

Minutes
Advisory Committee on International Trade – Sub-Committee on Communications
Virginia Economic Development Partnership
October 4, 2024

Microsoft Teams

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Mike Ligon, Chairman of the VEDP Advisory Committee on International Trade.

Members Present: Bob Feeser
Anne Marie Lacourse (Virtual)
Mike Ligon, Chair

Staff Present: Stephanie Agee
Lindsey Bertozzi
Julie Richmond
Mary Wood

Welcome and Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Mike Ligon welcomed sub-committee members and VEDP staff to the meeting at 10:04 a.m.

Public Comments

Chairman Ligon solicited for public comments. There were none.

ACIT Advisory Sub-Committee Comments

Stephanie Agee commented that since the last ACIT meeting in September she had been working with VEDP's Marketing and Communications team to develop a Trade messaging campaign. It was agreed that although VEDP utilizes multiple communications platforms, social media would be the best vehicle for messaging. Bob Feeser voiced his agreement with this approach. Chairman Ligon suggested focusing on the message format and content first before deciding which platform to utilize.

Ms. Agee described some of the methods suggested for communicating to various audiences the benefits of trade to Virginia and the Committee members added their own ideas while endorsing these:

- Focusing on social media as a platform to share messages – using both the main VEDP accounts and VEDP International Trade accounts on LinkedIn
- Sharing schedule of social media posts with ACIT members so they can repost, comment, and share with their networks using their own voices

- Utilizing the CNBC “Best State for Business” designation in conjunction with messaging about the benefits of trade
- Talking points sheet outlining the specific benefits of trade to Virginia which can be used by Committee members, shared with media, and with legislators
- Sharing content from the forthcoming study on the impact of trade for Virginia and images and content included in the 2025 Beyond Virginia calendar produced by VEDP that will feature Virginia exporting businesses
- Pitching stories of VEDP Trade clients and case studies on their international success to editorial boards of publications around Virginia; including ACIT members in these stories and their voices around why trade is impactful to Virginia
- Utilizing publications by trade organizations such as the World Trade Organization to provide additional content to share in social media posts and other communications

Following the discussion, Ms. Agee remarked on next steps. A talking point sheet will be developed as soon as the trade impact study is available, toward the end of the year. The study was commissioned by the Virginia Chamber Foundation and VEDP will work with them on communicating the results of the study to the public and stakeholders.

In conclusion, Chairman Ligon suggested that members of the sub-committee each work on a paragraph about trade from their specific lens of experience, to be circulated before the next ACIT meeting on November 12.

- Ms. Lacourse – the importance of export compliance
- Ms. Agee – the past efforts of VEDP Trade Missions
- Mr. Feeser – the benefits of Virginia’s trade-related infrastructure, including the Port of Virginia and Dulles Airport

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.