

Minutes
Advisory Committee on International Trade
Virginia Economic Development Partnership
June 1, 2021
Electronic Meeting via Zoom Meeting Platform
Richmond, VA 23219

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Mike Ligon, Chairman of the VEDP Advisory Committee on International Trade.

Members Present: Bob Feeser
 Nick Jiannas
 Mike Ligon
 Stuart Malawer
 John Milliken
 Secretary Bettina Ring
 David White
 James Xu

Members Absent: Tag Greason
 Ned Masee

Staff Present: Stephanie Agee
 Lindsey Bertozzi
 James Canup
 Nathan Day
 Jason El Koubi
 Carolyn Elliott
 Karin Sun
 Sandi McNinch
 Mary Wood

Guests Present: Franklin Della Pia
 Tom Plutt
 Carl Shultz

Welcome

Chairman Ligon welcomed everyone to an electronic meeting of VEDP's Advisory Committee on International Trade. He said that due to the nature of the state of emergency declared by the Governor regarding COVID-19, it is unsafe for this Committee to assemble in a single location. Because an in-person meeting is unsafe and we wish to discharge our lawful purposes, duties and responsibilities, we are permitted by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, as amended by the State Budget, to meet by electronic means without a quorum of our members being physically assembled at one location.

Chairman Ligon noted that the Committee members were gathered in a Zoom environment that is open to the public. The agenda suggests that the Committee will enter into a closed meeting

for a portion of our meeting. When the Committee is ready to enter into a closed meeting, the Committee members and VEDP support staff necessary to support the closed meeting will leave this public Zoom environment and gather in a separate Zoom environment. When the closed meeting is concluded, the Committee members will rejoin this public Zoom environment and the public portions of the meeting will continue. Should anyone from the public get disconnected from the public Zoom environment and be unable to re-engage, he or she should call (804) 393-0290 and speak to Lindsey Bertozzi. Chairman Ligon said we will do our best to re-engage and will halt the public portion of the meeting until the connection can be re-established.

The Chairman then shared a reminder of a few things that will be different from the in-person meetings:

- Everything on the public Zoom environment will be recorded and the recording will be posted on VEDP's website.
- All votes will be taken by roll call.
- During the public comment period, any member of the public wishing to make a comment may simply unmute and speak at that time, or use the Chat function and ask to be given an opportunity to speak.
- Likewise, during the meeting, Committee members may simply unmute themselves to speak or use the Chat function.

Public Comments

Chairman Ligon solicited for public comments. There were none.

Review and Approval of April 6, 2021 Meeting Minutes

After review of the April 6, 2021 minutes, Chairman Ligon asked for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made by David White to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Nick Jiannas. Sandi McNinch, VEDP General Counsel, conducted a roll call for approval of the minutes. The Committee unanimously approved the minutes via the roll call.

Yeas: Bob Feeser
 Nick Jiannas
 Mike Ligon
 Stuart Malawer
 John Milliken
 Secretary Bettina Ring
 David White

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Tag Greason
 Ned Masee
 James Xu (absent for vote)

Review and Approval of May 10, 2021 Meeting Minutes

After review of the May 10, 2021 minutes, Chairman Ligon asked for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made by Bob Feeser to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Stuart Malawer. Sandi McNinch, VEDP General Counsel, conducted a roll call for approval of the minutes. The Committee unanimously approved the minutes via the roll call.

Yeas: Bob Feeser
 Nick Jiannas
 Mike Ligon
 Stuart Malawer
 John Milliken
 Secretary Bettina Ring
 David White
 James Xu

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Tag Greason
 Ned Masee

Chairman Ligon commented that the ACIT had a good meeting in May with Senator Warner and feels that the Committee has the support of other senators. There is the possibility of having a meeting with Congressman Beyer in the future and Chairman Ligon thanked John Milliken for making contact with the Congressman.

Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority: Update on Passenger and Cargo Traffic via Virginia's International Airport.

Stephanie Agee introduced Carl Schultz who is the acting Vice President for Airline Business/Development with the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA). Mrs. Agee said that the ACIT was interested in the movement of goods in and out of Virginia and noted that the movement of people is also very important. She summarized Mr. Schultz's experience.

Carl Schultz gave an overview of the airports managed by MWAA, noting that they continued to serve the traveling public during the pandemic. Their team ensured the safety of workers and passengers, following COVID health and safety measures. Safety measures such as social distancing, sanitizing stations, plexiglass, etc., will stay in effect even as COVID requirements are loosened.

Mr. Schultz said that there are increasing passenger seats in 2021 and the hope is to get back to 2019 travel levels. He noted some comparisons between regional airports BWI and DCA. IAD has secured 13 new and expanded routes in 2021 on one new airline, Air Senegal. There has been an increase in traffic to and from Africa.

Mr. Schultz noted that cargo was critical during the pandemic (cargo in belly of aircraft). There has been a good recovery in cargo, even faster than passenger. He noted that IAD domestic service is the strong point for MWA, with 103 non-stop destinations leaving from or arriving into the airport. International service continues to lag and he hopes to see international service increase soon, especially during the summer months. IAD's international services include 52 non-stop destinations. He noted that key business travel factors include getting people back into the office, for business and government leaders to authorize business travel, and for borders to reopen.

Stuart Malawer was interested in getting more data on cargo, such as value and volume of cargo coming through airports vs. the Port of Virginia. Mr. Schultz said that they use WiserTrade to track this information and, while the data is a bit delayed, he will get his info and share it with Stuart Malawer.

Bob Feeser noted that there were changes in the nature of cargo post-pandemic. Mr. Schultz commented that during the pandemic there has been a shift in the makeup of the cargo, due to increased ecommerce, as well as some vaccine traffic and different supplies coming in from India.

David White said that Africa may be a point of strategic development for MWA. He asked if there were any other markets of strategic priority. Mr. Schultz replied that Africa was a key market and there was a lot of ethnic travel in southern Africa as well as India, Asia and Latin America. Some areas of the world that are expected to recover travel at a slower rate include India, China, and Asia.

Nick Jiannas was interested in data on air freight rates and trends as he has seen air freight rates go up recently. Mr. Schultz said that he would check with the Airport Authority for further information on this topic.

Chairman Ligon said that there was a huge building up when the Africa Opportunity Act was in effect. He wanted to know if this was something that MWA would support. Mr. Schultz said that the MWA was not directly connected with this but works with lots of industry groups that support and champion on behalf of the airports, etc. Chairman Ligon said that this was something that the ACIT can take up later.

Stuart Malawer commented that there is a foreign trade zone around Dulles airport and wanted to know if this has helped. Mr. Schultz said it is a minor player and few large companies use this. There is not a lot of interest to expand the foreign trade zone.

Bob Feeser requested Mr. Schultz to talk about airport capacity and the shift from work to leisure travel during the pandemic. He also asked if there is an opportunity to increase business-related cargo. Mr. Schultz said that passenger capacity is expected to return to pre-pandemic levels after October when airline restrictions expire. Hopefully, the restrictions will not renew, and traffic will increase to around 90% pre-pandemic levels. He explained how United Airlines is ramping up their passenger traffic by increasing the number of departure banks in July and, then again, in the fall/winter time period. Mr. Schultz said while they are not expecting constraints on the number of planes, there is a shortage on cargo warehousing space, especially cold storage at airports. Presently, tractor trailer systems are being used and they are looking into increasing cold storage at airports.

Stephanie Agee asked Mr. Schultz if he could talk about any construction projects either at Dulles or Reagan. He commented that at DCA, Gate 35X is gone and a new 14 gate concourse is there now. He shared that the Dulles Silver Line continues to be worked on with service expected around February of next year. It is hoped that Dulles will have more expansions after traffic levels return.

Stephanie Agee thanked Mr. Schultz for participating in the meeting and said that they are looking forward to working with him in the future.

Closed Meeting – VEDP International Trade Plan Discussion

Chairman Ligon requested that the Committee move into a closed meeting. A motion was made by Bob Feeser to move into a closed meeting and was seconded by Nick Jiannas. Sandi McNinch, VEDP General Counsel, voiced the following motion for adoption by the Committee to enter into a closed meeting. The following motion was unanimously adopted by the Committee via roll call vote conducted by Sandi McNinch.

I MOVE THAT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE VIRGINIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP AUTHORITY CONVENE A CLOSED MEETING:

PURSUANT TO VIRGINIA CODE §2.2-3711(A)(39) TO ENGAGE IN A DISCUSSION OR CONSIDERATION OF PROPRIETARY INFORMATION, VOLUNTARILY PROVIDED BY PRIVATE BUSINESS PURSUANT TO A PROMISE OF CONFIDENTIALITY FROM A PUBLIC BODY, USED BY THE PUBLIC BODY FOR BUSINESS, TRADE, AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OR RETENTION; AND

PURSUANT TO VIRGINIA CODE §2.2-3711(A)(50) TO ENGAGE IN A DISCUSSION OR CONSIDERATION OF THOSE PORTIONS OF VEDP'S STRATEGIC PLAN, MARKETING PLAN OR OPERATIONAL PLAN, THAT MAY RELATE TO TARGET COMPANIES, SPECIFIC ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES AND STAFF FOR MARKETING ACTIVITIES, AND SPECIFIC MARKETING ACTIVITIES THAT WOULD REVEAL TO THE COMMONWEALTH'S COMPETITORS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS THE STRATEGIES INTENDED TO BE DEPLOYED BY THE COMMONWEALTH, THEREBY ADVERSELY AFFECTING THE FINANCIAL INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

Yeas: Bob Feeser
 Nick Jiannas
 Mike Ligon
 Stuart Malawer
 John Milliken
 Secretary Bettina Ring
 David White
 James Xu

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Tag Greason
 Ned Masee

Back in Open Meeting, Certification of Closed Meeting followed by Roll Call Vote

Following the closed session, Sandi McNinch, VEDP General Counsel, voiced the following resolution for adoption by the Committee:

WHEREAS, THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE VIRGINIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP AUTHORITY HAS CONVENED A CLOSED MEETING ON THIS DATE PURSUANT TO AN AFFIRMATIVE RECORDED VOTE AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE VIRGINIA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT; AND

WHEREAS, THE ACT REQUIRES A CERTIFICATION BY THIS COMMITTEE THAT SUCH CLOSED MEETING WAS CONDUCTED IN CONFORMITY WITH THE ACT;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE COMMITTEE CERTIFIES THAT, TO THE BEST OF EACH MEMBER'S KNOWLEDGE, (I) ONLY PUBLIC BUSINESS MATTERS LAWFULLY EXEMPTED FROM OPEN MEETING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE ACT WERE DISCUSSED IN THE CLOSED MEETING TO WHICH THIS CERTIFICATION RESOLUTION APPLIES, AND (II) 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 BY THE COMMITTEE.

Yeas: Bob Feeser
 Nick Jiannas
 Mike Ligon
 Stuart Malawer
 John Milliken
 Secretary Bettina Ring
 David White

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Tag Greason
 Ned Masee
 James Xu (absent for vote)

Chairman's Comments

Chairman Ligon said that something to think about is how can the Committee capitalize on infrastructure funds being discussed in Washington. He said this ties back to earlier congressional discussions. He encouraged the Committee to help position Virginia for those infrastructure funds.

Chairman Ligon announced that he was retiring from Universal Leaf at the end of this month. He is looking forward to working with the ACIT in the future per his recent reappointment letter.

Stephanie Agee said that this was the last ACIT meeting for Carolyn Elliot as she, too, is retiring from VEDP as of July 1, 2021. She asked the Committee to join her in thanking Carolyn and wishing her well.

The next ACIT meeting will be on August 3, 2021 and could be in-person or virtual, to be advised.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:06 p.m.