

MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
| THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2022 |

A meeting of the Frederick County Economic Development Authority was held on Thursday, February 3, 2022, 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, Heather McKay, and Bryan Fairbanks.

**STAFF:** Patrick Barker, Shayla Rickard, 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 January 6, 2022, 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	Aye
Heather McKay	Aye
Doug Rinker	Aye
Judy McCann-Slaughter	Aye
Rick Till	Absent

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Mr. Barker submitted the following report:

Checking Account - Bank of Clarke County as of December 31, 2021 - \$2908.56  
Savings Account - Scott & Stringfellow as of December 31, 2021 - \$1,465,770.11

Ms. McCann-Slaughter asked if different investment options for the Scott & Stringfellow account had been explored so that a higher interest rate could be earned. Mr. Tibbs responded that he had spoken to an investment advisor at Truist

and other options depend on how much risk clients are willing to take. He agreed to explore more investment options.

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

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

### **TARGET BUSINESS STUDY**

Mr. Barker explained that staff has now moved into the industry drivers and project needs steps of this study. As a reminder, the effort's end-goal is to quantitatively and qualitatively identify the County's best fits relative to traded-sector industries, being those industries that would most benefit from Frederick County's assets and would be willing to expand and/or relocate to the area. In addition, this analysis will identify those industries that bring value to Frederick County in the form of investment, jobs, payroll and local purchasing.

Next steps involved acquiring background information for the further filtering of the identified sectors. First, industry drivers and location criteria were determined. Next, prototype project needs and specifications were developed. Then, benchmark locations for Frederick County were identified. Results from those steps for the EDA's review and comment were presented as shown below:

Overall, the primary selection factors (industry drivers) are as follows:

- Quality, availability, and cost of target workforce
- Proximity to key customers and suppliers
- Availability of target real-estate solution (size, cost, control, water/sewer/rail connectivity, etc.)
- Tax and regulatory climate
- Transportation infrastructure
- Operating costs (electricity, insurance, workers comp, etc.)
- Quality-of-life factors (public K-12 options, regional amenities, crime rate, etc.)
- Accurate and thorough RFI, RFP, and proposal requests

Staff will note the priority of selection factors varies from sector to sector; however, quality and availability of workforce is almost always one of the top three considerations.

The following lists some secondary selection factors (industry drivers):



- Availability and quality of customized recruitment and training solutions
- Customized (discretionary) incentives
- By-right financial incentives
- Level of state-and-community support (e.g., fast-track permitting)
- Personal preferences of executives involved in decision process (e.g., affinity for a particular place)
- Strong business retention program to assist with corporate intelligence and after care
- Creative and innovative solutions to key project decision factors

What size of land? How many people will a company hire?? What is the capital investment? The answers to these questions will provide some guidance to understanding the impact of a project and thus their potential selection as a promising industry segment for Frederick County, VA. Information from Conway Analytics' database on corporate expansion projects will shed some light on some of these answers. Staff performed analysis of the Conway database with two key filters, only those corporate activities September 2019 to September 2021 and only NEW locations East of the Mississippi River.

Sector	Capital Investment	New Jobs	Acreage
Corporate Services	\$10.0*	244*	60.2*
Information Technology	\$159.8	22	65.0
Finance & Insurance	\$7.8	145	Insufficient data
BioScience	\$36.6	64	81.5*
Advanced Manufacturing	\$46.0	71	131.0*
Food & Beverage	\$74.0	171	121.6

\*NEW location Entire of United States

When deciding on site location, companies need to gauge regional/community advantages and disadvantages to determine the most competitive regions/communities for their operations. Frederick County, VA needs to understand its competitors (benchmark locations) in order to construct a strong value proposition. Through discussion with some key site consultants and individuals at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, the following are generalized benchmark locations for Frederick County, VA.

- NY 81 Corridor
- PA 81 Corridor
- Hagerstown/Martinsburg
- North VA 81 Corridor
- Middle VA 81 Corridor
- South VA 81 Corridor
- Northern Virginia Region
- Richmond Region



- Columbus, OH
- Cincinnati, OH
- Greensboro I-74
- NC I-95
- NC I-73/74
- SC I-95

Ms. Brooks referenced a recent State of Commonwealth Report for Population Growth as a good tool for how to be more forward thinking.

Mr. Rinker stated that workforce needs are not always dependent on the economy.

Mr. Barker stated the study will continue with the next steps of gathering comparative data and benchmark with competing locations, identify key strengths (selling points), and identify weak points to be improved.

#### **VIRGINIA BUSINESS READY SITES PROGRAM RESULTS**

Mr. Barker reviewed results of site assessments for four business sites in Frederick County as performed by Draper Aden Associates, a licensed civil engineering firm. Those sites were the Winchester Regional Airport, the Milton Ray site, Stonewall Industrial Park, and the Payne property. Most all of the studied business sites were categorized as Tier 2 and a full report on each site was provided to the EDA Board. Staff will touch base with contacts for each property to confirm the items needed for progressing to the next tier do not exist. Any information discovered will be provided to Draper Aden. Staff was seeking any questions/comments on the report.

Ms. McCann-Slaughter asked if all sites needed the same items to be completed before they could progress just to the next tier. Mr. Barker will check with Draper Aden.

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

Mr. Barker gave the following update on the status of the planned activities which were presented and discussed at the January 13, 2021, joint meeting with the Board of Supervisors:

- 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** | Site is complete enough for launch with temporary job portal complete. A social media campaign will commence once new Project Specialist has been properly onboarded and reviewed site and plan



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

**UPDATE** | Workforce model activities paused until secure new chair and vice chair for Workforce Initiative Board. This should take place in 30 days.

- 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 Drive is a key component for development of those sites.
  - Complete additional site characterizations when additional sites matching the approved criteria come to market.

**UPDATE** | Characterizations of four additional sites completed.

- 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** | Some visits to be scheduled shortly, but likely after a planned regional information and idea session for agribusinesses organized in partnership with Tourism Board, Clarke County and VA Tech Cooperative Extension.

- 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** | Existing Business Manager is commencing business retention visits and deciding best avenue to complete visits.

### **JOINT MEETING WITH FREDERICK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Mr. Barker stated the 2014 MOU between the EDA and Board of Supervisors calls for an annual discussion and review of the Board of Supervisors’ expectations for economic development. The last meeting was held on January 13, 2021. Like the last time, staff recommends



structuring an agenda for this year's joint meeting to provide an overview of core EDA functions and recent projects, then an update to planned activities from last year. He then presented the following recommended topics:

- General overview of EDA's mission
- Talent strategy implementation
- Targeted Business Analysis status update
- FredCo Eats
- Grocery store attraction status update
- Update to planned activities from last year

While much forward movement has been accomplished on the planned activities from last year's meeting, they require a long-term focus. Staff recommends these activities continue as the planned activities for the ensuing 12 months. Staff suggests adding an item that addresses any recommended actions to enhance Frederick County's competitive nature toward promising segments identified in the Targeted Business Analysis.

He stated staff is seeking EDA Board feedback on the proposed agenda and planned activities for the next 12 months.

Ms. McCann-Slaughter suggested a collaboration with Frederick Water be added.

EDA staff will coordinate with County Administration to secure a date for the joint meeting.

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

Mr. Barker reviewed upcoming EDA events: Growing Your Agribusiness, February 25; The Widget Cup, April 7; Worlds of Work, April 21-22; Employer Expo, May 25.

Ms. Mays reported receiving good feedback from participants in the recent FredCo Eats event.

Mr. Barker stated there was no update to his contacts with grocery stores.

Due to a schedule conflict, the date for the March EDA meeting needs to be changed. All present agreed to reschedule it for March 10.

#### **ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before this Authority, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 a.m.



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Doug Rinker  
Chairman

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Jay Tibbs  
Secretary

