

MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
| THURSDAY, AUGUST 12, 2021 |

A meeting of the Frederick County Economic Development Authority was held on Thursday, August 12, 2021, at 8:00 A.M. in the County Administration Building, First Floor Conference Room, 107 North Kent Street, Winchester, Virginia.

PRESENT: Judy McCann-Slaughter, Doug Rinker, Stan Crockett, Susan Brooks and Heather McKay. Rick Till participated by phone from home for a medical reason and Board members present approved his remote participation.

STAFF: Patrick Barker, Wendy May, Allison Dongoski and Donna McIlwee, Frederick County Economic Development Authority; Jay Tibbs, Deputy County Administrator; and Michael Bryan, Attorney

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Chairman Rinker called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the June 3, 2021, meeting were presented.

Motion made, seconded and carried to approve the minutes by the following recorded vote:

J. Stanley Crockett	Aye
Susan Brooks	Aye
Bryan Fairbanks	Absent
Heather McKay	Aye
Doug Rinker	Aye
Judy McCann-Slaughter	Aye
Rick Till	Aye

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Barker submitted the following reports:

Checking Account - Bank of Clarke County as of May 31, 2021 - \$132,085.29
Savings Account - Scott & Stringfellow as of May 31, 2021 - \$1,295,158.35

Checking Account – Bank of Clarke County as of June 30, 2021 - \$5253.20
Savings Account – Scott & Stringfellow as of June 30, 2021 - \$1,295,169.33

On motion of Mr. Crockett, seconded by Ms. McCann-Slaughter, the Treasurer's Reports were approved by the following recorded vote:

J. Stanley Crockett	Aye
Susan Brooks	Aye
Bryan Fairbanks	Absent
Heather McKay	Aye
Doug Rinker	Aye
Judy McCann-Slaughter	Aye
Rick Till	Aye

FUNDING REQUEST BY THE LORD FAIRFAX SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SBDC) FOR BILINGUAL COUNSELING SERVICES TO FREDERICK COUNTY BUSINESSES

Mr. Barker stated the Center is requesting funding (\$15,000) from the EDA to offer bilingual counseling services in Spanish. Over the past year with additional City EDA funding, they have provided such services to businesses in the City of Winchester. Annually, the Frederick County EDA provides funding (\$28,000) from its general fund allocation to the SBDC.

He then introduced Christine Kriz, Executive Director of the SBDC, who gave a presentation on services they offer and demographics on the Frederick County Hispanic/Latino community.

Ms. Kriz introduced Diana Patterson, a local business owner and staff member of the SBDC who provides bilingual translation and interpretation services related to business and legal matters. Ms. Patterson then gave an overview of the program's efforts and accomplishments.

GROCERY STORE ATTRACTION

Mr. Barker gave an update on the EDA's efforts to attract additional grocery stores to our area. Each targeted grocery store received a mailing in early July and, subsequently, staff performed follow-up outreach with varying levels of connection. Two expressed some moderate interest, meaning they were actively looking for locations in a larger geographic area, which included Frederick County. Conversations with 4 elicited what could be deemed long-term interest, meaning there are no current plans to enter the market but our area is part of their long-term market consideration. Many of these stores have yet to consider expansion further west in Virginia and/or have evaluated Frederick County but a decision was made to focus on other markets. One contact expressed no interest in Frederick County in part due to their corporate shift of capital spending on e-commerce facilities.

Ms. McCann-Slaughter asked if Mr. Barker offered to give these chains a tour of the area to become more familiar with the market. Mr. Barker stated 80% of those contacted had already been to the area.



Mr. Rinker inquired if Mr. Barker felt the County's population needed more growth in order to be considered and could the County fast-track construction of a grocery store should one of the chains express an interest in opening a location here. Mr. Barker stated he did not get the impression that Frederick County's population was an obstacle and that he did not anticipate permitting to be an issue as most of the desired areas for a grocery store are already zoned for them.

Mr. Barker stated staff will continue to attempt to connect with 5 remaining grocery stores and will follow-up with those expressing some level of interest in Frederick County at an appropriate interval.

FREDCO EATS: RESTAURANT WEEK

Staff members, Wendy May and Allison Dongoski, gave a brief overview of this new initiative explaining it seeks to showcase Frederick County's growing restaurant scene by sharing the stories of local restaurants, featuring the diversity of local menus, increasing camaraderie amongst Frederick County eateries, and elevating the County's overall restaurant sector by sharing the successes of individual restaurants. This initiative also relates to the Talent Attraction Marketing Strategy for the Northern Shenandoah Valley.

A survey of County restaurants is currently underway to determine the week it will be held, goals restaurants hope to achieve through participation, framework of the event, and how the success of the event will be measured. The FredCo Eats: Restaurant Week logo and website are under development. Once launched, all related information will be available at FredCoEats.com.

Ms. McCann-Slaughter suggested a food truck park could be a future idea.

Mr. Rinker encouraged the event be held when fresh produce is in season and Ms. McKay stated that since locally grown produce is not available until later in the year, maybe Restaurant Week could be held twice a year.

EPA BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT GRANTS

Mr. Barker reported that, at its February meeting, the Board expressed interest in partnering with the City of Winchester and Clarke County on a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant program that provides funding to assist regions in assessing or cleaning up Brownfield sites, which are properties where there is a confirmed presence of hazardous substances, pollutants and contaminants, or the suspected presence of them. The grant can be used for environmental assessments, cleanup efforts or community engagement, to name a few. It was recommended by Draper Aden that the City serve as the lead given their past involvement with Brownfield grants.



Draper Aden held two meetings of the EDA directors to commence the grant application. Each EDA was tasked to acquire needed information and upon receipt of the information, Draper Aden will start compiling the application.

PROGRESS REPORT ON ACTIVITIES FROM JOINT MEETING

Mr. Barker provided the following update on the planned activities which were presented and discussed at the joint meeting.

- Activity #1 | Partner with appropriate local and regional partners to create solutions for current and projected workforce needs
 - Implementation of Shenandoah Valley Talent Solutions Strategy (digital aspects – website and resource showcase)

UPDATE | Website should launch in September, project specialist (County EDA) has developed a social media campaign to coincide with website launch, funding for initial campaign secured through Virginia Tourism Corporation through Shenandoah County.

- Assist the Workforce Initiative Board with project implementation
 - A workforce model for manufacturing, information technology, and construction similar to the existing career model which focused on medical careers
 - Enhanced community outreach/advocacy to parents, guardians, coaches, teachers, counselors

UPDATE | Workgroups continue development of workforce models and revised proposal sought for enhanced outreach to shift the way our community views career opportunities.

- Activity #2 | Continue refinement of the business sites program
 - Loan Program is in place
 - Waiting to finalize a Business Ready Sites Loan Program Agreement with one or more of the characterized sites (Artillery Business Center & Carbaugh Business Center)
 - Commencement of Renaissance Boulevard is a key component for development of those sites
 - Complete additional site characterizations when additional sites matching the approved criteria come to market



UPDATE | Started the internal process to identify additional sites suitable for characterizations through proactive outreach to property owners and direct communication from property owners.

- Activity #3 | Cooperative marketing match program with agribusiness entities
 - Creation of a program where two or more agribusiness entities agree to market an event/activity together (i.e. peach/apple festival) as a result the EDA would provide a cash match and Lord Fairfax Small Business Development Center would provide assistance with the marketing plan.

UPDATE | Staff has identified agribusinesses to receive call team visits and plans to start scheduling visits in the near future.

- Activity #4 | Expansion of retention activities
 - Identify “gazelle” businesses to add to call team rotation and other retention activities. “Gazelles” are very fast-growing companies. These types of companies maintain consistent and rapid expansion of both employment and sales.

UPDATE | Analysis completed on data identifying potential gazelles in Frederick County. Next step will include broadening business retention visits and deciding best avenue to complete visits.

- Activity #5 | Collaborative marketing with Winchester Regional Airport
 - Partner with the Winchester Regional Airport (WRA) to identify realistic development opportunities for WRA, develop marketing materials and a marketing plan and engage companies with large government portfolio and direct government user.

UPDATE | Plan to start development of postcard mailers with tailored pitch points in late August, per conversation with WRA’s executive director.

Staff is seeking general discussion and feedback from the Authority regarding the activities to date.

Ms. McCann-Slaughter stated she thought a collaboration with Frederick Water, along with the airport, was also desired. Mr. Barker stated the EDA does collaborate with Frederick Water, as well as the local electric cooperatives and others, regarding infrastructure.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES 4TH QUARTER

Mr. Barker distributed and reviewed this report.



SUCH OTHER BUSINESS AS MAY COME BEFORE THIS AUTHORITY

Mr. Rinker reminded Board members of upcoming EDA activities:

WoW – September 10th at Shenandoah University

Widget Cup – date not selected yet

Manufacturing Day – October 1st

Manufacturing Month – October 2021

Employer Expo – October 21 at Jim Barnett Park War Memorial Building/Rec Center

Mr. Crockett asked if the Lord Fairfax Community College Small Business Development Center receives any State funding.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before this Authority, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Doug Rinker
Chairman

Jay Tibbs
Secretary

