

**MINUTES  
ESSEX COUNTY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
June 2, 2022**

A meeting of the Economic Development Authority of Essex County was held on the 2<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2022, with the following present:

Lisa Andrews, Vice-Chairman  
Tim Smith – Treasurer  
David Holt  
Jamie Segar  
Ronnie Sidney  
Also present: Ronnie Gill, Vice-Chairman Board of Supervisors

Absent: William A. Croxton, Chairman

RE: CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Andrews called the meeting to order. A quorum was met.

RE: AGENDA REVIEW

Vice Chairman Andrews moved the guest speaker, Beth Sharpe from Tappahannock Main Street to the top of the Agenda.

RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chairman Andrews said the minutes from the April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting should be changed as follows: the total bank balance should be \$43,747.21 and the committee developed the façade application not Vice Chairman Andrews.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the last EDA meeting held on April 7, 2022, as amended. All AYES.

TAPPAHANNOCK MAIN STREET REPORT

Beth Sharpe Executive Director of Tappahannock Main Street said she plans to hold a business forum in the early fall of this year. Consociate will be the guest speaker and will be doing it for free. The topic will be focusing on social media. The Farmers Market and Third Thursday were very successful. There were issues with the heat during the last Farmers Market and EMS had to be called twice. 110 vendors signed up and 80 attended. Some vendors may have dropped out due to the excessive heat. She will make sure the misters in the Gazebo are turned on going forward.

There were issues with bugs at the Third Thursday event, however, Marty has agreed to work on it. TMS sold 20 tables for the Third Thursday events totaling revenue of \$10,000. That should cover expenses leaving the beverage sales to represent the profit. Ms. Sharpe said volunteers are needed for the Third Thursday event. She hopes the new downtown park will be ready by next year and is thinking about showing outdoor movies there.

The DAW Theater feasibility study should be completed by the end of June 2022. There are some additional funds to hire a fund-raising consultant.

Ms. Sharpe had attended the Main Street Conference and Tappahannock Main Street has achieved accreditation. Ms. Sharpe met with the Chamber of Commerce who need to decide what they want to do and then ask for support.

Vice Chairman Andrews thought the economic summit would bring people together. She would like to see a document showcasing empty buildings. Mr. Gill said the summit was a good start.

Ms. Sharpe said TMS will be meeting with a financial consultant. The consultant is free under the Main Street program. Ms. Sharpe feels that the community is extremely negative, especially in social media. Tappahannock Main Street will address that. The Town needs to finish its masterplan. Sharing information is critical.

#### RE: TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Smith reported that nothing has changed since the last meeting. \$5,000 has been committed to façade grants. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report. All AYES.

#### SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE VISIT

Mr. Gill reported that it was the combined partnership of many groups that facilitated the Secretary of Agriculture's visit to Essex County. The Secretary visited Tidewater Lumber which uses ecofriendly practices. He also toured the Wind winery and ended the day at Hundley seed, which is one of the largest seed companies on the east coast. Essex County received good press coverage on the visit. There are a number of farmers experimenting with cover crops as a method to reduce the use of chemicals and he hopes to invite the Secretary back soon to visit those farmers. Vice Chairman Andrews indicated that there are some very impressive industries in the County, such as breweries and wineries. She thought it would be a good idea for the EDA members to go on more field trips.

#### ECONOMIC SUMMIT

Vice Chairman Andrews stated that the Economic Summit will reconvene in August of 2022. Also, the County Administrator will be hiring a person to focus on Economic Development. She thought the sports complex was a good idea that came out of the summit. Mr. Gill said the County and Town of Tappahannock need to get on the same page regarding a sports complex. He said there needs to be places where the kids can go and play sports.

Vice Chairman Andrews added that the Hampton Inn has a business conference center with spacious rooms which will be an asset to the community. Job Fairs could be held there.

#### RE: OLD BUSINESS

Two façade applications have been completed. Vice Chairman Andrews pointed out the revisions to the façade application which include; another grant cannot be used for matching funds; a timeline needs to be provided; work must be completed within twelve months; facades need to be visible from the street; and the scope is expanded to include the entire County. A motion was made and seconded to approve the amended application. All AYES.

A motion was made and seconded to donate \$500 to Tappahannock Main Street for the Farmer's Market. All AYES.

RE: NEW BUSINESS

Vice Chairman Andrews said the Strategic Planning process will be the EDA's next area of focus. Training will provide a guide and the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission already has a Strategic Plan. She asked for volunteers to develop the plan. The committee will meet on June 8, 2022, at 5p.m. in the offices of Andrews and Andrews, which is located at 235 Main Street in Warsaw, Virginia.

RE: NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the EDA will be held on July 7, 2022.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made and seconded. All AYES. The meeting was adjourned.

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Vice Chairman of the Board, Lisa Andrews