

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

December 10, 2021

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority (EDA), of Stafford County, Virginia, was held on Friday, December 10, 2021 via conference (Zoom) call.

### 1. **CALL TO ORDER**

This meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Newlin at 9:01 AM. A quorum was present and accounted for.

#### Members Present

Don Newlin	Vice Chairman
Danielle Davis	
Jack Rowley	
Marlon Wilson	
Heather Hagerman	

#### Members Absent

Joel Griffin	Chairman
Howard Owen	Treasurer

#### ED&T/EDA Staff Present

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

#### Also Present

Charlie Payne	Counsel
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#### Also Absent

Fillmore McPherson	Stafford County Planning Commission
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### 2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

#### A. November 12, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes

Ms. Hagerman motioned to approve the November Regular Meeting Minutes. Mr. Wilson seconded.

**VOTE: 5-0 Approved**

### 3. **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

None

#### 4. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

##### A. Current Financials

In Mr. Owen's absence, Mr. Holden reminded the members that the budget review is being prepared quarterly. He reminded them, too, that the Go VA grant is a reimbursement grant. Mr. Holden shared that the first quarterly remittance for this grant has been submitted and that the budget will show a \$35,000 credit in 2 months' time.

Mr. Rowley moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Ms. Hagerman seconded.

**VOTE: 5-0 Approved**

#### 5. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

None

#### 6. **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

##### A. Audit Update

Mr. Holden shared that audit documents are almost completely uploaded to the audit portal and that future audits will be started earlier in the year. Mr. Holden reminded the members that in January of each new year the Statement of Economic Interest forms will need to be completed again. Mr. Rowley asked if members are associated with more than one public body, are they required to fill out multiple Statement of Economic Interest forms? Ms. Davis shared that she believes members would have to fill out one form for each public body they are associated with. Mr. Holden stated that he is unsure but will find out and share this with the members.

##### B. Go VA Grant

###### 1. RFP for Technology Specialist

Mr. Holden noted that this position posting is being re-posted and he encouraged members to share this posting with those that may come to mind as possible applicants.

###### 2. RIoT Staffing and Plans

Mr. Holden shared that RIoT intends to make an offer for their staff position by the end of this month and is in the process of hiring their Virginia Stafford staff member. This position, as well as the Technology Specialist, are anticipated to be filled by the end of this year and the Accelerator Program launched by the first of next year.

###### 3. First Remittance

Mr. Holden noted that there have been many new improvements to the Testbed, some paid for by the grant and some as EDA match, and shared that he would like EDA members to have a future meeting there to see how grant monies have been used. Mr. Holden stated that Stafford County received much attention at the Smart City Conference in National Harbor in October relating to the Smart Community Testbed, with three serious and six total inquiries from tech companies.

C. Cares Act Survey

Mr. Holden noted that he would be presenting this to the Board next week suggesting the use of ARPA funds and also asked EDA members for input on the survey slides as Mr. Hendon presents them. Mr. Hendon shared that the survey, consisting of 14 questions, was sent out to 150 Cares Act grant recipients and that about 20% of this group responded. Mr. Hendon stated that the survey was designed to understand the impact of the funds and what the current business community needs. Mr. Hendon noted the following statistics since Feb. 2020:

- 50% of businesses stated they are doing better
- 38% worse (half of these did not receive federal funds)
- 12% unchanged

Ms. Davis asked how the 38% was broken down and Mr. Hendon said he will get back to her on this. Mr. Hendon shared that the majority of local businesses are having difficulty attracting employees and that there seems to be a workforce problem: either wages offered or availability of employees to work. Mr. Holden noted that labor demand is a common problem across the country and Mr. Wilson confirmed this. Mr. Rowley shared what he read recently that stated that labor has the upper hand for the first time in history and the local hospital has offered bonuses and wage increases to try to retain employees.

Mr. Holden stated that he and his colleagues are trying to see what can be done at a local level to help business address the labor shortage.

Continuing to report on the survey, Mr. Hendon noted that businesses shared they would most benefit from community events and opportunities to network for other forms of assistance.

Mr. Holden shared again that he has suggested to the Board previously the use of ARPA funds and will do so again on Dec. 14 use the Cares Act Survey slides in that presentation. Mr. Holden noted that businesses are up and running again and restated the need for a consultant to help with the workload ED&T is experiencing. Mr. Rowley shared that Loudon County could be used as a model for use of ARPA funds to businesses.

D. EDA 2022 Meeting Schedule

Mr. Holden shared the new schedule for 2022 EDA meetings. Mr. Rowley noted that the August 23 meeting is just two weeks before the September 9 meeting and suggested skipping the August meeting due to the close proximity. Mr. Holden will look into this and get back to members next month.

E. Economic Development Strategic Update (EDA, BOS)

Mr. Holden stated that he anticipates taking this before the Board in early February and is planning to focus on what the EDA is doing as well as initiatives, data center attraction and the Testbed. Mr. Holden asked the members if they would like to dedicate a special meeting or a longer monthly meeting so he could share his ideas and get their input in

## Stafford County Economic Development Authority

January. Mr. Wilson stated that a longer meeting and lunch would be in order, especially as there are three new Board members in the new year and Ms. Hagerman agreed. Mr. Holden asked members to let him know if they have anything they would like prepared ahead of this meeting. Mr. Wilson shared that he has been feeling out some of the new Board members and Mr. Holden stated that he will call and discuss this with him.

### F. Marketing & Events Update

Ms. Browne reviewed the last four EDA-sponsored events held and noted that the remaining event of 2021 will be an online Lunch & Learn, which is part of the Go Virginia grant. Ms. Browne shared the following:

- EDA headshots will be taken January 3-7 in the Testbed between 8:30am-3:30pm and she will send out email reminder on this soon.
- The next Beer & Business will be on February 9 at Barley Naked and this event is sponsored by Express Tech and topic is Communication Fiber.
- In 2022 the Go Virginia grant really kicks off promoting the Accelerator Program which should benefit 6-10 entrepreneurs. Ms. Browne noted that this program starts April 27 and will hold regional interest meetings once a month to garner more entrepreneur interest.
- Monthly Lunch & Learns will continue
- Start-up Veterans Boot Camp 2.0 is planned for March or April
- Business Appreciation Reception will be on May 11 at the Holiday Inn & Conference Center from 5-7 pm. Ms. Browne stated that she is still looking to secure \$6,000 of the \$15,000 sponsorship and asked members for ideas of any possible sponsors. Ms. Browne will send out sponsorship interest package to the members.

## 7. COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP REPORTS

- A. Loan Committee (*H Owen, D Davis, J Summits*)  
Mr. Holden shared that four loan inquiries have come in this week.
- B. Germanna Group (*J Rowley*)  
Mr. Rowley shared that Germanna update will be shared in Closed Session.
- C. Property Group (*D Hendon, H Hagerman, J Rowley*)  
Ms. Hagerman shared the Property update will be shared in Closed Session.
- D. Broadband Expansion (*D Hendon, M Wilson*)  
None

## 8. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Holden shared that the two incentives voted on last month are moving forward with the Board (in the Board Package) and the MOU has been reviewed by Mr. Payne. Mr. Holden will email these to EDA members.

## 9. NEW 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. Rowley motioned to come out of closed session. Ms. Hagerman seconded.

**VOTE: 5-0 Approved**

**11. ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

None.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Holden noted that the January 14 meeting will be an extended version and be held in-person at the Testbed with Zoom option and lunch to follow. There being no further business brought before the Economic Development Authority, Mr. Newlin adjourned the meeting at 9:54 AM.

**MINUTES APPROVED BY:**



Joel Griffin  
EDA Chairman

**MINUTES SUBMITTED BY:**



John Holden  
EDA Secretary