VIRGINIA GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY BOARD MEETING
September 15, 2026
3:00 PM
Brightpoint Community College
13101 Route 1
Chester, Virginia

<u>Members Present</u>
Nancy Agee
The Honorable Carrie Chenery
Jim Cheng
Ben J. Davenport, Jr
Senator Creigh Deeds
Bill Dotson
Cliff Fleet
Joel Griffin
John King
The Honorable Jessica Looman
Emily O'Quinn
Jon Peterson
Dr. McKinley Price
Thomas Ransom
Delegate Atoosa Reaser
Delegate Virgil Thornton

<u>Members Absent</u>
Reggie Aggarwal
W. Heywood Fralin
The Honorable Katie Frazier
Delegate Terry Kilgore
Senator L. Louise Lucas
Senator Ryan McDougle
Fouad Qreitem
The Honorable Jeffery Smith
Delegate Luke Torian

Call to Order

Ms. Emily O'Quinn, Chair of the Virginia Growth and Opportunity (GO Virginia) Board, called the meeting to order.

Ms. O'Quinn made remarks welcoming several new members of the Board, including The Honorable Carrie Chenery, The Honorable Katie Frazier, The Honorable Jessica Looman, The Honorable Jeffery Smith, and Dr. McKinley Price.

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Roll Call

Mr. Cody Anderson, GO Virginia Program Administrator for the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, called the roll and stated that a quorum was present.

Public Comment

Ms. O'Quinn opened the floor for public comment.

Mr. Anderson noted that there was one written public comment submitted by Mr. Todd Haymore, Chair of the GO Virginia Region 4 Council. Mr. Haymore wrote to urge the Board to consider a recapture method that preserves regional per capita balances to the greatest extent possible.

Mr. Anderson noted that no other members of the public indicated intention to provide public comment. The public comment period was closed.

Consent Agenda

Ms. O'Quinn noted that the consent agenda consisted of the meeting minutes for the June 9, 2026, meeting, the 2027 state board quarterly meeting calendar, regional councils certifications, an amendment to Board Policy #14: Maximum Regional Per Capita Carryover Allowance, and reenactment of Board Policy #2: Electronic Participation in Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board Meetings.

Mr. Fleet requested that the Regional Councils Certification item be removed from the block for separate consideration.

Ms. O'Quinn requested that the 2027 State Board Quarterly Meeting Calendar be removed from the block for separate consideration.

A motion was made by Ms. Agee and seconded by Delegate Reaser to approve the remaining items on the consent agenda as a block. The motion passed.

Ms. Sara Dunnigan, Deputy Director of Economic Development and Community Vitality at DHCD noted that staff had misinterpreted a document submitted in reference to the Regional Councils Certification item. Ms. Dunnigan explained that the document erroneously noted that the GO Virginia Region 9 Council was out of compliance, however this was not the case, and that the Board should consider a motion to certify the Regional Councils to fully

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approve the Region 9 Council, as opposed to provisionally approving the Council, as noted in the Board packet memorandum.

A motion was made by Mr. Fleet and seconded by Ms. Agee to approve the Region 2, Region 4, Region 5, Region 6, Region 7, Region 8, and Region 9 Councils, as well as provisionally approving the Region 1 and Region 3 Councils. The motion passed.

Ms. O'Quinn noted that the 2027 State Board Quarterly Meeting Calendar included the date of March 9th as the meeting date for the GO Virginia Board. Ms. O'Quinn discussed that due to the proximity to the General Assembly Session, she would like to entertain a motion to approve the presented calendar with an amendment to change the date of the March meeting to March 23rd.

A motion was made by Delegate Thornton and seconded by Delegate Reaser to approve the 2027 State Board Quarterly Meeting Calendar with the amended March date to March 23rd. The motion passed.

Deputy Director's Report

Ms. Sara Dunnigan, Deputy Director of Economic Development and Community Vitality at DHCD, provided a brief overview of the application review process for GO Virginia grant applications.

Ms. Dunnigan presented the Board with 6 Per Capita implementation applications regarding talent development and entrepreneurship and innovation: Advancing Maritime Career Pathways from Region 5 (recommended by the workgroup for approval), NOVA Internship Preparation and Placement Program (IPPP) from Region 7 (recommended by the workgroup for deferral), Virginia Quantum Hub from Region 7 (recommended by the workgroup for approval, GO2 Work in Manufacturing Expansion from Region 8 (recommended by the workgroup for approval), RISE Phase III: AI-Ready Entrepreneurial Ecosystem from Region 3 (recommended by the workgroup for approval, along with the accompanying match local match waiver request), and Growth Alliance Initiative from Region 6 (recommended by the workgroup for approval).

Ms. O'Quinn noted that the Board would vote on the proposed projects as a block.

Mr. Griffin requested that the Growth Alliance Initiative be removed from the block for separate consideration.

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Mr. Peterson requested that the Virginia Quantum Hub be removed from the block for separate consideration.

A motion was made by Mr. Fleet and seconded by Mr. Ransom to approve the remaining projects as recommended by the workgroup. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Ms. Agee and seconded by Mr. Ransom to approve the Growth Alliance Initiative. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention (Mr. Joel Griffin).

A motion was made by Delegate Reaser and seconded by Ms. Agee to approve the Virginia Quantum Hub. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention (Mr. Jon Peterson).

Executive Committee Report	Ms. O'Quinn provided a report on behalf of the Executive Committee.

Ms. O'Quinn noted that the Committee met on August 10, 2026. At the meeting, the Committee discussed the GO Virginia application review process. This discussion covered the time needed to complete a technical review of applications prior to Board consideration, as well as a revised schedule for the Board accepting Competitive Fund applications. Ms. O'Quinn noted that each quarterly GO Virginia Board meeting's application deadline will be scheduled to be two weeks earlier than in past years to provide DHCD staff additional time to complete application reviews. Additionally, to accommodate the decrease in the amount of Competitive Fund funding and to allow more robust evaluation of Competitive Fund projects, Competitive Fund applications will only be accepted twice a year moving forward, in December and in June of each year.

Ms. O'Quinn reported that the committee also discussed potential recapture formulas for funds to be recaptured as part of the approved amendments to the 2025 Appropriations Act. Ms. O'Quinn discussed several options and that the Committee prepared two recommended pathways for recapturing funds from the program. Both paths included utilizing a formula for recapture that is based on each region's percentage of total FY26 Regional Per Capita funds allocated by the State Board. The two options presented to the Board included a formula that rescinds 75% of the funding from the competitive fund and 25% of the funding from the per capita fund, or a formula that rescinds 60% of the funding from the competitive fund and 40% of the funding from the per capita fund.

After discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Agee and seconded by Mr. King to approve the recommendation to rescind funds from the program at a 75/25% split between the Competitive Fund and Regional Per Capita funds, respectively. The motion passed.

Governance and Policy Committee Report

Ms. O'Quinn recognized Mr. Cliff Fleet, Chair of the Governance and Policy Committee, to provide a report for the Committee.

Mr. Fleet noted that the Committee met in-person on September 15th. Mr. Fleet explained that the committee discussed the Board referred topic of talent attraction and retention as a GO Virginia fundable activity. Mr. Fleet discussed that the committee hosted a presentation from Debbie Melvin, the Vice President of Talent and Partnerships at VEDP, who provided foundational information on the Commonwealths existing efforts to promote talent attraction and retention. Mr. Fleet noted that the Committee intends to advance a recommendation to the State Board at the December 7 meeting focused on temporarily pausing funding future talent attraction projects that emphasize a talent attraction portal. Additionally, Mr. Fleet noted that the Committee held a robust discussion about talent retention strategies and the importance of retraining existing talent for new and emerging occupations, particularly as it relates to the rapid growth of artificial intelligence.

Additionally, Mr. Fleet reported that the Committee considered specific cluster-scale up related scope and funding requested by a project called Strategic Cluster Advancement for Leading Energy (SCALE). These scope and budget items were referred to the Committee by the GO Virginia Board at the June 9, 2026, Board meeting. Mr. Fleet noted that after discussion, DHCD staff were directed to issue guidance to clarify that cluster scale-up projects should be focused on a primary activity with marketing being a qualifying supporting activity for the initiative that projects that are focused predominantly on marketing shall not be considered eligible for GO Virginia funding.

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Program Performance and Evaluation Committee Report	Ms. O'Quinn recognized Mr. Jim Cheng, Chair of the Program Performance and Evaluation Committee to provide a report for the Committee. Mr. Cheng reported that the committee met on September 15th. At the meeting, the Committee reviewed project closeouts for eight projects, including three implementation projects and five planning projects. Mr. Cheng reported that all of the planning projects were successfully completed and that all of the implementation projects successfully secured sustainable funding.
Regional Councils Committee Report	Ms. O'Quinn recognized Mr. John King, Chair of the Program Performance and Evaluation Committee to provide a report for the Committee. Mr. King reported that the Committee had not met since the June meeting of the Board. Mr. King noted that several members of the Committee had since rolled off of the Board and that the Committee has worked to add new members. Mr. King reported that Mr. Joel Griffin and Mr. Bill Dotson had both volunteered to serve on the Committee.
Information Items	Ms. O'Quinn recognized Ms. Dunnigan to provide an overview of the information items. Ms. Dunnigan noted that the Board packet included a summary of the FY26 Maximum Regional Per Capita Carryover Allowance balances and one DHCD administratively approved project.
Adjournment	The meeting was adjourned.

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