

**THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OF STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA**

SPECIAL RETREAT MEETING MINUTES

January 7, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER

A special “retreat” meeting of The Economic Development Authority (“EDA”), of Stafford County, Virginia was held on January 7, 2020 at Potomac Point Winery, located at 275 Decatur Rd, Stafford Courthouse, VA 22554 at 9:16 A.M. A quorum was present.

Members Present

Joel Griffin	Chairman
Don Newlin	Vice Chairman
Howard Owen	Treasurer
Jack Rowley	
Heather Hagerman	
Danielle Davis	
Skip Causey	

Also Present

Charlie Payne	Counsel
John Holden	Secretary, Director ED&T

ED&T Staff

Theodosius Zotos
Richard Cobert
Joshua Summits

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The December minutes will be reviewed and voted on at the regular February Meeting.

3. **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

None

4. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The most recent financials will be reviewed and voted on at the regular February Meeting.

5. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

None

6. **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

None

7. **WORKING GROUP REPORTS**

A. Loan Committee

Mr. Holden noted that Ms. Linda Knecht from Atlantic Union has agreed to serve on the Loan Committee (appointed by the Loan Committee). Mr. Owen and Causey both agreed and noted approval of Ms. Knecht, should she confirm when she meets with Mr. Holden on January 16 (Mr. Causey may attend that meeting as well).

B. Germanna Update

Mr. Rowley shared that he attended the recent graduation and continued appreciation of the College for the EDA support.

C. Property Group

(1) 204 Thompson

Mr. Rowley noted that the prospective buyer review period ends January 21 and that the Phase I Environmental Report was "clean."

(2) New Property (Centreport)

Mr. Holden noted that the Deed was still being processed (signed). An appraisal has been completed and will report on that report in closed session.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Retreat Agenda:

1. Retreat “Guidelines”

Mr. Holden acknowledged that he will act as “facilitator” but that his role is as much as a participant, as well. He further acknowledged his appreciation and pleasure working with the EDA Board as a key partner in the economic development and tourism work in Stafford.

2. Review of Strategic Plans

- a. EDA Strategic Plan, 2018
- b. Stafford County Economic Development Strategy, 2015
 - i. Economic Development Implementation Plan (I-Plan)
 - ii. Tourism Plan
- c. Stafford County 2040 (BOS Strategic Plan)

Mr. Owen asked all to confirm and renew the EDA Mission. Mr. Cobert read a statement from the www.gostaffordva.com website. Amongst that public statement was the phrase, “to facilitate business expansion and growth in Stafford”.

The Board generally agreed that this statement was a clear and sufficient mission statement.

In regards to the economic development plans and initiatives, Mr. Causey noted that he is often asked and believes the “citizens” are seeking more “things to do” or as Ms. Hagerman stated “amenities.” Mr. Causey, referring to the EDA Strategic Plan and the Department’s primary focus (industries) noted that “community assets” should be a target as well (private or public). Mr. Holden noted that community assets or “place making” is very much part of his vision for the role of the Department. He added that those sentiments were confirmed in the Community Forums held this past summer. Mr. Holden added that Tourism Development is the investment side of tourism and a key component of Place Making.

Members of the Board asked, in general, how the EDA may invest in “place” or community assets in the future. That may include “pad ready” sites for retail sites that add valuable and in-demand community assets. It may include other ways to invest in infrastructure to support such development—including in Downtown Stafford.

The discussion turned to “messaging” as a role for the EDA—to help promote the positive and public and private investments in Stafford. Ms. Hagerman suggested a social media campaign to promote the work of the EDA and economic development in Stafford. Mr. Owen suggested that include more traditional media (newsprint) as well to reach all audiences. Mr. Holden noted that was a key

element of the Economic Development Strategy Implementation Plan— Messaging. He cautioned that the message not be necessarily about the EDA (or the County) but about “Stafford.”

The Board acknowledged improved dialogue with the Board of Supervisors and the continued and expanded acknowledgment for the EDA from the BOS. All EDA Members expressed value and intent to continue 1:1 dialogue with their respective BOS Member. The EDA would like to have at least three joint EDA & BOS meetings per year. Discussion turned to additional follow-up and engagement with the Planning Commission. The EDA would like to encourage and offer input to development proposals at the appropriate time in the process.

3. Major Projects or Programs: Status & 18-month goals
 - a. Business Events
 - i. Business Awards Reception
 - ii. Veterans Boot Camps (Seminars)
 - iii. 8A Minority Business Seminars
 - iv. New Events (proposed)
 1. Cyber & Smart Tech Entrepreneurship
 2. Beer & Business in Stafford
 - v. Sponsorship Program for the above

The Board has been very pleased with the last few BAR programs. Some suggestions for 2020 were to repeat a panel perhaps with a “young” MC, repeat the presentation done at the FRA annual meeting regarding regional collaboration, and the general discussion about location. The sentiment was to hold it “central” at a location that will hold the growing numbers of attendees. Suggestions included the airport, hospital, and perhaps the 2nd floor of Germanna.

Mr. Cobert noted that this will be the 29th BAR and Mr. Griffin encouraged that next year’s be a “bigger” celebration (30th).

The addition of new events and revisions to the training programs was discussed, briefly, and the Board acknowledged and recognized concern for staff to expand programming. Mr. Holden noted that staff capacity would be a subject for closed session.

On the subject of sponsorship, the Board was not comfortable with asking for sponsorships “in general.” The Board believed that sponsorships for events should be on a case-by-case basis and only “soft asks” or opportunities be considered as they arise. The Board asked staff to consider and draft “guidelines” be available so that as opportunities for a sponsorship arise (to make a soft ask) the guidelines make clear what sponsorship “offers.” In regards to paying for events and registration, Ms. Hagerman noted some groups require registrants for events put a hold on a credit card that is charged in the participant does not attend (but did RSVP). That may be considered in the future.

- b. EDA Grant & Loan Program
 - i. Review current
 - ii. Promote loan program
 - iii. Grant program input\changes
 - iv. Major Incentive Program

No major changes were recommended regarding the grant or loan program. Mr. Causey did make clear, his appreciation that the EDA continue to set a “high bar” for grant requests. He explained the grant to ACE Flight Solutions as an example of securing details and personal guarantees from the company. He believes a 1:1 match is a requirement but would recommend the EDA consider a higher match requirement for grants.

- c. Other Initiatives—FYI
 - i. VEDP Site Assessment and Site Readiness
 - ii. Business & Tourism Incentives
 - iii. Downtown Stafford
- d. Other Items to Consider
 - i. Carbon credits EDA broker
 - ii. PACE Legislation

Staff briefed the EDA on the statewide site assessment project. In regards to incentives the EDA asked if First Line Technologies would brief the EDA on progress. The subject of the Regional Infrastructure Facilities Act (RIFA) was mentioned and staff and Mr. Payne explained briefly what a RIFA was and noted that one may be explored for the Fredericksburg Region. The Board briefly reviewed a PowerPoint regarding carbon credits program.

- 4. EDA Operations
 - a. Financials & Budgeting
 - b. Communications with Board (joint meetings, etc.)
 - c. Staffing (Closed Session Item 1)

Mr. Owen had nothing to bring to the Board on financials and budgets but stated that the agreement (MOU) to have County Finance do the books (started in 2018) has been extremely valuable and he appreciates their support.

The Board then moved into Closed Session to discuss item 4.c. and three other property and project investment projects.

9. **OLD BUSINESS**

None

10. CLOSED SESSION

The EDA Board went into closed session in accordance with Section 2.2-3711.A.3 and 5, et al. of the Code of Virginia 1950, as amended. No Votes were taken while in closed session. Members of the EDA and Economic Development staff present at the meeting were in the closed session.

Mr. Griffin motioned to move into closed session. Mr. Rowley seconded

VOTE 7-0 Approved

Mr. Griffin motioned to come out of closed session. Mr. Griffin seconded.

VOTE 7-0 Approved

Mr. Griffin noted that no votes taken.

Mr. Griffin shared three primary “takeaways” from the Retreat:

1. He urged and asked that EDA Members continue the improved dialogue with Board of Supervisors. He also encouraged EDA ask BOS for clarity on role of Community Economic Development Committee regarding economic development in coordination with EDA.
2. In addition to number one, he would like to consider how the EDA confirm and clarify the role of ED&T staff to support the efforts of the EDA and how the EDA may financially recognize the value of that staff time.
3. He acknowledged and expressed the sentiment of the EDA to play expanded role to invest in community “amenities” or infrastructure that supports “Place Making.”

11. ATTORNEY’S REPORT

NONE

12. ADJOURNMENT

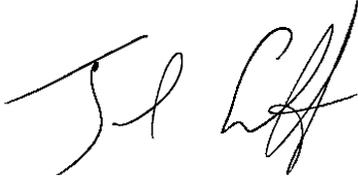
There being no further business brought before the Economic Development Authority, Mr. Griffin adjourned the meeting at 3:00 PM. The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 14, 2019. in the ABC Room of the George L. Gordon, Jr. Administration Center, located at 1300 Courthouse Road Stafford, Virginia.

MINUTES SUBMITTED BY:



John Holden
EDA Secretary

MINUTES APPROVED BY:



Joel Griffin
EDA Chairman