

**MINUTES
ESSEX COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
October 6, 2022**

A meeting of the Economic Development Authority of Essex County was held on the 6th day of October 2022, with the following present:

EDA Members Present:

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

EDA Members Absent:

David Holt
Jamie Segar

Also present:

Connie Dalton
Shiree Monterio
June Monterio
Sidney Johnson
Carolyn Barrett

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 September 1, 2022 meeting be postponed to the next meeting. There was no objection.

RE: TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Smith reported that the checking account currently has \$4,725.35. In our 12 month CD we have \$2,583.78. Our 13-26 month \$30,944.61. Totaling \$38,253.74. There was a motion to approve it was seconded and approved.

Connie Dalton, Planning & Development Tappahannock

Connie Dalton is the new Planning and Development Director for the Town of Tappahannock. She has a heart for building communities. She splits her time between Zoning Director and community development. They are reviewing the comprehensive plan, a downtown revitalization plan, a town park

draft plans, grant funding for the Hoskins Creek project, a grant project from the airport and the library has asked for help with its expansion.

Shiree Monterio, 7 and M Development, LLC

The company is labeling this the Bray's Fork Redevelopment Project. They own about 40 acres in Bray's Fork and are focusing their effort on Parcel C which is about 13 acres. It is between the industrial park and the regional hospital.

The first phase will be called Essex Point at Mt. Clement. It is a mixed use development connecting healthcare and housing. They want to do a sustainable and innovative aging in place community. The improved retirement community will be a place where you can age gracefully with the support of nearby medical services. It will be a planned community with independent and affordable senior housing, centralized wellness and community services, workforce housing, retail, medical office and education.

A rezoning application has been submitted, which must go from Business to Planned Unit Development. The company has also been working with Virginia Housing to make this project affordable. To make the application more competitive and open up for state funding, they have asked the County to approve legislation to designate their area a housing revitalization area.

New Business

Daw Theater Façade App

Randy Shuford stated that they have obtained most of their funds but need help with the Façade. They want to do the front of the building first to show that it is in an active project. They believe that if the front looks good that it will help in the momentum for the rest of the project.

Vice Chairman Andrews asked about already awarding the DAW a grant in the fall. Randy stated they never received a check. Chairman Croxton stated they never consummated that request. Vice Chairman Andrews stated that they need some estimates. Randy stated they are spending about \$30,000 to do the front to rebuild the front, shutters and windows.

Randy stated that City Decorators was doing the work. Vice Chairman Andrews stated that since non-profits could ask for the grant before they spend the funds, the DAW will need to provide proof of the expenditure after completion of the work. Randy stated that they are about \$6,000-\$8,000 short of what they need. Vice Chairman Andrews asked if there was a need for the money. Randy stated it would be nice as they do believe they will be short without it.

Fitz Cabinetry & Design Façade App

Chairman Croxton stated that they received the application with the design for a mural. They have everything that they needed to turn in. Vice Chairman Andrews pointed out that they have done a great job and the building looks great but one of the criteria is that the application is to be submitted before the improvements commence. There was some confusion about which side the mural was to be

painted. It was determined that it is the back side where the mural is near completion. EDA members agreed to discuss the application in closed session.

Ronnie Sydney Pre-Announcement

To enhance tourism, Mr. Sydney had the idea of how the town and county could honor the achievements of singer Chris Brown who was active with the community until 2008. The relationship between the community and Chris Brown has not always been that great. Mr. Sydney wanted to get in contact with him and his family to try and bridge that relationship and find ways to bring him back to Tappahannock. Ideas were to do a Hollywood star on Prince St somewhere, naming a street after him, maybe an honorary diploma, since he was into art perhaps doing a mural somewhere, or maybe a key to the city? If there are other ideas to help promote this idea, Mr. Sydney would welcome them.

Chairman Croxton approximated Mr. Brown's net worth at \$60,000,000 and suggested that he might consider donating \$5,000 to the fire relief fund. It was also suggested for him to donate to the Daw Theater and to receive a star in the pavement in return.

John Harvey, Main Street Update

On October 20, Good Shot Judy will perform for Third Thursday. Trunk or Treat will be free on October 30th from 5-8 and the Hanger will be doing a show as well. Winterfest will be held over two different weekends. They are trying to make it absolutely free. The community Christmas Tree will be at the Essex Museum. December 4th will be the parade and tree lighting and December 10th will be the market. Main Street Tappahannock is working to rebrand themselves to make it known that the organization is for the whole community.

The EDA can help. For example, the former Cash to You business site is ready for someone unique to move in. The old bakery is empty now and could use something that goes in there.

TMS's Fire Relief has raised over \$100,000. It is a three-phase project. Phase 1 is closed out as that was taking care of all of the residents. The funds would be awarded to businesses that were affected by next month and the remaining could go into a disaster fund.

Vice Chairman Andrews asked if there is any idea on redevelopment. Mr. Harvey stated that there are grants available but there are three different property owners that all have to agree. Main Street is willing to help but the property owners have to be willing.

It was stated that there is work being done on the Rappahannock Times building and there may be an application for a façade grant but may apply at the town as well since it can be done before or after the work is done.

Old Business

June Parker Marina Addition to Grant

Chairman Croxton stated that it would have to be the county to add the Marina to that grant and we are hoping that the county will do that with the grant. We could do a proposal or resolution to send to the board.

Supervisor Johnson asked where the breakdown was on getting it on the agenda? Chairman Croxton stated he has never really asked for it to be on the agenda but he has spoken with everyone to get the item onto the grant request.

Supervisor Johnson stated if we put the Main Street behind it, the EDA behind it, and some concerned citizens in terms of tourism behind it, then it may change some philosophy. That marina has a negative image from years back that needs to be removed and show the potential of what it could be.

Vice Chairman Andrews offered a resolution:

Whereas, county citizens and visitors have little public water access to the Rappahannock River;

Whereas, the June Parker Marina could offer significant economic development for Essex County and the Town of Tappahannock by providing water access, beach facilities, marina services and amenities that would benefit citizens and draw tourists;

Whereas, substantial groundwork has been done on behalf of the EDA to obtain a federal grant to fund the marina's acquisition and redevelopment, ("the marina project");

Whereas, Essex County and the Town of Tappahannock's application for a federal RAISE grant to provide environmental and engineering study of transportation and water access projects did not include the marina project;

Whereas, the \$1.5 million RAISE grant awarded to Essex County and the Town of Tappahannock provides flexibility to add consideration of the marina project;

Whereas, concerns with the marina project can be addressed through proper engineering and environmental study from the RAISE Grant;

Now therefore, the EDA strongly recommends that the Essex County Board of Supervisors and the Tappahannock Town Council adopt resolutions to direct their staff to add the marina project to the scope of the RAISE grant's study.

Mrs. Dalton asked if the RAISE Grant is for the county and the town? They all said it was for both and that we should present the resolution to the Town as well.

The motion was made to adopt the resolution, seconded and approved.

The EDA moved into closed session.

Chairman Croxton stated he was going to write a letter to the Board of Supervisors asking to have the EDA compensated for their attendance in meetings as well as to provide EDA with a yearly budget.

Daw Theater façade

Chairman Croxton said that they should grant this request as you can see the work happening. Vice Chairman Andrews agreed. All voted in favor.

Fitz Cabinetry & Design

Chairman Croxton said they have received quotes and feel they should approve it. Vice Chairman Andrews opposed as the work has already commenced and that this is a project that someone undertook something they will do on their own. Since we are low on funds, she recommends not going against their own criteria since the work is almost done. Chairman Croxton stated the application was mailed 2 weeks ago but got hung up at the post office for the cost of a stamp, \$0.24.

Chairman Croxton moved to give them \$1,000 to support them in some form or fashion since they tried to comply.

Ayes: 4 Nays: 1

RE: NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 3, 2022.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made to adjourn and seconded. All Ayes

Vice Chairman of the Board, Lisa Andrews