
501 E. Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219
Monday, January 6, 2025
2:45 p.m.**

Commissioners Present

Delegate Daniel Marshall, III, Chair (Remote)	Secretary Caren Merrick
Delegate Terry G. Kilgore, Vice-Chair	Delegate Israel D. O'Quinn
Mr. Edward Blevins	Honorable William A. Pace
Ms. Gretchen Clark	Deputy Secretary Jason Powell
Senator L. Louise Lucas (Remote)	Mr. Hampton Wilkins

Absent

Senator Todd E. Pillion

Staff

Honorable James Campos	Ms. Stephanie Kim
Mr. Stephen Versen	Mr. Jerry Silva
Mr. Jordan Butler	Ms. Roz Stein
Ms. Sarah Capps	Ms. Emily Van Pelt
Ms. Adrian Chapman	Ms. Sara Williams
Ms. Vicki Humphreys	

Counsel for the Commission

Ms. Elizabeth Myers, Assistant Attorney General

Guests

Mr. Joe Benevento, Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation

Incentives and Loans Committee Vice-Chair Kilgore opened the meeting at 2:55 p.m.

Pace moved to approve the remote participation of Commissioners Marshall and Lucas; Commissioner Clark seconded; all members present voted to approve.

Director Campos called roll and determined a quorum was present.

Pace moved to approve the minutes from the previous Incentives and Loans Committee meeting on September 25, 2024; Commissioner Blevins seconded; all members voted to approve the motion.

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

Campos introduced Deputy Director Versen to present an update on the Economic Development Workforce Housing Incentive Pilot Program. Governor Youngkin announced in November that localities receiving funds from the upcoming rounds of the Business-Ready Sites Program will be required to have a workforce housing plan in place. Also announced was a new workforce housing financing program from Virginia Housing with up to \$15M in funding per year. TRRC worked closely with Virginia Housing when developing TRRC's workforce housing program, so these programs are complementary, and the Commission has additional flexibility such as off-site infrastructure improvements. A key difference between TRRC's and Virginia Housing's programs is the amount of money that can go towards each individual housing unit. While Virginia Housing can provide an incentive of up to \$50K per unit for an occupant with an income up to 150% of the area median income (AMI), TRRC's per-unit incentive is up to \$35K with an income limit of 120% of AMI. Versen proposed changing the guidelines of the TRRC program so that TRRC levels align with those of the Virginia Housing program.

Commissioner Marshall added that TRRC could also support these projects by making loans for developing the infrastructure that is needed to build the housing facilities.

Commissioner Pace moved to authorize staff to amend the current guidelines of the Commission's new Economic Development Workforce Housing Incentive Pilot Program by increasing the maximum per-unit incentive to \$50,000 and changing the income level target for these new units to be between 80 and 150% of Area Median Income; Blevins seconded the motion; all members present voted to approve the motion.

Campos introduced Versen to give an update on the Virginia Small Business Finance Authority (VSBFA) Loan Program. TRRC has received four applications for the program, one of which VSBFA recommended that TRRC decline and so will not be covered here. Versen reviewed the staff recommendations for the remaining loan requests and explained that, when a public entity applies for one of these loans, staff will include those requests in the Commission book; when a private entity applies for a loan, staff will maintain all documents including any proprietary information in the office, and Commission discussions about those projects will be held in closed session.

Pace moved, pursuant to TRRC policy, that the Committee approve the \$2M loan to the Town of Richlands to install a gas turbine to supply the town electricity; Commissioner O'Quinn seconded; all members present voted to approve the motion.

Versen presented a loan request for \$200K to Summerfield Heritage Farm in Grayson County, which was received after the board book was published. Governor Youngkin worked with VSBFA and TRRC to establish the Governor's Agriculture Emergency Loan Program in response to Hurricane Helene, and this is the first full loan request that TRRC has received for that program. VSBFA has recommended that we approve this loan at 1.5% for 5 years to help rebuild the farm.

Morefield noted that there are at least two proposals being considered by the General Assembly to create a permanent relief fund that will provide grants. If either of these is adopted, then it will be likely that any loan amount received by a farmer for relief through VSBFA or TRRC would be subtracted from the maximum grant amount that would be available through the relief fund. Farmers should keep this in mind when accepting a loan. Versen added that a farmer could get approved for a loan then wait to learn the outcome of the legislation before accepting the loan. He committed to bringing this up with farmers who inquire about loans.

No motion was needed for the \$200K loan award to Summerfield Heritage Farm.

Pace moved that, pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, the Committee move into closed session. The purpose of closed session is the discussion and consideration of information subject to the exclusion of § 2.2-3705.6 related to economic development. The subject of this closed session discussion is the potential Commission loan and a separate TROF grant for Project Maggie; Kilgore seconded; all members present voted to approve the motion.

The Committee went into closed session. After the closed-session discussion, the meeting was re-opened.

Pace moved that the Committee vote on and record its certification that, to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under this chapter and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting; Kilgore seconded; all members present voted via roll-call vote to approve the motion.

Pace moved that the Committee approve a Tobacco Region Opportunity Fund award of up to \$50,000 for Project Maggie, with the exceptions for wages, performance period,

and award amount as discussed in closed session; Blevins seconded; all members present voted to approve the motion.

Kilgore called for new business, and there was none.

Kilgore adjourned the meeting at 4:11 p.m.