



Virginia Israel Advisory Board

Office of the Governor

Minutes of Board of Directors' Meeting

December 1, 2015 10:10 AM to 11:45 PM, House Room 2, Richmond, Virginia

Attended in Person: Irv Blank, Jeffrey Brooke, Bob Budoff, Mary Rae Carter (for Maurice Jones), Mel Chaskin, Donald Ferguson (OAG), Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn, Daniel Fogel (Director of Communications Richmond Federation), Joel Kanter, Julie Krachman, Chuck Lessin, Abby Moore, Jay Myerson, David Oblon, Kevin O'Holleran, Ralph Robbins, Aaron Roberts, Richard Samet

Attended Via Conference Call: Aliza Asher, Marc Broklawski, Aviva Frye, Darcy Hirsh, Jay Klebanoff, Joyce Slavin-Scher

1. Mel Chaskin, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM.
2. Board Minutes of July 21, 2015 were presented. There were no corrections.
3. Mel discussed the timing of Board Appointments and asked everyone whose term was expiring to let him know if they wished to be reappointed. He also mentioned that there was one opening for a gubernatorial appointment. In order to apply or reapply for an appointment, one must go online to the Secretary of the Commonwealth's web site and fill out a VIAB form. He said that the Senate and House appointees are expiring and that any individuals appointed by the General Assembly can also call Mel for further information.
4. **Annual Report.** Mel reported that everyone should have received the 2015 Annual Review by email and that it was posted on the web site.
5. **Virginia Tech, SW Virginia and other Business Development updates.** Ralph reaffirmed that the VIAB initiative in the Agro Technology sector with emphasis on Southwest Virginia, is succeeding. The VIAB has created a platform for professional support, funding opportunities, and access to market which Ralph refers to as "the ecosystem for success".
6. **Project Jonah** - The company involved in Project Jonah has secured a \$10 million grant conditional on meeting certain benchmarks including matching private funds. Other funds of at least \$1 million have also been awarded in Tazewell County and additionally Virginia Tech was involved in securing \$500,000 from Federal and local sources for R&D that will have a direct impact on the project. Ralph reported that during our last Board Meeting, we reported with confidence that the company purchased 105 acres of land in Tazewell and that the program was gaining momentum. Approximately three weeks after the meeting, there was a significant shakeup in the management structure of the US Company. According to Ralph, "We are concerned about the new management's ability to secure the private equity necessary to launch the project successfully." While Ralph remains in contact with the management team in Israel, the new local management team has decided not to seek the assistance of the VIAB for continuity of the project. "Neither the U.S. management team nor the VEDP kept the VIAB in the loop for some unexplained reason." Ralph will reach out to the VEDP for more information and will report to the Board during the next Board meeting.

7. **Virginia Chickpea Project** - We continue to determine how to best transition this project from a VSU project to a Virginia Tech Project. Ralph explained how the VIAB is trying to restructure the effort to include a Phase I (VSU to complete in 2016) and a Phase II (led by Virginia Tech). The Phase II will involve a consortium of the best breeders and technologies from both Israel and Virginia Tech. We will strive to have VSU involved as well. When the project design is finalized, the VIAB will present it to Secretary of Agriculture Todd Haymore.
8. **Project Milkman – Mini Dairies.** Ralph and the Virginia Tech delegation were introduced to this at the Israeli Agrotech program in Tel Aviv in April 2015. Dr. Joe Marcy, the head of the Virginia Tech Delegation and head of the Virginia Tech Food Sciences program, was introduced to the company which designs and produces mini/micro dairies. The VIAB is coordinating negotiations between the Israeli company and Dr. Marcy at Virginia Tech to establish a demonstration site in the new Virginia Tech Food Sciences building. We will report progress at our next Board Meeting.
9. **Project Sunshine - Smart greenhouses.** We are currently searching for farmer/businessmen to partner with an Israeli greenhouse company to develop and execute a demonstration site. We see a great positive social and economic impact resulting from this program - transitioning tobacco farmers to the cash crops of fruits, flowers, and vegetables and growing the economies of towns in Virginia's depressed southwest areas. Vice Chairman Chuck Lessin reported that his research and connections have shown that the Richmond climate is good for ornamental plants and our Israeli greenhouse contact is exploring this aspect of the program. Another possible opportunity is in medical cannabis using Israeli technology of breeding out the illegal THC from the plants.

Ralph further elaborated that Southwest Virginia is especially suited for greenhouses because of its height above sea level. We expect that Virginia will be the Headquarters of the operation and be the staging/distribution/warehouse location for the company. Ralph explained that the concept is that of an "information franchise model", where the Israeli company offers all aspects needed for the greenhouse buyers to succeed including: design, training, support and marketing activities. We are also exploring offering this program to non-farmers including veterans since agricultural experience is not necessary to build and operate one of these greenhouses - training is offered by the Israeli company that is working with us on this program.

10. **EPC – On site water treatment.** We introduced this company to SW Virginia where they recently won an RFP in Tazewell, Virginia where they will be installing their first treatment facility. The Israeli company has contracted with a local construction company who will build the infrastructure and install the facility. Thus, as Ralph explained, approximately 50% of the total cost of the unit will go to a local contractor. The company has also committed to assembly/warehousing and potential construction in Tazewell when they expand sales to other Virginia locations as well as across the United States. Ralph pointed out that "VIAB has been working with EPC for 14 years to bring the company to Virginia and this program is an example of the follow-up required for a program to be successful."
11. **Teaming Agreements Update** – Ralph reported that the VIAB is working closely with the Norfolk City Government EDA (Larry Lombardi) to promote the VIAB "Teaming Program." VIAB's goal here is to identify ten Norfolk Companies that fall into special U.S. government contracting categories such as **Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB)** and introduce them to 10 Israeli companies with the goal of creating teaming agreements. According to Ralph, the program can offer smaller to medium Israeli companies with a unique way to enter the Federal Contracting market and will offer Virginia economic development opportunities as these companies will need a local presence to compete and execute the contracts.
12. **Project Paper: NCC Production** - Ralph reported that the VIAB is working with Secretary of Agriculture Todd Haymore's office and the VEDP to explore the possibility of helping an Israeli nanotechnology company to establish a site which would provide support at the back end of and in cooperation with the

Tranlin paper facility being constructed in the Richmond Area. Tranlin is the U.S. subsidiary of a leading Chinese pulp and paper company. NCC nano particles are transparent, very strong and are excellent for production of novel eco-friendly materials. The Israeli company has developed a proprietary technology for extraction of NCC from wood pulp and paper production waste streams, and thus presents an excellent potential partnering opportunity for Tranlin.

13. **“Triangulation Program”**: This is a unique program that gives Israeli companies the ability to enter both the US and the Chinese market through a joint Dao Ventures and VIAB program. The VIAB recruited 3 Israeli companies to participate in a Dao Ventures Competition. The effectiveness to attract Israeli companies to Virginia via the program will be tested and analyzed.
14. **Dulles to Tel Aviv Direct Flight** – VIAB has re-energized its quest for a direct route between Israel and Dulles because of several factors that created a window of opportunity. The VIAB is working with the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority which recently joined Ralph in Israel for a meeting with top management of EL AL. One of the tools presented to the two potential airlines, EL AL and United, is a VIAB generated petition supporting a non-stop flight from Dulles to Tel Aviv which has been widely circulated via electronic media. The window of opportunity for this flight is based on airline consolidation and the vacuum that is created by the suspension of the direct Philadelphia-Tel Aviv flight.
15. **Governor’s Trip to Israel**. The economic development trip is scheduled for July 13-15 directly after the Farnsworth Air Show. The VIAB will work with the VEDP to develop the Governor’s schedule.
16. **Minds in Motion Update** – The Sandler family of Virginia Beach is sponsoring research that will demonstrate the uniqueness of the MIM program to teach tolerance between diverse communities through activities increasing self-confidence. The Sandler’s connected the VIAB with the Meyers-JDC-Brookdale Institute in Jerusalem, a professional institute that performs research on social issues. A meeting will be held in Virginia Beach later in December to discuss the project. The leadership of the Brookdale Institute, the Minds in Motion Program, and the VIAB will participate in the meeting. While we hope the research can begin with the next program in March 2016, there may be challenges in receiving necessary approvals from the Ministry of Education in Israel. Ralph told the Brookdale Institute that we can provide letters of support from the State if they thought it would help facilitate the process.

Ralph also reported that we have received information commitments from the Tidewater Federation in support for the “operational” aspects of the Minds in Motion Program. We are still seeking support from the other Federations in Virginia and the local community in Israel.

New Business

17. Mel reminded the Board about the Virginia Ethics form that most members are required to fill out. Those who are required to fill it out should have received an email and they are due on 12/15. If anyone has questions they should call Mel’s assistant, Kim Clark. Kim will also be updating the Board List with a new Greater Washington Federation President- Bob Zahler.
18. Mel asked everyone to note the upcoming meetings on their calendars:
 - March 29, 2016
 - July 26, 2016
 - November 29, 2016

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45.