



MINUTES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF BEDFORD, VA
Bedford County Administration Ground Floor Training Room
122 E Main Street
Bedford, VA 24523
March 5, 2026
5:30 p.m.

Economic Development Authority:

Present: David Wells (*Vice Chairman, District 1*), Vicki Gardner (*District 2*), Matthew Braud (*District 4*), Kristy Milton (*District 5*), Jimmy Robertson (*District 6*), Jim Messier (*Chairman, District 7*)

Staff Present: Pam Armstrong, *Economic Development Director*, Lauren Thurston, *Business Programs Coordinator*, Niki Feazell, *Economic Development Administrative Assistant*, Patrick Skelley, *County Attorney*, Robert Hiss, *County Administrator*, Whitney Greenway, *Assistant Finance Director*

Guests: Charla Bansley, *Board of Supervisors, (District 3, left early at 6:31)*, Edgar Tuck, *Board of Supervisors, (District 2, arrived 5:42pm)*

Absent: Wyatt Walton (*District 3*), Mickey Johnson, *Board of Supervisors, (District 1)*

(1) CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Messier called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

(2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Messier asked for motion to approve agenda as amended with a closed session added to agenda as item 3(A). Mr. Braud moved as amended, seconded by Mr. Robertson. *Adopted unanimously.*

(3) APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – February 5, 2026

Chairman Messier asked for motion to approve February 5, 2026, minutes as presented, Mr. Wells moved, seconded by Mrs. Milton. With one abstention from Mr. Braud, due to him having to leave prior meeting early. *Adopted unanimously by all other members present.*

A. Closed Session

- At a regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority of the County of Bedford, Virginia held at the County Administration Building on the 4th day of March 2026, Chairman Messier asked for motion to enter closed session. Mr. Braud moved to enter pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A) (6), seconded by Mrs. Milton.
 - *Closed Session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A) (6), Discussion or consideration of the investment of public funds where competition or bargaining is involved, where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the governmental unit would be adversely affected.*
- Mr. Braud made motion to move back into regular session; seconded by Mrs. Milton. Voting Yes: Mr. Wells, Mrs. Gardner, Mrs. Milton, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Messier, and Mr. Braud.

(4) REPORTS

A. Economic Development Director's Report

- Four Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) visits were conducted in February and included Innovairre, Custom Truck, CVM, and Fostek. All reported plans for growth, including hiring, expansion, and equipment upgrades. Meetings were positive, and potential joint visits with EDA members may be scheduled in the coming months.
- Work continues with a prospective project seeking funding sources, with continued interest in Bedford County.
- Members were reminded that the next meeting will be a joint session with the Town EDA on April 14 at the CVCC Bedford Campus.

B. Business Programs Report

- Students participated in the Emergency Services Bedford ONE Tour in February. The tour included visits to Fire & Rescue, 911 Communications, and the Sheriff's Department. Each department provided hands-on activities and leadership presentations. A former student who attended the tour last year, now part of the Headset to Badge program, spoke about his career in 911 dispatch and shared insights on related career opportunities. Two students reached out to Fire & Rescue to participate in a ride-along.
- AP Government students visited the Administration Building for the All-Things Government Tour in February. Students heard from several staff members and participated in a mock community development hearing.
- CTE Expo for 8th grade students will take place on March 18. Several Bedford County businesses are involved in guiding students to make informed decisions about their future classes and career paths.
- CTE Signing Day will be held on May 13. An invitation will be sent out tomorrow for the event, and light refreshments will be provided. The event will celebrate students transitioning into the workforce or continuing education through the CTE curriculum. For easier parking and more attendee space, guests will park in the upper lot behind Elba's and will be shuttled to the event.
- Quotes for the signage project are still being gathered. In May, a presentation will be made with various businesses, pricing options, and material choices.

C. Monthly Financial Report

- The monthly financial report was presented, noting delays in grant reimbursements due to a slow processing timeline, creating temporary cash flow challenges. VBRSP submitted 3 of the 4 reimbursements that were sent out as of today's date. One reimbursement with TRRC is still pending.
- Journal entries are caught up but not reflected in the available monthly report. Interest earnings through January are approximately \$47,000, reflecting an increase from prior reports, while interest rates have declined to 3.83%.
- The Beale's debt has been settled, with final loan closeout to be completed during the audit process.
- Staff continues to follow up on delayed payments, with expectations that reimbursements will be received in the near term

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

EDA	
EDA Mileage – (February meeting)	\$123.93
Bedford Center	
Town of Bedford Power – CVCC – (February)	\$5,154.19
Peaksview Landscaping – (February)	\$518.09
BRWA (February)	\$160.44
Johnson Controls (February; Qty testing fire system inspection_CVCC)	\$476.25
Johnson Controls (February; Band-Aid on water pipe, d.o.s. 12-23-25_East Coast)	\$570.82
Johnson Controls (February; Completed water pipe repair_CVCC)	\$2,897.67
New London	
Southside Electric – (February)	\$660.66
Peaksview Landscaping – (February; lawn maint + leaf removal)	\$2,965.00
Hurt & Proffitt (February) - Site Characterization Report, Sites 10A&12A	\$4,400.00
Washington Street	
Peaksview Landscaping (February; lawn maint + snow/ice removal)	\$2,650.50
TOTAL:	\$20,577.55

(5) TOWN OF BEDFORD

- No new business to report.

(6) BEDFORD CENTER FOR BUSINESS

- No new business to report.

(7) MONTVALE CENTER FOR COMMERCE

- No new business to report

(8) NEW LONDON BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER

- No new business to report.

(9) WASHINGTON STREET PROPERTY

- No new business to report.

(10) OTHER BUSINESS

A. Review of 2026 Goals and Strategic Plan updates

- Staff presented a consolidated set of goals integrated into the strategic plan, incorporating input from members. The plan is intended to serve as a flexible, working document to guide priorities for the year. Additions include business retention strategies, industry roundtables, evaluation of a market-informed shell building strategy, support for key projects, and development of a local procurement framework. Discussion focused on defining a “market-informed shell building

strategy,” emphasizing alignment with current market demand, site design considerations, and flexibility for future expansion. Members noted the importance of using real-time market data and regional trends to guide development decisions, particularly given demand for smaller industrial spaces. Staff highlighted ongoing efforts to gather market insights and engage with prospects, noting challenges in meeting demand without existing inventory. It was agreed that progress toward goals will be reviewed regularly.

B. Review budget items for discussion

- Staff presented a preliminary budget framework for discussion, emphasizing that it is not a final proposal but intended to guide planning in alignment with strategic goals. Key considerations included potential funding for grants, professional services, business roundtables, and a facilitator for strategic planning. Discussion included a proposed signage project estimated at approximately \$75,000 and performance-based incentives, including an existing commitment related to a hotel project. Members also reviewed the potential continuation and structure of a childcare grant program, noting limited participation to date and challenges related to licensing requirements. It was suggested that future efforts focus on measurable workforce impact and direct input from local businesses. Additional discussion addressed available contingency funds and capital reserves, as well as the possibility of pursuing multiple grant opportunities simultaneously. Staff noted ongoing exploration of development opportunities, including potential build-to-suit projects.
- Members emphasized the importance of aligning budget decisions with the strategic plan and tracking progress through measurable outcomes. The strategic plan will continue to serve as a living document to guide priorities and accountability throughout the year.

C. Additional Business

- Staff announced an upcoming “Makers and Entrepreneurs” roundtable hosted by the Town on March 19 and encouraged member attendance.
- A request was made for the EDA to provide a letter of support for the proposed Smith Mountain Lake Center project. Members discussed the potential regional economic benefits, including increased tourism and support for local businesses. Mr. Wells made motion to authorize Pam Armstrong to draft and submit a letter of support on behalf of the EDA. Mrs. Milton, seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made to adjourn by Mr. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Braud. Unanimous consent to adjourn.

Adjourned 6:50 pm



Chairman



Secretary