



**MEETING MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF BEDFORD, VA
Bedford County Administration Ground Floor Training Room
122 E. Main Street
Bedford, VA 24523**

**October 12, 2021
7:00 p.m.**

Economic Development Authority:

Present: Rhonnie Smith - Dist. 1; Vicki Gardner - Dist. 2; Wyatt Walton - Dist. 3; Matthew Braud - Dist. 4; Kristy Milton - Dist. 5; James Robertson - Dist. 6; Jim Messier - Dist. 7

Absent: None

Staff Present: Pam Bailey – Economic Development Director, Brandon Butler - Senior Assistant County Attorney

Staff Absent: None

Transcriber: Julia Peters

Guests: None

(1) CALL TO ORDER & DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Messier called the October meeting of the Bedford County Economic Development Authority to order.

(2) CLOSED SESSION

Closed Session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A) (5), discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community.

Mr. Walton moved, seconded by Mr. Braud to enter into Closed Session.

Voting yes: Mr. Smith, Mrs. Gardner, Mr. Walton, Mr. Braud, Mrs. Milton, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Messier

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

Staff remained for the Closed Session.

WHEREAS, the Bedford County Economic Development Authority has convened a Closed Meeting on this 12th day of October 2021, pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Bedford County Economic Development Authority that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, on this 12th day of October 2021, that the Bedford County Economic Development Authority does hereby certify that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting was heard, discussed or considered by the Bedford County Economic Development Authority.

<u>MEMBERS</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Rhonnie Smith	Yes
Rhonda Gardner	Yes
Wyatt Walton, III	Yes
Matthew Braud	Yes
Kristy Milton	Yes
James Robertson	Yes
Jim Messier	Yes

(3) OTHER BUSINESS

A discussion followed regarding the possibility of 100+acre business pad-ready sites in Bedford County. Mr. Walton stated he would be opposed to this type of venture in New London. Mr. Braud asked if the 100 acres includes the road or if the land was already divided. Ms. Bailey said there are several lots that have acreage but if the lots were added together, they could encompass 100 acres. Mr. Walton thought that it would be more valuable to Bedford County to have several businesses with 30 employees rather than one very large company. Ms. Milton agreed. Mr. Smith thought it would be possible, if it was done in conjunction with partnerships and did not take the EDA's eyes off other high-tech prospects for New London. Mr. Walton noted that if this path was pursued and the EDA obtained grants, it would be locked into doing the large project. Chairman Messier said that ideally Montvale should be looked at seriously because it would need to be economically worthwhile to eliminate those tanks. Mr. Smith was in favor of pursuing, but not at the exclusion of the EDA's regular business. Mr. Robertson thought it might be worthwhile to find 100 acres elsewhere and do joint-interest investing in the site. Mrs. Gardner wanted to know how many businesses have inquired about 100 acres in Bedford County in the last ten years. Ms. Bailey said Megan Lucas, CEO of the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance (LRBA), shared that the prospects turned down in the region have wanted at least 27 graded acres. Ms. Bailey also stated there is a prospect that wants to build a 400,000 square foot building in New London and another prospect is interested in 60 acres for a large building. Mrs. Milton said that the EDA should focus on the day-to-day small businesses and let the LRBA focus on the large business prospects. Ms. Bailey and Mr. Smith noted that to steer the LRBA toward Bedford, there must be large acreage sites available in the County. Ms.

Bailey said that according to Ms. Lucas, Bedford has lost 27 projects since 2015 due to not having natural gas available. Mrs. Milton remarked that a prospect for 100 acres will want to have natural gas. Ms. Bailey informed the EDA members that Campbell County just received a GO Virginia grant to extend their natural gas line. However, the catch is that they must have a prospect that will use the newly built gas line. Ms. Bailey has spoken to Columbia about building out a gas line for Bedford County. She was told it would cost approximately \$10 million to do so. Discussion ended.

(4) ADJOURNMENT

7:20 p.m.

APPROVED:


Chairman


Secretary