

**MINUTES
ESSEX COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
August 4, 2022**

A meeting of the Economic Development Authority of Essex County was held on the 4th day of August, 2022, with the following present:

William A. Croxton, Chairman
Lisa Andrews, Vice-Chairman
Tim Smith – Treasurer
David Holt
Ronnie Sidney
Jamie Segar

Also present:

Eric Pollitt, Town Manager
Tommy Blackwell, Commissioner of the Revenue
Chris Rhodes, Rappahannock Times
Roy Gladding, Mayor of Tappahannock
Beth Sharpe, Tappahannock Main Street
Kay Carlton, Town Council
George Jennings, Artist
Ken Pollack, Bay Transit
Michael Lombardo, County Administrator
John Harvey, Tappahannock Main Street

Absent:

James L. Acors, Jr.

RE: AGENDA REVIEW

Tommy Blackwell introduced the special guest, Roger Johnson.

Roger Johnson

Mr. Johnson discussed the idea of public/private partnerships. This would be a legally binding document between the county or town and a private sector. It is not just a contract for building but for a long standing partnership.

RE: CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Croxton called the meeting to order. A quorum was met.

RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Croxton asked for the approval of the minutes from the July 5, 2022 meeting. There was a motion and a second. All Ayes.

RE: TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Smith reported that the checking account currently has \$4,725.36. In our 12 month CD we have \$2,580.20. Our 12-15 month \$30,962.46. Totaling \$38,268.02. There was a motion to approve the treasurers report and seconded. All Ayes.

Blossom's Childcare

Chairman Croxton, introduced Luisa Archeoa. He mentioned there may be a façade request. She talked about her child care center, Blossoms Child Care Center. She is starting a Prekinder program to help additional children that are not part of the prekindergarten program through Essex County. She has a curriculum that she has adopted the STREAM program. The problem she has is with advertising but also the look of the building.

Mayor Gladding

Mayor Gladding started by discussing Prince Street. There are three insurances companies involved will be meeting. There is about an 8-10 million dollar loss. He would like to see the cleanup process take place quickly. He asks that people give the owners some space and time to develop the ideas for them to recover. Someone mentioned that they would like to let the owners know that they can reach out to the EDA for help with grants to assist with the rebuilding. Someone asked if this was an isolated event or is this something that the other businesses should be concerned with as to being up to code? Mayor Gladding does not know what caused this fire.

Mayor Gladding also talked about Hoskins Creek. He talked about putting some boat slips and kayak launching sites. He said they are waiting on permitting. County Administrator Michael Lombardo mentioned that the Army Corp will be dredging Hoskins Creek in the fall into next spring. Someone mentioned that the middle peninsula planning commission is looking into acquiring the dredging instruments that would be available for the county to use down the road.

Mayor Gladding mentioned that the YMCA is interested in moving into the fitness center. There is some interest in that and the County is looking into it as well. County Administrator Lombardo stated he is cautiously optimistic.

Ken Pollack

Mr. Pollack is the transit director for BayTransit. They serve 12 counties, rural transportation. They have the Rivahride it is a 1 hr loop from 7am-3pm. The funding is matched by federal and state grant money. They get 50% from the federal and 15% from state. Without the local money we don't get the federal. We asked for \$5,222 from the town but were only able to give \$3,000. Without the additional \$2,222 it comes out to a \$6,600 shortfall. It would mean cutting some service come October. He is requesting the EDA supplement the additional \$2,222. Kay Carlton asked what they charged per ride. Mr. Pollack said that currently they charge \$0.50 per ride. They have a meeting next week to increase the rivahride to \$1.00 per boarding.

Chairman Croxton excused Mr. Pollack so they could have a discussion. Someone mentioned that the EDA is not a funding agency for year after year. If the Town did not come up with the funds in the past

two years the shortfall is only going to grow. She believes the hospital may be a good resource for them. The question was asked what is the county providing. County Administrator Lombardo said that the county has provided their share of \$27,000. He stated that since this is the Rivah Ride which is in town. He is surprised that the town won't cover the additional \$2,000.

The motion was made that they make a resolution to the town to reconsider the additional \$2,000. It was seconded. All Ayes.

New Business

The middle Peninsula Planning Commission met and there is a lot of money for grants and the EDA is well positioned to go out for those grants.

The Virginia Department of Development Partnership and special funding for site development. LaGrange would be a great way to use this. Mr. Lombardo stated that the property owners are now willing to sign so they are restarting that process.

RE: NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 1, 2022.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made to adjourn and seconded. All Ayes

Vice Chairman of the Board, Lisa Andrews