



VIRGINIA ISRAEL ADVISORY BOARD

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Virginia Israel Advisory Board

Office of the General Assembly

Minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting

May 6, 2025, 10:00 AM

*****DRAFT*****

Attended in person:

Chairman Mel Chaskin
A.J. Nolte
Irv Blank
Bob Budoff
Dov Hoch
Zach Jacobs
Aaron Roberts

Attended online:

Jeffrey Bialos
Jeffrey Brooke
Josh Goldberg
Sam Kaufman
Jack Kennedy
Allison Lawrence
David Leon
Gershon Litt
Jay Myerson
The Honorable Juan Segura
Steven Shapiro
Nathan Shor
Steven Skaist
Rob Slotnick
Denver Supinger
David Tenzer
Charlette Woolridge

Board meeting minutes

https://drive.google.com/file/d/10bl4x1Gre_targXfjalh3j8sEZFcZhYs/view?usp=drive_link

1. Chairman Mel Chaskin Convened the meeting:

The Chairman noted in the context of the budget agreement approved on May 2, 2025, The Governor and both legislative bodies worked together to increase the Virginia Israel Advisory Board's budget beginning in Fiscal Year 2026.

The Chairman opened the discussion to review the minutes of the VIAB BOD meeting December 10th 2024. The minutes were reviewed and will be posted as such on: viab.org

The Chairman welcomed two new Board Members: Aaron Roberts and Steven Shapiro

2. Executive Director Dov Hoch gave an update to the board:

i) **Dov spoke with the new board members** in advance of the meeting and is updating them and plugging them into VIAB projects

ii) **Dov presented the VIAB Award: "Thomas Jefferson's Commerce with all Nations"** to: **outgoing Secretary of Commerce and Trade Caren Merrick** and thanked her for the close collaborations during her term of service. Dov noted he was engaged with the new **Secretary Juan Pablo Segura** before he entered his role and is engaged on several undertakings since he assumed the position of Secretary

iii) **Economic Development upcoming activities**

Select USA - Department of Commerce annual Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) event with 3000 companies in National Harbor. 30 Israeli companies of whom Dov met with in advance and will introduce the near-term prospects to the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) under the Virginia Secretary of Commerce at the event. **The Governor** & Secretary of Commerce and Trade will attend the event. **Senior VEDP** executives will attend an Israeli embassy event along with 50 Israeli executives.

In the global context, the significance of Israeli companies as investors in the US, Dov noted: Israel is #1 out of 100 countries in the Mid East & Africa in the three core categories of Direct Foreign investment (i) Greenfield projects, (ii) R&D & (iii) Job creation - per the U.S. Dept. of Commerce statistics.

U.S. Dept Commerce sourcing Va. contractors for multi-billion-dollar Israeli infrastructure projects.

\$1.5M R&D grants for partnerships between Israeli and Virginia companies A focus for next year will be to promote the grants along with a Commonwealth- Wide program with 12 Virginia public and private economic organizations. The grants are funded by the US and Israel governments. Last year VIAB facilitated three \$1M grants to Israeli Virginia R&D partnerships – equivalent to 12 times the VIABs budget.

3. **Annual Report – Dov presented the report and VIAB in person to 30 legislators** from both bodies & both parties.

There was an overwhelming, supportive response with strong interest to learn more on the Commonwealth-wide & district specific activities. The report is a single document describing VIAB's activities & impact available On VIAB site / NEWS / VIAB News

4. **New Project: Israel and Virginia in the context of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the declaration of independence** in partnership with the VA250 Commission. This will be a core focus for FY '26. Elements include:

- a. **Book** – Digital & Print;
- b. **Testimonials** of Virginians affinity for Israel (Video & online)
- c. **VA. Map of Israel / Biblical names & events;** Towns with biblical names Jerusalem; Shiloh; Zion Crossing; Salem; Israel Mountain
- d. **Timeline:** Virginia – Israel 1776 - 2026 Digital and evergreen
- e. **Events:** Book Launch & Speaking tours; Israel Mountain Va Activities

5. The Chairman announced the next board meeting is scheduled for July 22, 2025
6. The Chairman asked members if they had any issues they wanted to raise.
7. The Chairman concluded the meeting.