



**MEETING MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF BEDFORD, VA
Virtual Meeting through WebEx being held pursuant to and in compliance with
Bedford County Ordinance #O 040620-01**

**May 7, 2020
5:30 p.m.**

Economic Development Authority:

Present:

Dennis Novitzke - 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: Traci Blido - EDA Secretary; Pam Bailey - Marketing & Business Development Coordinator; Sheldon Cash - Director of Public Works; Robert Hiss - County Administrator; Amanda Kaufman - Deputy County Administrator; Patrick Skelley - County Attorney

Staff Absent: None

Transcriber: Julia Peters

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

(1) CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Messier called the meeting to order pursuant to Bedford County Ordinance #O 040620-01. This meeting is being held electronically via WebEx.

(2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Messier asked for a motion to approve and/or any amendments to the Authority's May 7, 2020 agenda.

Ms. Blido said she would like to add **Item 7B. Authority to Negotiate Price of an Available Lot** to the agenda.

Mr. Braud moved, seconded by Mr. Novitzke, to approve the May 7, 2020 EDA Agenda, as amended.

- Spoke to hundreds on Chamber webinars, VEDA/VEDP, and other groups to guide opportunities and share best practices.
- Assisted dozens of citizens in navigating through unemployment processes.

Mrs. Blido presented several slides showing initial and continued claims of unemployment both regionally and county-wide. A staggering 3,357 initial claims were filed in our region the week of April 4 and well over 9,000 continued claims filed by the week of May 2. Bedford County saw 986 initial claims for unemployment in the same week of April 4 with continued claims of 2,501 the week of May 2, reflecting a 10% unemployment rate. Industries affected the most were food preparation and serving related occupations, office and administrative support, sales and related occupations, and production.

The local company, Nanotouch Materials, “exploded” in growth with their disinfecting technology and are looking to expand in the near future. They are currently installing automation equipment to handle the increased orders in their building. She added that it’s nice to see that all Bedford County buildings now have Nanotouch technology touchpads on the doors.

B. Marketing/Business Development Report

Ms. Bailey reported that the New London Business and Technology Center will soon have a revamped map near entrance showing sold lots and revised lot layouts in the park. She continues to work on a brochure featuring all of the County's business parks. Content for the newsletter is in development and all the Bedford One Spring tours have been rescheduled for this coming fall. She will hold a steering committee meeting on May 12 and noted that the week of May 3-9 is International Economic Development Week.

C. Monthly Financial Report (April 2020)

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

D. Monthly Accounts Payable Report – Bills that have been paid (March and April)

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

E. Review Draft of EDA Budget

Staff reviewed the draft version of the EDA budget for Fiscal Year 2021 with the Authority members. Mrs. Blido stated that the Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative (MBC) may request a change in their lease rate based on electric bills. Their electrical equipment was upgraded and now they are paying more for their electricity use, as they agreed months ago. With a new lease, they may look at that again. She explained that MBC is charged for the electric power in the space they utilize, but not for the use of the space itself. A new lease is needed since they are currently on a month-to-month basis and she would like to work on that this month. She also noted that the EDA budget proposal is mostly flat and any extension in the Meade Road or shell building project expenses will be reallocated from the FY 19/20 as needed. There are also potential additional expenditures at Elba Butcher Shoppe that were unknown at the time the budget was created and there are no new capital expenditures anticipated for the CVCC building. She recommends voting on approval of the budget next month after some of the Elba expenses are firmed up.

(5) TOWN OF BEDFORD

A. Ratify Elba Butcher Shoppe Lease

applying for CIP funds and perhaps grants within the Town in the future, for long-term maintenance needs.

D. Authorize Request for Town to Return Funds from Expired Loan Program

The EDA provided \$10,000 in matching funds in 2017 for the former Bedford Main Street/Town of Bedford Business Boot Camp and a 0% loan program. The funds sit dormant with the Town of Bedford Treasurer and the EDA may authorize staff to request the funds be returned to the EDA.

Mr. Robertson moved, seconded by Mr. Novitzke to authorize Mrs. Blido to request the Town of Bedford return the funds they still hold from the expired loan program to the Bedford County EDA.

Voting yes in a roll call vote: Mr. Novitzke, Mrs. Gardner, Mr. Walton, Mr. Braud, Mrs. Milton, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Messier

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

(6) BEDFORD CENTER FOR BUSINESS

A. Update on CVCC HVAC Progress

Mr. Cash reported that the HVAC project is going well. Three units are installed and work continues on the network connection.

(7) MONTVALE CENTER FOR COMMERCE

A. Authorize Bush Hogging Work

John Goyne has recovered from a tractor injury and is ready to go back to bush hogging the usual areas of the center that are done twice per year. Agreed consensus from the EDA members authorized Mrs. Blido to contact Mr. Goyne regarding the bush hogging.

B. Authority to Negotiate Price on Lot 1

Mrs. Blido has been in contact with a prospect that wants to purchase Lot 1, a 9.53 acre lot. The prospect is a transit equipment type company with 23 employees. The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance has completed the due diligence requirements to make the site more prepared to sell. Discussion followed regarding the price of the lot sold to Bobblett Gap and the bottom line price for Lot 1 which is not a graded lot.

Mr. Robertson moved, seconded by Mrs. Gardner to authorize staff to negotiate the price for Lot 1, but not to go less than \$200,000.

Voting yes in a roll call vote: Mr. Novitzke, Mrs. Gardner, Mr. Walton, Mr. Braud, Mrs. Milton, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Messier

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

(8) NEW LONDON BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER

A. Shell Building Construction Progress

Mr. Robertson moved, seconded by Mrs. Milton to authorize funds not to exceed a total of \$5,000 with a value of \$300 per company request to acquire necessary PPE. Companies granted funds must be licensed and doing business in Bedford County.

Voting yes in a roll call vote: Mr. Novitzke, Mrs. Gardner, Mr. Walton, Mr. Braud, Mrs. Milton, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Messier

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously

Mr. Hiss spoke to the EDA regarding a Bedford Regional Water Authority (BRWA) sewer situation where growth is outpacing the infrastructure. The New London lift station flows sewage to the Lake Vista lift station in Forest and over the years, Forest has incurred increasing growth. BRWA is reaching capacity of flow through the Lake Vista lift station. This impacts BRWA's ability to permit certain development within the next year and future. BRWA would like to reexamine the New London pump station's underutilization as well as its support of the New London business park, and upgrading the Lake Vista lift station. A joint meeting with BRWA and the Board of Supervisors (BOS) has been scheduled for June 22, 2020 at 5:00 p.m and Mr. Hiss would like some EDA representation at the meeting to hear about the situation and its impact. Discussion followed regarding BRWA taking the unused capacity at the New London station and how it may affect the selling of property at the New London Business and Technology Center. Mrs. Blido will forward to the EDA members the letter she received from BRWA and this issue will be further discussed at the next EDA meeting set for June 4.

(10) ADJOURNMENT

7:50 p.m.

APPROVED:



Chairman



Secretary