

**MINUTES
ESSEX COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
October 5, 2023**

A meeting of the Economic Development Authority of Essex County was held on the 5th day of September 2023, with the following present:

Present:

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

Also present:

Kay Carlton – Town of Tappahannock Council
Chris Rhodes – Rappahannock Times
Tommy Blackwell – Commissioner of Revenue

Absent:

RE: CALL TO ORDER

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

RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Andrews asked for the approval of the minutes from the September 7, 2023 meeting as modified. David Holt made the motion to approve. Motion was seconded. Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

RE: TREASURER'S REPORT

Tim Smith stated that the checking account balance was \$15,857.63. There were no checks written for the month. The 12-month CD was \$15,349.38. Interest to date this fiscal year is \$349.38. The total fund balance is \$31,207.01. Motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded
Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

Old Business

Mr. Andy Lankford resubmitted his application for a façade grant with more detail on the work. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Croxton and seconded by Mr. Segar. Ayes: 6 Nays: 0. Ms. Andrews will send a letter to Mr. Lankford detailing the grant for \$2,500 and noting required items that are needed for the check to be sent.

Mr. Croxton mentioned Ms. Mary Tribble who has done artistic renderings of buildings in town and suggested she speak to the EDA. Mr. Croxton will reach out to her about attending a meeting.

Downtown Tappahannock Redevelopment:

The town has received a grant of \$61,000 with a match requirement of \$31,000 for a total of \$92,000.

The Tap in and Connect App that is being developed will include a double dollar gift program, seating areas in town, possibly MLS integration.

There are also projects underway by the design committee.

The last Farmers' Market of the season will be on the 14th. Winterfest is set for 12/2 and the Christmas parade is on 12/3.

Trunk or Treat is upcoming (10/29) and the expectation is that there will be about 2,000 children attending. Donations can be made to Historic Downtown Tappahannock.

Soul on the River will be on 10/14 beginning at 3:00 pm. Tables are available for purchase.

Mr. Croxton updated on the redevelopment of the town from the fire and opined that an engineering design is needed, especially with the age of the sewer and water infrastructure. Discussion revolved about redevelopment costs escalating due to interest rate increases and also updating the current assessment of the properties. Mr. Blackwell also raised the need for reassessment. He is hopeful that the county will do an RFP for a reassessment to be completed by 1/25.

Discussion of finding, promoting and publishing available commercial and industrial properties took place. The upshot is that we will need to be more proactive in identifying these properties. Mr. Blackwell brought up that VEDP appears to have incorrect information regarding properties on their site. Mr. Holt will contact and provide the correct information to VEDP.

Board of Supervisors:

Ms. Andrews reported that Ronnie Gill (BOS) and Troy Balderson (Town Council) are serving on a combined economic development committee. They discussed merging the town and county façade grant programs.

The BOS will continue reviewing and discussing the Mount Clement project, with a potential vote next Tuesday.

Chamber of Commerce:

Mr. Croxton reported that there was a meeting at the 1710 Tavern last week. The Chamber is growing and open to new businesses joining. Cost is \$100/year.

Zoning:

Mr. Smith reported on Zoning and indicated that the PUD and Comprehensive Land Use Plan are the primary efforts of the department at this time.

New Business

Ms. Andrews brought up a new program from the state – Virginia Business Ready Sites. There will be webinars regarding it on 10/3 (already past) and 10/24 from 2:00-3:30 pm. Ms. Andrews will forward a link to the members.

RE: NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 9:00AM.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made to adjourn and seconded. All Ayes

Secretary, David Holt