

MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
| THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2021 |

A meeting of the Frederick County Economic Development Authority was held on Thursday, October 7, 2021, at 8:00 A.M. in the County Administration Building, Board of Supervisors Room, 107 North Kent Street, Winchester, Virginia.

**PRESENT:** Judy McCann-Slaughter, Doug Rinker, Susan Brooks, Rick Till and Heather McKay.

**STAFF:** Patrick Barker, Wendy May, 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 September 2, 2021, meeting were presented.

On motion of Ms. McCann-Slaughter, seconded by Ms. Brooks, the minutes were approved by the following recorded vote:

J. Stanley Crockett	Absent
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 report:

Checking Account - Bank of Clarke County as of August 31, 2021 - \$200,772.45  
Savings Account - Scott & Stringfellow as of August 31, 2021 - \$1,295,201.89

On motion of Ms. McKay, seconded by Ms. McCann-Slaughter, the Treasurer's Report was approved by the following recorded vote:

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

### **EDA STRATEGY 2021-2022**

Mr. Barker explained that the EDA Strategy, as approved by the EDA Board, helps guide staff as they pursue Frederick County's economic development activities. The EDA Board reviews and adopts the Strategy annually to reaffirm and/or modify the overall goals and objectives. At its May meeting, the EDA Board responded to several strategic questions and, based on those responses, staff solicited feedback from the EDA Board at its June meeting regarding any suggested revisions to the EDA's mission and main goals. Consensus was both should remain as presented.

To complete the Strategy update, staff restructured the objectives and measurements for each main goal to provide more direct connectivity between the two, thus providing staff more clarity to evaluate effectiveness. The overall objectives remain with some exceptions to remove redundancy. The EDA Board was provided a copy of the Economic Development Strategic Plan prior to this meeting.

Mr. Barker stated staff is seeking the Authority's comments and adoption, if appropriate, of the overall document.

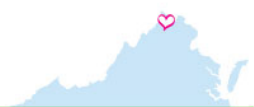
Ms. McCann-Slaughter stated that, as evidenced by comments made at Barrett Machine's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, the EDA is doing a good job of letting our community know of opportunities locally. She also inquired if we could bring partners together with the hospital to discuss the bio-technical sector since employment growth for this sector is the largest.

Mr. Till asked if there were any new metrics in the Strategy since this is his first involvement as a Board member.

Mr. Rinker stated the Strategic Plan is the backbone of the EDA's goals.

Ms. McCann-Slaughter stated she would like to delay any action on the Plan to a later date so the document can be closely examined by EDA Board members.

Mr. Rinker instructed Board members to send any major comments on the Plan to Mr. Barker prior to the November Board meeting.



## **TARGET BUSINESS STUDY**

Mr. Barker gave an update on baseline information for this study before staff goes too far into the process. Last year, the EDA decided to move forward with the Target Industry Analysis and authorized staff to execute a contract with IBM. After working steadfastly over several months, staff was unable to negotiate agreeable contract terms with IBM. Staff then contacted the second ranked vendor to explore the possibility of having them complete this work but, due to the vendor's significant project load, they were unable to take on our project.

As a result, staff embarked on replicating as much of the requirements of the RFP as possible with the end goal remaining to quantitatively and qualitatively identify the County's best fits relative to traded-sector industries, which are those industries that would most benefit from Frederick County's assets and would be willing to expand and/or relocate to the area, as well as identifying those industries that bring value to Frederick County in the form of investment, jobs, payroll and local purchasing.

He then presented preliminary results from Step 1, which was completed using two main data sets---JobsEQ and Conway Analytics. JobsEQ, created by Churma Economics, is a software tool the EDA staff utilizes that provides online access to demographic, industry, occupation, and employment data. Conway Analytics provides a global database of corporate facility expansion projects, providing easily understandable, low-cost access to critical business intelligence, including global project tracking and lead signals for expanding or relocating corporations.

To arrive at priority targets, he reviewed the filter system staff executed. Before proceeding further, staff is seeking Board agreement they are on the right track.

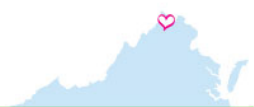
Ms. Brooks asked if we were looking at what the working population is doing, i.e., driving out of the area or working locally. Mr. Barker stated it is hard to actually identify those traveling outside of the area.

Board members agreed staff's work to date is on track.

## **PROGRESS REPORT ON ACTIVITIES FROM JOINT MEETING**

Mr. Barker gave the following progress report:

- 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** | Official launch pushed to late October/early November. County EDA Project Specialist has developed a social media campaign to coincide with website launch. Funding for initial campaign secured through Virginia Tourism Corporation.

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

**UPDATE** | Workgroups continue development of workforce models with a desired report date in December. Proposal for enhanced outreach to shift the way our community views career opportunities paused to focus on workforce models.

- Activity #2 | Continue refinement of the business sites program
  - o Loan Program is in place
  - o 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
  - o Complete additional site characterizations when additional sites matching the approved criteria come to market

**UPDATE** | Characterizations of 4 additional sites will commence shortly.

- Activity #3 | Cooperative marketing match program with agribusiness entities
  - o 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 start scheduling visits after the new Existing Business Manager is in place.

- Activity #4 | Expansion of retention activities
  - o 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** | No activity until new Existing Business Manager is hired. Analysis completed on data identifying potential gazelles in Frederick County. New Existing Business Manager 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** | Draft postcard mailers provided to WRA's Executive Director for review. Timeline for next steps will come post his review. Airport property included in the upcoming site characterization study.

#### **EPA BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT GRANTS**

As information, Mr. Barker reviewed changes the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency recently released to the application for their grants, which provide funding to assist in assessing or cleaning up of Brownfield sites. The most applicable difference between this year's Request for Application (RFA) and last year's RFA relates to eligible groups. The previous plan was to submit as a coalition between Clarke County, City of Winchester, and Frederick County. The EPA is no longer accepting coalition grant applications and is only accepting "community-wide" applications. After some discussion with Draper Aden, the conclusion was reached that the most conservative approach that will result in the strongest proposal would be for the "community" to consist of Frederick County and Winchester, with Frederick County as the lead applicant, which will result in Frederick County serving as the fiscal agent.

Following discussion with County Finance, it is recommended the grant monies come to Frederick County instead of the EDA. Staff would advise there could be a net cost to the County/EDA to participate and there are upfront costs that would be recouped through the grant. The County will be sent an invoice for services by the environmental consultant, typically ranging from \$20,000 to \$50,000 at a time. The County would submit for reimbursement with a very short turnaround for reimbursement of all invoices.

No action is required by the EDA.

#### **SUCH OTHER BUSINESS AS MAY COME BEFORE THIS AUTHORITY**

Mr. Rinker congratulated Mr. Barker on his selection as a recipient of a Cardinal Award from the Virginia Economic Development Association. This award is the most prestigious honor bestowed by VEDA to deserving members in recognition of their leadership in the field of



economic development, outstanding professional accomplishments and exceptional service to the organization.

Ms. May announced several upcoming EDA events: Makers Month is being celebrated the entire month of October; The Employer Expo on October 21; and FredCo Eats January 31 – February 6, 2022.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before this Authority, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m.

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Doug Rinker  
Chairman

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Jay Tibbs  
Secretary

