



Virginia-Israel Advisory Board

Office of the Governor

Minutes of Board of Directors' Meeting

July 26, 2016 10:10 AM – 11:20 PM, House Room 2, Richmond, Virginia

Attended in Person: Jeff Brooke, Bob Budoff, Mary Rae Carter (Secretary Jones's office), Mel Chaskin, Donald Ferguson (OAG), Daniel Fogel (Richmond Federation), Darcy Hirsh, Sophie Hoffman, Julie Krachman, Larry Krakover, Chuck Lessin, Robin Mancoll, Abby Moore, Kevin O'Holleran, Ralph Robbins, Nathan Shor, Steven Valdez

Attended Via Conference Call: Aliza Asher, Marc Broklawski, Jerome Chapman, Mark Dreyfus, Harry Graber, Joel Kanter, Jay Klebanoff, Jay Myerson, Eric Steigleder (Secretary Holton's office), David Tenzer

1. Mel Chaskin, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM.
2. The Board Minutes of March 29, 2016, were presented. There were no corrections.
3. **Minds in Motion (MIM) Update.** Ralph introduced Brett Bonda, Managing Director of the Richmond Ballet, to talk about the Minds In Motion program just completed in Israel, as well as to discuss the Richmond Ballet's plans for the future. In 2010 the first Richmond Ballet MIM residency in Israel took place at the Beit Yitzhak Israeli-Jewish school and community. The major goal of the program was to instill self-confidence in all participants – both students and adults. In 2014, they expanded to include the nearby Arab-Israeli school and community of Qalansuwa. The 2016 program was the third year of the joint residency program. Brett talked about how relations have improved between the two communities as a result of the program.

He also discussed a new stage of the program, a professional study that is being conducted by The Brookdale Institute, Israel's leading center for applied research on social policy and services, serving Israel, the Jewish world, and the international community. Their mission is to increase the effectiveness with which society addresses critical challenges to enhance the well-being of Israel's citizens, and expand opportunities for its most vulnerable members. The findings of the research will be applicable to Virginia as well. The study is being funded by Annie Sandler of Tidewater, Virginia.

The Richmond Ballet hopes to use this study to show the benefits of expanding the program in Israel and Virginia. Brett and Ralph appealed to both the Virginia Israel Advisory Board members, the Jewish Federations, and other individuals to help fund the program. Brett stated that all contributions should be made to the Richmond Ballet's 501(c)3 account and designated specifically for the Virginia-Israel program. Contact at the Richmond Ballet for more information: Cat Studdard, the Director of the Minds in Motion Program, (804) 344-0906, cstuddard@richmondballet.

4. **Governor's Visit to Israel** – July 9-11, 2016. Ralph reported that Secretary of Agriculture Todd Haymore and Secretary of Trade Maurice Jones joined the Governor of Virginia, Terry McAuliffe for

an intensive two days of business development meetings. While McAuliffe and his senior team were on the ground in Israel for only 46 hours; there were significant results. Highlighting the trip was a Memorandum of Understanding signed by Virginia Tech and the Strauss Group.

Other achievements of the visit included:

- Over 20 high-level meetings by the Governor's senior staff
- Understandings by five companies that they will expand or initiate activities in Virginia in the coming twelve months.
- Four announcements including a \$10 million investment in ImmunArray, a Virginia-Israel life science company.
- A potential "Virginia-Israel Life Science" fund that will be earmarked for expansion of Israeli companies into Virginia.

Ralph added that the activity generated by the Governor's visit could result in the creation of 500+ jobs in Virginia over the next 12 - 36 months. The Governor is fully engaged in our mission and offered the resources of his staff to help VIAB close deals and bring tax dollars and jobs home to Virginia.

Other visits and activities during the Governor's visit:

- a) **Project Cycle** – Ralph reported that this innovative municipal solid waste treatment which converts waste to valuable plastic products was of great interest to the Governor. There will be a decision within six months on whether this plant will open in Virginia bringing over one hundred jobs to the commonwealth. Total number of jobs in the first phase: 106
- b) **Project Innovation** – The Governor met with a cyber-security innovation center which would work closely with Virginia universities -- product sales and support from this development could add 300 jobs within five years.
- c) **Yissum Innovation: Hebrew University** – Listened to four presentations of companies that are in advanced stages of development. All were in the agro-technology field and could expand in Virginia. There are potential co-funding opportunities including combining funding from Israel via Yissum with Virginia's special funding programs including Tobacco Commission, VCEDA funding, State/local and the CIT.
- d) **Strauss & Virginia Tech MOU** – This agreement will enable the development of programs to bring high-quality commercialization-ready companies to Virginia with agro-technology as the principal direction. There are currently five projects that are real possibilities with the expectation that five more will be added to the pipeline for 2017. VIAB will be closely monitoring and pro-actively following up on this program to ensure that all parties remain engaged with the goal of signing agreements to bring these companies and jobs to Virginia.
- e) **Energix and Alony Hetz** – Energix is an alternative energy company with wind and solar projects in Israel and Europe. They want to enter the US alternative energy market and prefer to get into a market with less competition than California and other western States. They will visit Virginia in August to explore opportunities.

- f) **Reception** – 250 people joined the Governor and VIAB and VCEDA representatives at a cocktail reception in Tel Aviv. Three announcements were made by the Governor about Israeli companies expanding their businesses in Virginia:
- a. **Sensilize** which develops value added payloads for UAVs using multi-spectrum sensing.
 - b. **EPC** announced their entry into the US for their on-site waste treatment facilities. The first unit will be in Tazewell, where the equipment will enable a county recreational park to open. The company plans to assemble and perhaps to manufacture their product in Tazewell County thereby creating 20 – 50 jobs.
 - c. **TESSA** announced it is donating a \$500,000 micro-dairy, the first of its kind in the U.S., to Virginia Tech Food Science and Technology Department. In addition to serving the students as a teaching tool, the site will also be used as a demonstration site as part of future US development activities in the United States.
- g) **Exigent Announcement** – Seven years ago the VIAB was instrumental in developing a program that attracted Israeli Life Science companies to the VCU Biopark in Richmond. While the Governor was in Israel, the company announced a \$10 million investment into ImmunArray – one of the businesses that were brought to Richmond through VIAB’s efforts. Exigent plans to explore additional possibilities to expand in Virginia and VIAB will organize the visit.
- h) **Oran Safety Glass (OSG)**. The Governor visited their Israeli facility in Kibbutz Zuba. The VIAB has been working with the company and other state agencies to develop a plan for potential expansion in Virginia. Ralph announced that according to the company, the final expansion plans for the company will be announced within the next six months.
5. **El Al Meeting** – The Governor met with El Al and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority to make a case for a direct flight between Dulles and Tel Aviv. VIAB continues to work towards this goal. We were able to present some new data including statistics about customers who drive from New York to Dulles instead of flying. The VIAB believes that many of these drivers could add to the potential passenger numbers for a direct flight because of the convenience of a direct flight. The VIAB will continue to follow up with the MWAA.
6. **Other New Business:**
- Two new Board members were introduced: Jerome Chapman and Michael Gillette.
- There was a short discussion on BDS.
7. Mel asked everyone to note the upcoming meetings on their calendars:
- November 29, 2016
 - April 4, 2017
 - July 18, 2017
- The meeting was adjourned at 11:20.