

**STAFFORD COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 09, 2021**

The regular meeting of The Economic Development Authority (“EDA”), of Stafford County, Virginia was held on April 09, 2021 via conference (Zoom) call.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

This meeting was held (and advertised) by conference call and called to order by Chairman at 9:02 AM. A quorum was present and accounted for.

Members Present

Joel Griffin	Chairman
Don Newlin	Vice Chairman (left meeting at 9:55 am)
Howard Owen	Treasurer (joined meeting at 9:55 am)
Danielle Davis	
Heather Hagerman	
Jack Rowley	
Marlon Wilson	

ED&T/EDA Staff

John Holden	Secretary, EDA; Director, ED&T
Tammy Guseman	Administrative Assistant, ED&T
Linzy Browne	Marketing & Events Coordinator, EDA

Also Present

Charlie Payne	Counsel
Kristen Shields	Counsel
Fillmore McPherson	Stafford County Planning Commission (left meeting at 9:55 am)

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. March 12, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Newlin motioned to approve the March Regular Meeting Minutes. Mr. Rowley seconded.

**VOTE: 6-0 Approved**

### 3. **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

NONE

### 4. **OLD BUSINESS Downtown Stafford**

#### A. Status and Update UD5 Zoning

Mr. Holden shared that the Planning Commission was considering three items and voted as follows:

- Comprehensive Plan Change (voted down 4-3)
- Zoning Code Change (passed 4-3)
- Rezoning of the JPI and County-owned properties (deferred until 4/14)

Mr. McPherson affirmed this summary and noted that the main concerns of the Planning Commission are:

- Traffic on Route 1/Courthouse Area
- Lack of proffers and tax revenue vs. impacts of new infrastructure builds
- Costs associated with the number of housing units/school seats

Mr. Griffin asked how many of the Planning Commission members are business owners. Mr. McPherson stated that he believes none of them are. Mr. Griffin expressed his frustration that the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors are more concerned about traffic than local businesses. Mr. McPherson replied that traffic was not the main concern but the number of houses and school seats is and suggested seeking a comparable ratio of houses to businesses. Mr. Griffin stated that we need more businesses that can be taxed so that infrastructure can be updated.

Mr. Holden noted that he completed and updated an economic assessment and after consulting schools. His research and data found that due to the nature of the planned apartment housing units and that less bedrooms per unit lowers the number of his figures are net positive for tax revenue for the JPI and County project in Downtown Stafford Mr. Holden also stated that every property in the Downtown area other than that owned by Stafford County will need to be re-zoned for this project. As those are rezoned, the County may ask for proffers. Mr. McPherson acknowledged that re-zoning will increase proffers and asked Mr. Holden to explain where he got his figures from. Mr. Holden will resend his analysis to the EDA.

Mr. Griffin requested that the EDA draft a letter of support for the Downtown Stafford project due to the tax revenue it will generate. Ms. Hagerman agreed and noted that her research shows that baby boomers and millennials both want a walkable live/work lifestyle. Mr. Wilson stated that the need is great to keep revenue inside of Stafford County instead of spending in other counties. He added that the proposed JPI and County projects will barely make a “dent” in school impacts but have much more positive impact for the community. Ms. Davis added that the proposed JPI and County projects will help foster and create and enhance an “identity” for Stafford. Mr. Rowley noted that while he fully supports the Downtown Stafford project, he feels there are too many apartments and traffic is already congested. Mr. Rowley does not see the benefit of changing to UD5 zoning and thus requests his disagreement is noted in any such letter Mr. Newlin shared his support of the Downtown Stafford project as a viable plan to prepare for more residents and feels that the reward is greater than the risk.

Mr. Holden reminded EDA members that essentially one-third of economic development is the message. He noted that without the re-zoning and subsequent development, JPI will invest far

less and that many other counties and cities in Virginia are vying for the opportunity to be home of the CIT-sponsored Virginia Smart Community Testbed that has been offered to Stafford County. If Stafford does not take it, another county/city may. Mr. McPherson asked Mr. Holden if he would be willing to present this economic opinion to the Planning Commission. Mr. Holden stated he has already spoken to Mr. Jeff Harvey in regards to speaking on this matter and will present his updated assessment and answer questions at the next Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Griffin stated he will work with Mr. Holden to draft a Downtown Stafford support letter from the EDA (sans Mr. Rowley) to the Board of Supervisors and give EDA members a chance to comment and edit.

## 5. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

### A. Current Financials

In Mr. Owen's absence, Mr. Holden reported that staff has reviewed and accounted for all the grant checks from the Cares Act funds. Mr. Holden stated that eventually the remaining Cares Act funds will be transferred to the Operating account and the Cares Act account will be closed.

### B. Budget Planning

Mr. Rowley asked Mr. Holden to give an update on the Stafford Cares Restaurant Program. Mr. Holden reminded the EDA that this project was not funded by the EDA and stated that 50 restaurants have been accepted into the program and ED&T staff are currently working on the paperwork necessary to purchase the meal cards in the next 2-3 weeks.

Mr. Newlin moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Griffin seconded.

**VOTE: 6-0 Approved**

## 6. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

- A. Mr. Griffin attended a Virginia Economic Development Partnership meeting and believes the idea of Downtown Stafford is a top priority for VEDP as it seeks to expand new business and attract talent those businesses need. He also noted VEDP's emphasis on broadband and development of pad-ready sites, subjects this EDA has been working on. Mr. Griffin suggested trying to coordinate with the Board of Supervisors to obtain some pad-ready sites to prepare for new businesses as we come out of COVID restrictions. Mr. Griffin mentioned the partnership between Cyber Bytes and Virginia Tech and asked if Mr. Holden had more information on this. Mr. Holden noted that the partnership is with the Richmond campus of Virginia Tech will offer their training and programs at Cyber Bytes both physically and remotely.

## 7. **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

### A. ED&T Monthly Update

### B. Go Virginia Grant

Mr. Holden shared that EDA is asking for \$215,000 from Go Virginia and that this project is focused on the expansion of RiOT to Stafford and the region. If project is successful, we plan to launch the RiOT Accelerator Program and RiOT would have an office in the Testbed here in Stafford. EDA is the grant applicant and we have utilized Ms. Browne's marketing contract

as match. RiOT will also develop local community workshops specific to King George, Fredericksburg and Stafford. Mr. Holden will email the detailed VA Grant Summary to EDA members and stated that he will be presenting this information to the Go Virginia Region Six Council on April 26.

- C. Mr. Holden stated that the next entrepreneurial development program event will be held on May 25 and will be a virtual entrepreneurial event called 'Project Next'. Ms. Browne shared that also on May 25 is the Opening of the Testbed. Ms. Browne noted that in the last EDA meeting, Mr. Griffin requested a heavier presence of EDA members at public events and that all members are invited to the Testbed Opening. Mr. Griffin encouraged all members to attend and Ms. Browne will send Invites to each.

## 8. **WORKING GROUP REPORTS**

- A. Loan Committee (*H Owen, D Davis, J Summits*)
- B. Ms. Davis noted the committee hasn't met yet. Mr. Holden stated that there are two loan applications in underwriting by Josh and REDCO and one likely offer and once offers are received the committee will meet again.
- C. Germanna Update (*J Rowley*)  
Mr. Rowley shared that Germanna is still planning on re-opening in September more than likely with a hybrid approach.
- D. Property Group (*H Hagerman, J Rowley*)
- E. Broadband Expansion (*J Holden, M Wilson*)  
Mr. Wilson stated he, Mr. Holden and Mr. Cannon will hold an in-person planning session next week to discuss the Broadband Summit, broadband suppliers to invited to the Summit and any potential constraints.

## 9. **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Position of ED&T Specialist  
Mr. Griffin asked if discussion could be held in regards to the vacant ED&T Specialist position. Mr. Holden stated that the job posting for this vacancy closes on April 9 and the plan is to have the new staff member installed by June 1.

## 10. **CLOSED SESSON**

*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 (with the exception of Don Newlin) and Economic Development staff present at the meeting were in the closed session.*

Mr. Griffin motioned to move into closed session. Ms. Davis seconded.

**VOTE: 6-0 Approved**

Mr. Griffin motioned to move out of closed session. Mr. Owen seconded.

**VOTE: 6-0 Approved**

**11. ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

None

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business brought before the Economic Development Authority, Mr. Griffin adjourned the meeting at 10:15 AM. The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2021.

**MINUTES APPROVED BY:**



Joel Griffin  
EDA Chairman

**MINUTES SUBMITTED BY:**



John Holden  
EDA Secretary