

Meeting Minutes  
Virtual Meeting  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
April 28, 2020

At a virtual meeting of the Economic Development Authority of York County, Virginia, held on April 28, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. using the Zoom platform, those present were:

R. Anderson Moberg, Chairman  
Vernard E. Lockwood, II, Treasurer  
John Biagas, Secretary  
Harmon J. Coxton  
J. Mark Carter  
Leslie Henderson Schultz

Others present:

Neil A. Morgan, County Administrator  
Mark Bellamy, Deputy County Administrator  
James Barnett, County Attorney  
James W. Noel, Jr., Assistant Secretary and Director of Economic Development  
Melissa M. Davidson, Assistant Director of Economic Development  
Tim Wyatt, Deputy Director of Information Technology  
Amanda R. Ridings, Coordinator of Economic Development

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chairman Moberg.

**ROLL CALL**

A quorum was established with six members present.

**CITIZENS' COMMENT PERIOD**

NONE

**PRESENTATIONS**

NONE

**NEW BUSINESS**

**VA 30 DAY FUND SMALL BUSINESS DISASTER RELIEF GRANT PROGRAM**

Mr. Noel reported that the new Greater Williamsburg portion of the VA 30 Day Small Business Disaster Relief Grant Fund program is moving forward. The program, which will provide grants up to \$3,000 per qualifying business, needs each of the three EDAs to provide \$3333.33 in seed funding. Mr. Noel reminded the members that he had provided this information in an email prior to the meeting and the concept received unanimous approval, however, an official vote must be taken to formalize the decision.

Mr. Noel mentioned that a press release has been done to promote the program and staff has reached out to local news stations, which should provide needed exposure. He also reported that Chesapeake Bank has agreed to match the three EDA's funds, with a \$10,000 donation. There have been additional private contributions, putting the total grant fund at over \$35,000 already. The intent is to continue to grow that amount with more private donations.

Mr. Carter motioned to adopt a contribution of \$3,333.33 to the VA 30 Day Fund from the EDA's Capital Fund.

Mrs. Schultz seconded the motion.

On roll call the vote was:

Yea: (5) Carter, Coxton, Lockwood, Schultz, Moberg  
Nay: (0)

**COVID-19 RECOVERY TASK FORCE**

Mr. Noel reported that staff has had much discussion on the economic recovery of our area from the COVID-19 pandemic and what the county can do to help businesses get back on their feet. He suggested forming a recovery task force to discuss ideas, programs, and priorities and suggested it be comprised of two EDA members, representatives from various businesses and industries, and members of the three local chambers serving York County.

Mr. Morgan stated that we should use this group as more of a resource for information gathering.

Mr. Noel agreed with Mr. Morgan and said that the focus of this group would be to provide insights and ideas for a successful recovery for various industries in the county.

Mr. Lockwood questioned what type of advice we would be giving and where would we be getting our guidance.

Mr. Noel stated it would be similar to what we are doing right now, sharing pertinent information on our website and Facebook that we harvest from source like the SBDC.

Mrs. Davidson reported that we are trying to figure out what the businesses need and how we can actually help them. We can then point them in the direction or create an assistance program for them on our own.

Mr. Noel requested two volunteers from the EDA to be a part of this effort.

Mr. Biagas and Mrs. Schultz volunteered to serve.

#### GRANT REQUESTS – BLOOM LAWN+LANDSCAPE

Mr. Noel presented a request for three different grants from local business owner Daniel Plawski, owner of Bloom Lawn + Landscape, located on Route 17 near Kiln Creek. The requests are for the Business Growth Grant, Commercial Corridor Property Improvement Grant, and the Economic Development Grant Program. The total grant request is for \$22,500, which will be used to make significant improvements to his property. Mr. Noel introduced Mr. Plawski to discuss his plans for the property and use of the grant funds.

Mr. Plawski stated that the company owns four parcels equaling 1.4 acres. Their goal is to create a high end show room on the property, by adding significant landscaping, lighting, and hardscape features. These improvements will require an investment of almost \$100,000 and will significantly improve the property's appearance from Route 17.

#### OLD BUSINESS

##### RIVERWALK LANDING LEASES

Mr. Noel reminded the EDA of their action at the April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting to forgive all rent for all Riverwalk Landing tenants for the months of April and May. He said that June rent would be due soon and that direction is needed on how to respond to relief requests moving forward.

Mr. Morgan stated Mr. Buffa is planning to open Water Street Grill for takeout next week and they are trying to find a way to accommodate employees and customers, so that it doesn't cause congestion on Water Street. He said that within a couple of weeks the County

must be ready to have a larger phased reopening, however, he predicted that the earliest date things would be somewhat back to normal would be July.

Mr. Morgan suggested that staff take the next month to come up with a more long-term assistance proposal, as he is sure there will be an expectation that we do something.

Mr. Noel recommended that we have the Riverwalk Landing Committee meet and come up with a proposal to bring back to the board.

#### BUSINESS GROWTH GRANT MODIFICATION AND RE-FUNDING

Mrs. Davidson suggested that the EDA review the terms of the Business Growth Grant to determine if it would be helpful to expand the scope of the program to help the businesses stay alive and cover COVID-19 related expenses.

Mr. Coxton stated he feels like most businesses are already getting grants from different agencies.

Mrs. Davidson stated that some businesses are still waiting on funding from the government and were looking for something more short term to help. The grant could cover what isn't covered under the Paycheck Protection Program.

Mr. Noel suggested it could be aimed at small businesses that haven't been able to take advantage of the other assistance programs.

Mrs. Davidson suggested having this be a discussion at the first task force meeting. She stated there are funds still available in the Business Growth Grant fund.

#### LAND PURCHASE REQUEST – 410 OLD YORK-HAMPTON HIGHWAY

Mr. Noel stated that Mark Smith, CEO of Smith Electric and Cable, has been holding during the meeting to speak on what he would like to do on the EDA owned property at 410 Old York Hampton Highway. He introduced Mr. Smith to discuss his proposed use of the property and present his request.

Mr. Smith reported that his company moved to York County from Newport News in 2014 and purchased two units in York River Commerce Center. He said that his business is growing and that they want to construct an 8,000 sq. ft. building, as well as a smaller building towards the road, that would to accommodate this growth. Mr. Smith presented his request to purchase the 2.14 acre parcel from the EDA.

Mr. Moberg thanked Mr. Smith for his presentation and said the EDA would discuss the

terms of the sale in closed session and get back to him.

### EVRIFA PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Noel reported that a memorandum was sent out to all of the local Economic Development directors saying that if they would like to participate in the development of the Kings Creek Commerce Center on the fuel farm property, their elected body will need to pass a resolution to that effect. The related state budget amendment passed and the governor signed it. The solar company does want to proceed with the project and would like to close in a September-October time frame. Participation from at least two localities is needed to move forward with the project under the EVRIFA.

### NEW MATTERS

#### MILLER GROUP PURCHASE AGREEMENT MODIFICATION REQUEST

Mr. Noel reported that the Miller Group, which is currently under contract to purchase and develop 3.39 acres from the EDA in Busch Industrial Park, is asking to modify their existing agreement to allow 24 months to get the building constructed after closing, rather than 18 months, as is currently required.

Mr. Barnett said the company made this request about a week ago, stating that due to COVID-19, it may take longer than anticipated to complete the project. He stated that he hopes we can close quickly, after we approve the six month extension.

Mr. Coxton motioned to approve a six month extension, from 18 months to 24 months, for the Miller Group to complete construction of their new building.

Mr. Lockwood seconded the motion.

On roll call the vote was:

Yea: (6)      Coxton, Lockwood, Schultz, Biagas, Carter, Moberg  
Nay: (0)

### FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Chairman duly noted the receipt of the January, February, and March 2020 financial reports.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the March 9, 2020, meeting of the Economic Development Authority of York County were approved by vote as follows:

On roll call the vote was:

Yea: (5) Lockwood, Biagas, Carter, Coxton, Moberg  
Nay:  
Abstain: (1) Schultz

The minutes of the April 7, 2020, meeting of the Economic Development Authority of York County were approved by vote as follows:

On roll call the vote was:

Yea: (5) Biagas, Carter, Coxton, Lockwood, Moberg  
Nay:  
Abstain: (1) Schultz

**CLOSED MEETING**

The Chairman noted it was in his judgment appropriate for the Authority to enter into closed meeting as authorized by the Freedom of Information Act for the purpose of prospective business under Section 2.2-3711(A)(5) and public property under section 2.2-3711(A)(3).

Mr. Coxton moved that the Authority enter into a closed meeting for the aforesaid purpose and that the Authority deemed it necessary, as specified by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, that non-members Jim Barnett, Mark Bellamy, Jim Noel, Melissa Davidson, and Amanda Ridings be present during the closed meeting.

Mr. Lockwood seconded the motion.

On roll call the vote was:

Yea: (6) Biagas, Carter, Coxton, Lockwood, Schultz, Moberg  
Nay: (0)

The Authority entered into closed meeting at 3:16 p.m.

**RETURN FROM CLOSED MEETING**

The Authority returned to open meeting at 3:34 p.m.

**ROLL CALL VOTE CERTIFYING COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 2.2-3711.1 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA**

Mr. Moberg moved that, to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements specified under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were discussed in closed meeting, and that only such public business matters related to prospective business under Section 2.2-3711(A)(5) and public property under section 2.2-3711(A)(3) were discussed during closed meeting.

The Chairman stated if any member of the Authority believed that there was a departure from the requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, that the member was required by law to state his objection prior to the vote, indicating the substance of the departure that in his judgment had taken place. No such objection being raised, the roll call was as follows:

Yea: (6) Carter, Coxton, Lockwood, Schultz, Biagas, Moberg  
Nay: (0)

Mr. Lockwood motioned that the EDA sell 2.14 acres of land at 410 Old York-Hampton Highway to Smith Electric and Cable at the price of \$85,000 an acre.

Mr. Coxton seconded the motion.

On roll call the vote was:

Yea: (6) Coxton, Lockwood, Schultz, Biagas, Carter, Moberg  
Nay: (0)

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS**

Mr. Morgan reported they have developed a three-phased reopening plan for the county, which is consistent with the state and the national plan. He stated that the big challenge will be at the beach, athletic fields, and playgrounds.

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Mr. Morgan reported that the revised County budget is posted on the website. Overall, the general fund expenditures were reduced by 4.7% and there will be no new positions or raises. The entire capital budget has been moved forward a year, which could cause some construction projects to be slowed down. Between now and July there will be a fallback plan, in case the situation declines further, which will include things such as encouraging retirements, additional operating cuts, and salary reductions.

**DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMENTS**

None.

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMENTS**

None.

**MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

None.

**CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

None.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

  
R. Anderson Moberg, Chairman

A Copy Teste:

  
James W. Noel, Jr., Assistant Secretary