



# VIRGINIA ISRAEL ADVISORY BOARD

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## Virginia Israel Advisory Board

*Office of the Governor*

Minutes of Board of Directors' Meeting

March 27, 2018 House Room 1, Richmond, Virginia

**Attended in Person:** Irv Blank, Jeffrey Brooke, Bob Budoff, Mel Chaskin, Larry Davidson, Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn, Will Frank, Aviva Frye, Joel Kanter, Julie Krachman, Larry Krakover, Chuck Lessin, Kevin O'Holleran, Lesley Shinbaum (Secretary Lee's office), Daniel Staffenburg (Richmond Federation) Julie Strauss, Steven Valdez

**Attended Via Conference Call:** Michael Gillette, Dov Hoch, Robin Mancoll, Dave Tenzer

1. Mel Chaskin, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.
2. The Board Minutes of November 28, 2017 were presented. They were accepted as presented.
3. Legislative Actions: Mel Chaskin briefed the Board on the proposed changes to the VIAB charter that had been discussed in the November 28, 2017 meeting. Legislation has been passed in the Virginia Legislature to approve changing VIAB's charter and the bill is currently awaiting the Governor's signature. If the bill is signed into law it will take effect July 1, 2018. The changes include:
  - a. Moving the VIAB office from the Executive branch to the Legislative branch
  - b. VIAB will be reporting to the Virginia Secretary of Commerce
  - c. All staff and Board members will have to be Virginia residents
  - d. VIAB will be required to meet with the Governor annually
  - e. The VIAB budget will remain at its current level of \$215,000. Any unspent dollars will transfer from the Executive branch to the Legislative branch and then be restored to the VIAB.
4. Board Membership: the change in charter includes changes in representation from the legislative branches and the Governor's office. Mel will work individually with each

Board member to discuss how his/her status will change if the bill is signed by the Governor.

5. New Hire in Israel –Of the three candidates that were submitted to the Governor’s Office for approval only one is still in the running due to the hiring delay. Mel Chaskin will be recommending that the remaining candidate, Dov Hoch, be hired as the full-time Executive Director effective July 1, 2018. Dov will be moving to Virginia and is already a U.S. citizen and a product of U.S. universities. He has already been working for VIAB as our Israel representative. Chuck Lessin reported that the VIAB office may be moving from the Fairfax County EDA office to the Richmond area.
6. Program Updates: Chuck Lessin reported that he was recently back from Israel where he met with Dov Hoch.
  - a. Dov Hoch has met with Pure Blue Fish – this aquaculture company wants to expand to Southwest Virginia. Their plan is to grow yellowtail which is a more profitable fish than the normally farmed tilapia. Dov is helping them examine the options in Virginia.
  - b. Ecotech is ready to move forward on moving to Virginia. This company recycles tires in an environmentally friendly way.
  - c. Chuck participated in an update on Minds in Motion – Delegate UVA roundtable – the UVA McIntyre and Darden School’s of business at UVA were in Israel for a roundtable with Oran Safety Glass and Sabra Dipping.
  - d. Board Member Aviva Frye reported in her role as a representative for Energix. The Energix Executives told Aviva that VIAB was a major reason for their decision to seriously look at Virginia.
  - e. The CEO of EPC is coming to Virginia. Chuck Lessin will be hosting him and Ralph Robbins in Richmond. EPC is looking to expand into offering their unique water treatment to residential development. Chuck is setting up meetings with the Virginia DEQ.
  - f. Ralph Robbins is doing some consulting with the state of Israel – helping Israeli companies to expand into the United States. Since he has a relationship with us we are expecting that this will be very good for our mission.
7. Update on Minds in Motion – Delegate Eileen Filler Corn reported that the program went very well. She was able to get the MIM Israeli artist delegation time with legislators both in Washington D.C. and in Richmond as well as tours of the state houses. She emphasized that these artists donated their art and paid for all of their own transportation and housing. Eileen arranged for Virginia First Lady Pam Northam and

the delegation to visit the Richmond Ballet. The delegation visited schools where the program is operating as well. Robin Mancoll reported that Tidewater was hosting the delegation on April 22 when they will be selling any artwork that did not already sell. Mel thanked Binns of Williamsburg and their CEO Tom Smith for all of their hard work on the project. Hopefully at the next Board meeting there will be a report on the total funds raised.

8. Update on Bird Foundation. Julie Krachman will be attending the BIRD Foundation meeting in Washington DC in June. Board Members were encouraged to invite any business contacts they might have that could be interested in the BIRD Foundation. If they have any proposed invitees they need to get their names and business affiliations to Julie Krachman by the end of April.
9. The next Board Meetings are scheduled for 7/24/18 and 11/27/18.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 AM.