

**Minutes
International Trade Committee
Virginia Economic Development Partnership
November 30, 2017
VEDP Office – 901 East Cary Street, 9th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219**

Call to Order/Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 pm by Hampton Dowling, Chairman of the International Trade Committee. Each person introduced themselves.

Members Present: Hampton Dowling, Bob Feeser, Basil Gooden, George Judd, Mike Ligon, Stuart Malawer, Art Moye, John Pullen, James Xu via phone

Members Absent: None

VEDP Staff Present: Lindsey Bertozzi, Jason El Koubi, John Elink-Schuurman, Carolyn Elliott, Paul Grossman, Monica Sadie, Diane Thomas, Theodora von Hohenstaufen Noll, Mary Wood

Guests Present: None

Public Comment Period

Chairman Hampton Dowling solicited public comments. There were none.

Approval of Minutes from November 2, 2017 Meeting

Chairman Dowling made a motion to approve the minutes. Vice-Chairman, George Judd seconded and the motion passed.

Chairman's and Vice-Chairman's Update

Chairman Dowling thanked Paul Grossman and his staff for the set-up of Podio, a communication platform to be used by the Trade Committee. Documents and presentations will be posted on this site for advanced viewing before meetings and as a means to reduce paper flow.

Chairman Dowling requested the International Trade Committee members send him their thoughts as to how this committee will function, the priorities and perspectives of Trade, relationships to be brought forward and the structure. Time will be set aside at the January 2018 meeting to view the input from the committee members. The next meeting will be on January 18, the same day as the VALET Graduation/Orientation event at the Omni Hotel. All International Trade Committee members are invited to attend the VALET Program Graduation Luncheon on January 18, from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., prior to the Committee Meeting. Chairman Dowling plans to attend the January 17, 2018, VEDP Board Meeting.

Vice-Chairman Judd stated that he and Chairman Dowling attended the VEDP Board Meeting on November 17, 2017, and gave the VEDP Board a view of the International Trade Committee's charter and its view on the ecosystem of economic development and International Trade. Mr. Malawer asked Mr. El Koubi who appoints the VEDP Board. Basil Gooden confirmed some of the members are ex-officio.

Summary of VEDP Strategic Plan Process

Chairman Dowling said Jason El Koubi emailed a draft of the Strategic Plan the day before Thanksgiving Holiday, asking for input by Monday morning. Chairman Dowling and Vice-Chairman Judd submitted input on Saturday in order to meet the Monday deadline. Mr. El Koubi stated that the response for feedback was incredibly helpful and said that the Trade Committee adds value to VEDP. A number of items in the executive summary will be adjusted, some items need more explanation and other ideas can be incorporated in future updates to the Plan. Mr. Malawer asked Mr. El Koubi who the strategic plan goes to. Mr. El Koubi replied it goes to JLARC and various legislative committees.

Review and Discussion of International Trade Programs

Chairman Dowling turned the meeting over to Paul Grossman, International Trade Vice President, for an overview of Trade programs. Mr. Grossman relayed that all presentations/documents would be available after the meeting on Podio. Mr. Grossman started the overview by explaining how economic development teams from different states/cities had visited Virginia's International Trade team to learn about its various programs. Some that have visited are the states of Georgia, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina and Tennessee as well as phone calls with Singapore, Quebec and the country of Georgia. Mr. Pullen asked why Trade shares information with other states on how we run our programs. Paul Grossman replied other states request to visit our Trade group in order to learn how we do it, adding that other states cannot usually replicate our programs because they do not have the infrastructure needed to make these same programs work.

Global Network/Research

Lindsey Bertozzi, International Trade Assistant Vice President, presented the Global Network/Research service of International Trade. Secretary Gooden asked if there was a charge for research done for Virginia companies. Mrs. Bertozzi explained the fees for the different research items. Vice-Chairman Judd added that research is a valuable part of the VALET program. Mr. Feeser wanted to know if International Trade ran out of funds, would it be able to provide Research. Lindsey Bertozzi replied, yes, that with three Research employees, secondary research could still be performed. Mr. Feeser asked if clients have to be members to use International Trade's services. Mrs. Bertozzi replied, no, that International Trade serves all Virginia companies. Chairman Dowling then asked if the Global Network consultants were steady, i.e., stay onboard with International Trade for long periods of time. Lindsey responded that some of the consultants have been with Trade for many years

STEP Grant Program

Monica Sadie, Associate International Trade Manager, presented the STEP program, explaining the Program components. A positive aspect of STEP is that it uses federal funds to assist Virginia companies. The down side is that because it is a federal program, there is a lot of reporting that has to be done.

Mr. Pullen asked about businesses coming into Virginia and having funds available to help them. Mr. Grossman explained that the FDI segment of VEDP helps businesses locate into Virginia. International Trade helps Virginia companies export their products and provides available funding to assist them. Jason El Koubi elaborated further in regard to measuring success, stating that International Trade is certainly a big part of VEDP's success but that there are other parts of VEDP that contribute to the success.

REP (Regional Export Program)

Diane Thomas, International Trade Manager from Abingdon, explained that REP is a rolling admissions year program with 50 companies participating each year. This program requires companies to write a plan with goals. Secretary Gooden asked how companies are identified. Mrs. Thomas replied that it takes a lot of work on the Trade Managers' part. She said that word-of-mouth is the best way to get companies interested in the program. Referrals are important, too, but face-to-face contact is what gets the job done.

Trade Missions

Mrs. Thomas continued by explaining Trade Missions. When a slide was shown outlining the Trade Mission process, Chairman Dowling asked who does the actual, behind the scenes work to organize a Trade Mission. Mr. Grossman commented that it was someone not managed by himself. This change was made several years ago. Mr. Moyer commented this would seem to be a complication.

Mr. Grossman stated that he and Mr. El Koubi spoke with Florida and Georgia this week about their trade missions. Their trade missions are completely different from Virginia's trade mission programs. Mr. Grossman said to be careful when you hear the term Trade Mission because it is different in various states. Chairman Dowling asked if there was any down-side to a Trade Mission. John Elink-Schuurman, commented that follow-up after a Trade Mission is critical. The Trade Manager is the coordinator for the Trade Mission and handles the follow-up work. Chairman Dowling asked if, other than money, is there another resource that could help International Trade. Mr. Grossman replied that more manpower is needed, citing Hampton Roads as an example.

Trade Show Program

Mary Wood, Program Manager, explained the Trade Show Program. The results from a Trade Show can take months to come forth. Chairman Dowling asked if there was a way to improve the process of collecting the results from trade shows. In order to request more money, the Committee would need to give the Finance Chairman an ROI.

Global Defense Program

Theodora von Hohenstaufen Noll, Defense Program Manager, presented the Defense Program and gave illustrations of the important roles Virginia defense companies play in global defense. It was also explained how funding for the Global Defense Program has shifted from federal dollars to state dollars.

VALET Program

John Elink-Schuurman, VALET Program Manager, presented the VALET (Virginia Leaders in Export Trade) program, noting that VALET is not a program for start-ups. Mr. Feeser asked about the manpower for VALET. Mr. Elink-Schuurman and Mr. Grossman explained that there are two VALET managers with the state divided into regions for VALET purposes.

VITAL and Trade Partners

Mrs. Bertozzi explained that VITAL (Virginia International Trade Alliance) is designed for new to export companies. It is an initiative that partners with Virginia's public universities, industry associations and the Virginia Chamber of Commerce to serve their member companies as they expand international sales.

Mr. El Koubi asked how Trade manages relationships with Trade partners. Mrs. Bertozzi explained the process to select a Trade partner, including three referrals each year in order to stay onboard as a partner. Mr. El Koubi wanted to know how Trade says "no" to someone when they want to be a partner. Mrs. Bertozzi explained that this is not a problem.

Vice-Chairman Judd asked whether Agriculture measures their export promotion efforts. Mr. Grossman replied that Agriculture offers some of the same services as Trade, such as research and trade shows.

Wrap-up of Trade Overview

Mr. Grossman thanked the Committee for their time. What they just heard and saw was the recipe for Virginia. It works for Virginia. No other state has a Defense or VALET program. Trade has lots of ideas as to how to make the programs even better. Mr. Grossman stated that the Committee's questions during this meeting have been captured and will be addressed at the next meeting.

Upcoming Meeting Dates through First Half of 2018

January 18, 2018 (after VALET luncheon)

February 21, 2018

March 22, 2018

April 26, 2018

June 7, 2018

Presentation of Podio

Mary Wood demonstrated PODIO, showing how to access documents. Everything on PODIO can be subject to a FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) request. Chairman Dowling would like for PODIO to be used by Committee members as a means to keep paper handouts at a minimum.

Adjournment

Chairman Dowling requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Moyer motioned for the meeting to be adjourned. Mr. Feeser seconded. Meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m.

Respectively submitted,



Paul H. Grossman, Jr.
Vice President, International Trade
Virginia Economic Development Partnership