



**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**

**February 4, 2021
5:30 p.m.**

Economic Development Authority:

Present: 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: Rhonnie Smith - Dist. 1

Staff Present: Robert Hiss - County Administrator; Traci Blido - EDA Secretary; Pam Bailey - Marketing & Business Development Coordinator; Patrick Skelley - County Attorney

Staff Absent: None

Transcriber: Julia Peters

Guests: Edgar Tuck - County Supervisor District 2, Charla Bansley - County Supervisor District 3

(1) ORGANIZATION

A. Election of Officers

Mr. Skelley called the meeting to order and opened the floor for nominations for a Chairperson of the EDA for 2021.

Mr. Walton moved, seconded by Mr. Braud to nominate Jim Messier as Chairman of the EDA for 2021.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

Chairman Messier then asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman.

Mr. Walton moved, seconded by Mr. Braud to nominate Rhonnie Smith as Vice-Chairman of the EDA for 2021.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

Chairman Messier asked for nominations for Secretary.

Mr. Walton moved, seconded by Mr. Braud to nominate Traci Blido for Secretary of the EDA for 2021.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

Chairman Messier then asked for nominations for Treasurer.

Mr. Walton moved, seconded by Mrs. Milton to nominate Kim Snow for Treasurer of the EDA for 2021.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

(2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Messier asked for a motion to approve and/or any amendments to the Authority's February 4, 2021 agenda. Mrs. Blido noted an addition to **Agenda Item (5) Town of Bedford** under **5B. Close Out Central Virginia Manufacturing (CVM) Performance Agreement**.

Mr. Walton moved, seconded by Mr. Braud, to approve the February 4, 2021 EDA agenda, as amended.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

(3) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES - January 7, 2021

Chairman Messier asked for approval and/or any amendments to the Authority's January 7, 2021 meeting minutes.

Mr. Braud moved, seconded by Mrs. Milton, to approve the January 7, 2021 meeting minutes, as presented.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

(4) REPORTS

A. Economic Development Director's Report

Mrs. Blido reported that this past month they have worked on the shell building with the bank, site work negotiations, and financial spread sheets. They also addressed several new prospect inquiries and built on the marketing plan. They explored tourism zone concepts which would help places like Mariner's Landing. Capital Improvement Project (CIP) requests and the budget had to be submitted as well. The CIP request from last year was tabled so they will be exploring that one again tonight. Due to a deadline, she has already submitted two projects but would like to hear the EDA's thoughts on those projects. After selling Lot 3B, they realized that there are not any smaller lots graded in New London. Damage Prevention bought the 4-acre lot there and Lot 4 has 10 acres graded on the 24-acre lot which Bausch and Lomb considered for an expansion. Then Covid-19 hit and the company pulled back a bit and just expanded at their current location. Lots 10A and 12A are larger lots but have 1.7 acres each that are cleared and grubbed and she would like to talk about grading those in tonight's meeting. The final payment for the \$3.5 million Tobacco Commission grant from Comcast was signed off today. It was a \$7 million project and activated 8,045 homes at the Lake. There were a couple more successful grants as well recently with smaller ISP's. Although there are issues with the tower project, towers are up in the County which can be built on. There is also a Tobacco Commission grant that just opened up in the Southern Virginia Economic Development Program which is the same program that helped build the shell building. We depleted most of those funds and then Poplar Forest applied for their trail system this last round and received the grant, so all of Bedford County's allotment was used. Now, \$5.5 million has been put back in the program for all the southern Virginia counties. Staff is looking to apply for funds for grading. The Gauntlet business competition will begin February 9 and Ms. Bailey will be giving more information in her report. Halifax County wants to reference Bedford's incentive guidelines and documents in their policy changes. The legislators in Richmond are making many changes and she is keeping an eye on the PPP money and taxes and she sent an email to Senator Newman regarding the local grants that have been disbursed. There was a Teva prospect this week brought to the EDA by Glenn Youngkin, who is running for Governor. All of the equipment is now out of the building and the property is now under contract with another prospect. Once the due diligence is done, staff will work with the buyer to find the best and highest use. She believes the buyer is an investment firm. It is challenging to find a pharmaceutical company interested when the building has neither equipment nor employees, so they are advertising it to all clean manufacturing, including food and beverage and cosmetics.

B. Marketing/Business Development Report

Ms. Bailey reported Bedford One has been quieter this year due to Covid-19, but they are moving forward with two virtual tours in March. She is working on the details for the March 3 tour with the Liberty University Nursing School and ways to incentivize the students and keep them engaged. Sam Moore will be the second March tour which will be held on March 24. There is almost \$13,000 left over from the shell building project and \$10,000 left from the Meade Road project. Grant vouchers have been submitted for payment to the Tobacco Commission, but she said she didn't want to close out the projects as final with available funds remaining since a prospect is interested in the shell building. Community Development has a comprehensive plan that contains a chapter regarding economic development that Ms. Bailey is updating. On Monday, Ms. Bailey and Mrs. Blido will participate in the Chamber of Commerce podcast entitled "Chamber Vibe". The Gauntlet Program which is a business competition, is new to Bedford County. It provides training for those who want to start a business and the participants compete for money. It will be held virtually from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. every Tuesday from February 9 to May 27. Hundreds of Gauntlet alumni, industry experts, investors, and community leaders speak to the participants about their plans. Wendy Witt who is opening a new business in Town will be involved in the program. A disc golf clinic by Paul Macbeth is being sponsored by the Chamber on April 10. Attendees can sign up for a private training session with him and will receive a disc golf starter kit containing three discs. Ms. Bailey noted that the Covid-19 workspace standards will become permanent in Virginia and will affect employees and employers. Further information can be found on the Governor's website.

Chairman Messier updated the EDA members about some business changes along Bridge Street.

C. Monthly Financial Report (January 2021)

Staff reviewed the financial report with the EDA members and answered questions. Fiscal Management is implementing a new operating system so not all data was available at this time for the current year.

D. Monthly Accounts Payable Report – (January bills that have been paid)

Staff reviewed the accounts payable report with the EDA members and answered questions.

(5) TOWN OF BEDFORD

A. Elba Butcher Shoppe consideration to amend lease

Mrs. Blido reported that the lease did not actually start until June 1, 2020, not April 1, 2020, so the owners have asked that the lease be changed to reflect the two month difference. Mr. Skelley has updated the lease and if approved by the EDA, Chairman Messier will sign the corrected document. Mrs. Blido suggested to the owners to advertise a little more, especially to people that may be traveling through Bedford from Lynchburg, Forest, or Roanoke. Ms. Bailey noted that some of their plans to host an open house or grand opening were thwarted due to Covid-19. Discussion followed regarding advertising the store and possible follow-up with the owners with further recommendations. Consensus was the store should try to draw in people from outside the local community, which would increase their sales.

Mr. Walton moved, seconded by Mr. Braud, to authorize the Chairman to sign the amended lease reflecting a two month extension to the terms.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

B. Close out Central Virginia Manufacturing (CVM) Performance Agreement

Mrs. Blido stated that CVM has completed all the requirements of their Performance Agreement. They received a \$20,000 grant from the EDA and finished a 2018 expansion. They purchased the facility's equipment from the Canadian company and bought new laser cutting equipment. They also needed to maintain all 15 of their employee positions. They have also invested \$368,000 in laser equipment and forklifts.

Mr. Robertson moved, seconded by Mr. Braud, to close out the Performance Agreement with CVM, declaring the grant successful and the company has met all the required conditions.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

Mrs. Blido also wanted the EDA to know that a meeting has been planned with Mary Zirkle, Sheldon Cash, Mrs. Blido, and the Forestry Department representative regarding the planting of trees in the Town using grant money. She said more will come on the subject in future meetings.

(6) BEDFORD CENTER FOR BUSINESS

Nothing new to report.

(7) MONTVALE CENTER FOR COMMERCE

A. Proposal to submit CIP request for grading Lots I-1 and I-3

Mrs. Blido reviewed with the EDA members that she has applied for CIP funds to cover grading of two lots in Montvale. She will be asking for \$680,000 from the Board of Supervisors (BOS) for this project. The lots have not been surveyed but a \$50,000 grant was received by the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance (LRBA) and passed to us for the environmental due diligence requirements, which moved these two lots from a 2.5 to a 3 on the site characterization chart for site-readiness. Discussion followed regarding whether the grading was rough grading or pad-ready grading. The CIP request, if funded, will allow the lots once grading is done, to bump to a 5 in site-readiness, making the lots pad-ready for any interested business. Mrs. Blido explained that she wanted to keep the EDA informed and to have their support in requesting these funds. Mr. Robertson noted that a meeting is scheduled for 9 a.m. on Saturday to survey and review the Montvale school. Someone is interested in the geographic location of the school and he will inform the EDA of any further details once he attends the meeting.

(8) NEW LONDON BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER

A. Proposal to submit CIP request for grading Lots 10A and 12A

Mrs. Blido reviewed the CIP request with the EDA members. When speaking with Sarah Capps from the Tobacco Commission, she mentioned that the prospect for the shell building liked having Lot 9 next to the building if a future expansion was necessary. She suggested that while the equipment was on-site to grade Lots 10A and 12A, have Lot 9 graded as well to make it more marketable. Mrs. Blido received a quote from Hurt and Proffitt for \$5,200 for the site ops work needed to determine the lot's best use first and then they can create a grading plan thereafter, but in time to apply for a Tobacco Commission grant to offset the CIP money. Discussion followed about the grading of Lot 9 and that a potential user of the property should have input in future use, site, and grading plans. Discussion also pertained to other lots in the park that could use funds for grading. Consensus was to direct funds toward just grading Lots 10A and 12A at this time.

Mr. Walton moved, seconded by Mrs. Gardner to authorize the Chairman to approve a resolution written by staff from the EDA supporting a grant application to the Tobacco Commission.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

(9) CLOSED SESSION

Closed Session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(3), discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body; and 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. Braud moved, seconded by Mr. Walton to enter into Closed Session.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

Mr. Walton moved, seconded by Mr. Robertson to return to regular session.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

WHEREAS, the Bedford County Economic Development Authority has convened a Closed Meeting on this 4th day of February 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 4th day of February 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>
Vicki Gardner	Yes
Wyatt Walton, III	Yes
Matthew Braud	Yes
Kristy Milton	Yes
James Robertson	Yes
Jim Messier	Yes

Mr. Walton moved, seconded by Mr. Braud to authorize Chairman Messier to sign a Bank Commitment Letter as provided by staff.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

Mr. Walton moved, seconded by Mr. Braud to authorize Chairman Messier to sign a lease with a potential tenant of the shell building, subject to the lease's review by the County and EDA Attorney.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

(10) OTHER BUSINESS

A. Brief updates from any EDA subcommittees

Mrs. Gardner reported that her group has been meeting every two weeks and each committee member has been assigned different areas of Smith Mountain Lake (SML); including the future amphitheater property,

Crystal Shores, Mayberry Drive-In, Sweetwater Park, Eastlake area, Bridgewater Bay, and Bedford Community Park. Also included in discussions were Explore Park, Mariner's Landing, and SML Airport. There have been good conversations and reports. A complete update was given by Mariners Landing representatives. The plan is to do a SWOT analysis of each area and then connect the dots throughout the County and how each business area can support one another and communicate better. Supervisor Tuck noted that the Landing Restaurant is relocating from Bernard's Landing to Mariner's Landing, which is a significant move. Another restaurant will be going into Mariner's as well and a national chain is getting ready to announce at the Lake. Mrs. Gardner added that the golf course is being upgraded with a renovated clubhouse. Mr. Tuck said they will also have 120 short-term rental units and a company is starting up as a mentor to provide businesses with help in navigating social media. He noted that many companies are interested in doing business in Bedford County. Discussion continued about the Lake area. Mrs. Blido said they will be meeting with Mariner's representatives next week and are looking at a tourism zone where a percentage of the new tax revenue coming from these development projects can be returned to them as an incentive for several years. There will be more to come on this subject later and staff is brainstorming and reviewing other models to see what would work. Mrs. Gardner stated that organizing these groups has been a great experience and the information obtained has been exceptional.

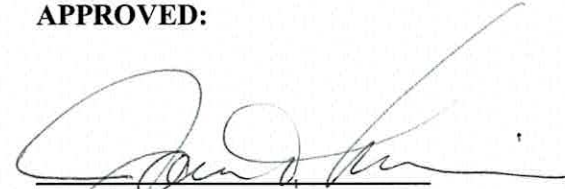
Mrs. Blido reminded the EDA that on March 3 at 10 a.m., she and Chairman Messier will be meeting with Sam Rasoul and introducing him to the CERE building and the New London Business and Technology Center park.

Mr. Hiss reported that officially, Virginia is in the 1B Phase of the Covid-19 Pandemic. It has been frustrating because the region has been very slow in its ability to handle the situation. State government departments have not done well in carrying the ball across the finish line and have asked local governments to step in and help at the last minute. They are working on holding a vaccine clinic at the County gym every Tuesday. County employees will be volunteering and school employees will be the first to go through the clinic. The Health Department will vaccinate school employees next week for the first clinic. Hopefully, within one of the next few Tuesdays this month, all County employees will be able to take part. Then they will open up to the general public for those over age 65. The region receives only 3,000 vaccines per week, with a total population of 255,000. Discussion followed regarding the vaccinations and continuity of government.

(11) ADJOURNMENT

7:23 p.m.

APPROVED:



Chairman



Secretary