



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

**January 7, 2021
5:30 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

Staff Present: Robert Hiss - County Administrator; Amanda Kaufman - Deputy County Administrator (by phone); Traci Blido - EDA Secretary; Pam Bailey - Marketing & Business Development Coordinator; Patrick Skelley - County Attorney

Staff Absent: None

Transcriber: Julia Peters

Guests: Mickey Johnson - County Supervisor District 1; Edgar Tuck - County Supervisor District 2

(1) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Messier asked for a motion to approve and/or any amendments to the Authority's January 7, 2021 agenda.

Mr. Braud moved, seconded by Mr. Walton, to approve the January 7, 2021 EDA agenda, as presented.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

(2) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES - December 3, 2020

Chairman Messier asked for approval and/or any amendments to the Authority's December 3, 2020 meeting minutes.

Mr. Smith moved, seconded by Mrs. Gardner, to approve the December 3, 2020 meeting minutes, as presented.

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

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

(3) REPORTS

A. Economic Development Director's Report

Mrs. Blido wished everyone a happy new year and thanked the EDA for their support through 2020 and enduring the many Covid-related protocols. The month began with a big prospect request that came through the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance (LRBA) and continued from there with a lot of business inquiries and many meetings. Project "SLED" came through the LRBA, which was a large-scale prospect for the Teva site and we had to act quickly with several partners to collect information right before the holidays. Flood plain maps and aerial maps were submitted and Mrs. Blido also shared some information about the TEVA site with Abbott Labs leadership to make sure they are familiar with the building. She then learned from JLL that there was a contract for that property. She did not have further information but will learn more soon and continues to market the site hoping a pharmaceutical company will be interested. The announcement for Damage Prevention Solutions has taken place. The Back to Business grant program and the meat processing grant program have been closed out. She thanked Ms. Bailey for all the phone calls and paperwork she completed for these grants. She also thanked the Commissioner of Revenue, the Treasurer, the entire finance team, and the Extension Agent for their involvement. The business ag community was very grateful for the four grants that were awarded to help with food security in Bedford County and the grants have been put to good use. A photo was received from Bramble Hollow Farm in Montvale where they built an entire building and we were able to reimburse them for the building materials used. The new space will be used for a community kitchen/agriculture processing area. The bigger food processor, Eco-Friendly Foods, sent a very nice thank you and they were very grateful, showing us what they did with the grant money.

In December, Neathawk Lumber Company had their tactical review committee with the planning department and are already expanding in Montvale. Innerspec is building a 10,000 square foot robotic non-destructive test (NDT) center, which is a \$2 million investment. Mrs. Blido and Ms. Bailey are assisting Innovairre with their layoffs and helping those employees affected. The company will be down to about 150 employees after these layoffs. They have also been working on Tobacco Commission grants, Comcast, and shell building reports. There will be a Tobacco Commission meeting tomorrow and Delegate Chris Hurst is the new chairman of the Southwest Virginia committee. A tour has been planned for Delegate Sam Rasoul in March for the New London Business and Technology Center. He is interested in seeing the LU Center for Engineering, Research and Education, and the shell building and businesses in the park.

Bedford County will be participating this year in the Gauntlet which is about entrepreneurship, not only in high-tech small companies but also retail and small shops. It helps entrepreneurs find resources and connects them to organizations that can help them grow. Part of the program is a Shark Tank-type event where the participants can win grants. Mrs. Blido asked the EDA members to think about whether they would want to add any funds to the pot for this event. The Gauntlet program begins in February but it will be a few months before the Shark Tank portion is held.

B. Marketing/Business Development Report

Ms. Bailey reported that about \$500,000 was provided in grants to 99 local businesses. There were 120 businesses that applied for assistance but 16 were ineligible. Some of those ineligible did not have enough of a loss or had received a grant from the Town. Five companies did not provide all the required documentation and therefore were also not eligible. In the Phase 2 portion of the grant programs for companies with gross revenues between \$3 million and \$25 million, the EDA provided \$81,000 in total grants to nine companies. Out of the nine companies, only two had received an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) loan, and all but one received funds from the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). These nine companies accounted for 400 jobs in Bedford County so the grants were really appreciated and several sent very nice thank you notes. For the meat processing grants, \$260,510.58 in grants was distributed to four farms and only one of these farms had received any EIDL or PPP assistance.

For Bedford One, a tour is being scheduled for Sam Moore Furniture sometime in late March. Liberty University will be doing their nursing school tour on March 3. Both tours will be virtual. Sam Moore continues to recruit and is in need of people to work for them. They have done everything possible to recruit, but have a hard time getting people in the door. They are hoping the tours will draw some interest from the students.

The grant voucher for the shell building is being reviewed in Finance and a payment request will be sent for about \$475,000. The total reimbursement is a little less than the anticipated \$3.71 million. The total receipts are \$3.58 million, so there is about \$12,000 left over. A reimbursement check for \$192,000 will be sent for the Meade Road project.

Ms. Bailey included some data from the Facebook page and the website. There have been 55% more people visiting the pages in 2020 and the two top stories were about the Elba Butcher Shoppe.

Mr. Walton noted that out the \$1 million available for the grant programs, \$600,000 was spent. Mr. Hiss said there was an extension granted for another year by the federal government to spend those funds, so the leftover \$400,000 will be addressed in the near future by the Board of Supervisors (BOS) and how the County will use the remaining money.

Mr. Walton also noted that approximately \$3.3 million was spent on the shell building, including the land and the road work.

C. Monthly Financial Report (December 2020)

Staff reviewed the financial report with the EDA members and answered questions.

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

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

(4) TOWN OF BEDFORD

Nothing new to report.

(5) BEDFORD CENTER FOR BUSINESS

Nothing new to report.

(6) MONTVALE CENTER FOR COMMERCE

Nothing new to report.

(7) NEW LONDON BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Nothing new to report.

(8) OTHER BUSINESS

Nothing new to report.

(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. 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

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

Voting yes: Mr. Smith, 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 7th day of January 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 7th day of January 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.

MEMBERS VOTE


Rhonnie Smith Yes
Vicki Gardner Yes

Wyatt Walton, III	Yes
Matthew Braud	Yes
Kristy Milton	Yes
James Robertson	Yes
Jim Messier	Yes

(10) ADJOURNMENT

7:00 p.m.

APPROVED:


Chairman


Secretary

