

**MINUTES
ESSEX COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
March 2, 2023**

A meeting of the Economic Development Authority of Essex County was held on the 2nd day of March 2023, with the following present:

Present:

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

Also present:

Tommy Blackwell – Essex County Treasurer
Chris Rhodes – Rappahannock Times
June Monterio – Bray’s Fork Developer
Kay Carlton – Tappahannock Town Council
Ronnie Gill – Essex Board of Supervisors

Absent:

James Acors

RE: CALL TO ORDER

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

Guest Speaker – Connie Dalton, Community Development Director and Zoning Administrator, Town of Tappahannock

Mrs. Connie Dalton stated that there are many organizations working on community development. The town has been working on its website to make sure that it stays up to date. We also send out monthly newsletters from the town as to what is going on. The town staff has a Facebook page for specific town business. One of the significant initiatives is to make sure that the Visit Tappahannock/Essex County page, which is geared to tourism, can be updated as necessary. There was a grant received for the downtown revitalization plan. In the plan, there is a focus on pedestrian and biking traffic. Within the town there are a lot of businesses within walking distance. The final plans for Central Park are being completed for review. We are also looking at getting the riverfront finished to include seating and a fishing pier. The number one thing that the EDA can do to assist is to bring in the businesses that are needed. There have been numerous grants that have been awarded to the Town. These are all listed on the website and can easily be accessed.

Chairman Andrews asked how much was the Virginia Business Ready Sites Grant? Mrs. Dalton stated that it was \$261,000. Chairman Andrews then asked if they allocate a certain amount annually for the façade grants? Mrs. Dalton was going to ask about as she was not sure what is in the budget for façade grants next year.

Chairman Andrews asked what type of businesses they would like to see at the airport? Mrs. Dalton stated healthy food restaurants and a new gym are possibilities. In addition, the old airport is being used to help people get their CDL license.

Mrs. Dalton stated that they are working on a one-page document for prospective businesses. This is “one pager” from Essex County and Tappahannock could be provided to public facing organizations and if someone makes an inquiry, they could be provided the information. We would then ensure that we are handing out consistent information.

RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Lisa Andrews asked for the approval of the minutes from the February 3, 2023 meeting. Vice Chairman Croxton made the motion to approve. Jamie Segar seconded. Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

RE: TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Smith reported that our current balance is \$16,057.63. On February 13, 2023, both Lisa and Tim signed for a 12-month CD for \$15,000. It is at a 4.75% interest. The total fund balance is \$31,057.63. Mr. Holt made a motion to approve the financial report. Mr. Croxton seconded Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

Mr. Smith does think it would be a good idea to join the Chamber of Commerce as a supporter. The cost would be \$50 and would allow any EDA member to go to their functions. Mr. Croxton stated he would like to see the EDA support the Chamber financially as opposed to becoming a member.

Mr. Holt asked if we contributed to the Chamber would that not also make us a member and if so then we could figure out what level of support we wanted to give.

Chairman Andrews would like to see the EDA join as a member and then discuss helping with a larger sum later.

Mr. Sidney stated that it would be advantageous for the EDA to join collectively to allow for anyone to attend.

Mr. Holt made a motion to become a member of the Chamber of Commerce at the \$50 level. Mr. Croxton seconded the motion. Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

Old Business - none

Liaison Reports

- Bill Croxton – Chamber of Commerce – Mr. Croxton stated that they had a nice reception that was well attended. He made a request to the board to go to the town and the county to ask for some annual subsidy to assist the Chamber . Mr. Croxton made the presentation at the town council meeting and it was well received. Teresa Lankford made the presentation to the county Board of Supervisors. The Chamber is asking for town and county to contribute about \$5,000 each.
- Tim Smith – Zoning – Mr. Smith stated that zoning is in the process of doing their comprehensive plan. Chairman Andrews asked if they were hiring a consultant or doing it in house and what the time frame was. Mr. Smith stated they are doing it currently in house but do not have a time frame right now.

Chairman Andrews stated that Mr. James Acors was going to step down from the EDA as he did not feel he had the time that he could commit to it right now.

Strategic Planning – Lisa Andrews

Chairman Andrews stated that the subcommittee has met a couple of times. We have begun to gather information of resources to put on the website as well as on the one-pager that was mentioned by Ms. Dalton. These resources are basic facts and figures to be useful to a business looking to come to Tappahannock. We are also working on a vision statement for the EDA.

New Business

Mrs. Monterio stated that they are on target. They will be presenting to the planning commission next month and has almost finished the rezoning application. Chairman Andrews asked what some of the feedback was. Mrs. Monterio stated that they needed to look at the utilities, VDOT, and the full site plan to make sure that everything was listed.

Chairman Andrews asked what type of response they got with the inquiry for water and sewer? Mrs. Monterio the main issue is with the capacity. The Timmons group is helping with the project and has done a plan which indicates sufficient capacity.

Mr. Croxton is bringing a façade grant application with the Rappahannock Times Building. He would like to put him on the docket to speak to this. It is a very thorough application and indicate to him that we would review.

Mrs. Andrews stated that we could review and then discuss it at next month's meeting.

RE: NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Thursday, April 27, 2023 at 9:00am. The meetings planned for April 6 and May 4 are cancelled.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made to adjourn and seconded. All Ayes

Secretary – David L. Holt