

**Waynesboro Economic Development Authority
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Friday, November 9, 2018
Economic Development Office, 301 West Main Street
Waynesboro, VA 22980**

Members Present: Mr. George Reed
Mr. Perry Fridley
Ms. Tami Radecke
Mr. Mark Snyder

Members Absent: Mr. Tom Reider
Ms. Mary Sullivan
Mr. James Hyson

Others Present: Mr. Greg Hitchin- Director of Economic Development & Tourism
Ms. Courtney Cranor- Assistant Director of Economic Development & Tourism
Ms. Stephanie Duffy- Administrative Assistant
Mr. Mike Hamp- City Manager

Welcome:

Mr. Fridley called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. and welcomed everyone. Mr. Fridley welcomed Mr. Snyder to the board.

Approval of Minutes:

There being no other changes to the minutes from the August 10, 2018 meeting, Ms. Radecke made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Reed and passed by unanimous vote.

Financial Report:

Mr. Hitchin reported on the financial accounts for September, October and November. There were four checks to approve: \$12,591.45 to the Wayne Theatre Alliance for the second half of their 2018 real estate tax reimbursement; \$10,750 to Timmons Group for continued industrial park design services; \$400 to Black Beard Labs and \$175 to Mountain Laurel Studios, both of which are Grow Waynesboro expenses. Mr. Reed made a motion to approve the checks as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Snyder and passed by unanimous vote.

Committee Reports

- a) Audit- Mr. Hyson was reviewing the bank reconciliations for approval.
- b) Handbook- Members were given updates to make to handbooks.
- c) Loan- Mr. Hitchin reported that the loan committee is currently working on two applications, and anticipates two more within thirty days.

GO VA/Blue Ridge Community College Outpost Update

Mr. Hitchin gave an update to the board. The BRCC Outpost is a community service providing high speed internet for those wishing to sign up for BRCC courses, and/or take online courses. The cyber security business, GreySurf, will work with BRCC students and provide an internship and on the job training for those students completing the BRCC cyber security course. The City is partnering with both projects and providing space for both in a downtown building. A two year lease will be executed within the next few days and then the location can be announced.

Greater Augusta Chamber of Commerce Wage Survey Sponsorship Opportunity

Mr. Hitchin reported that the chamber is conducting a wage survey among members here and in other chambers in the valley. The survey results will deliver important information that is not normally found through the Virginia Employment Commission or other published data and will aid existing businesses as well as enhance attraction efforts. He recommended that the EDA show support by sponsoring the survey at the Silver level -- \$500. The board agreed that this was an important project and Mr. Reed made a motion for the EDA to sponsor the survey at the \$500 level. Ms. Radecke seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Monthly Updates

- a) Downtown Redevelopment
 - i. Virginia Museum of Natural History- The Waynesboro Advocacy Committee has interviewed architecture firms to select one within weeks to begin work. The goal is to have some preliminary information to share with the general assembly during FY20 budget session.
- b) Grow Waynesboro- Ms. Cranor gave an update on the Grow Waynesboro program. This year was the third year for the Grow Waynesboro initiative and the first year it was funded by community sponsors. There were fifteen applicants which resulted in four awardees receiving a total of \$22,000 in grant funds. The four businesses will be open by the end of March 2019 as stipulated in their performance agreements. The EDA requested Ms. Cranor put together a documents showing success stories and stats for the program.
- c) Tourism- Ms. Cranor reported on some noteworthy PR Waynesboro has received recently. Hops Kitchen was chosen to represent Virginia in the Food Network's online round-up of the best nachos in each state. USA Today also ranked Waynesboro number fourteen in the top fifty places to live in the U.S. Ms. Cranor will e-mail the link to everyone for reference. Waynesboro recently received a \$50,000 grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation for marketing efforts. The funding will go towards the creation of the new Visitors Guide and the new tourism website which is underway. She reported on the Greater Augusta Regional Tourism (GART) Beerwerks passport initiative. The passport program has received 2,444 redeemed passports which equates to almost 15,000 brewery visits. The program will feature a new t-shirt color in January, encouraging people to come back and do the trail again. Survey results show that people who are participating in the passport program are spending more time than planned in the valley, resulting in additional spending. The larger regional committee, Shenandoah Valley Tourism Partnership (SVTP) is working on adding utrip to their website which will work as a call to action by allowing people to build an itinerary based on their interests. All lodging in the valley will be listed and each locality will add fifty attractions. SVTP will be the first in Virginia to use utrip.

- d) Industrial Properties – Mr. Hitchin gave a brief presentation with updates on site development, website, and new Federal Opportunity Zones.
- i. Website update- The new Waynesboro Economic Development website is under way. A screen shot of the homepage was shown. A screenshot of the Nature’s Crossing website was also shown as well as the data and demographics tool which the EDA had voted in August to fund.
 - ii. Opportunity Zone- Opportunity Zones are low-income census tracts that offer tax incentives to investors who invest and hold their capital gains in Opportunity Funds. Investors in Opportunity Funds receive a temporary deferral on their capital gains taxes if they hold their investments for at least 5 years, and a permanent exclusion from a tax on capital gains from the Opportunity Zones investments if the investments are held for 10 years. This is a new program and it has not been completely defined but Waynesboro does have a designated Opportunity Zone which covers the East Main Street Corridor as well as the two industrial properties. This designation will be in place for the next ten years.
 - iii. TIER System & Site Readiness- the Timmons Group created a tier system for the state which rates properties on site readiness from tier zero to tier five. Site readiness is important because timeframes for businesses to be operational are now shorter than ever and the more a site is developed and ready, the faster a business can be open.
 - iv. Waynesboro Readiness- Mr. Hitchin talked about the southern corridor connection road and how it plays into site readiness for the two industrial parks. In 2023 when the connector road is complete, Nature’s Crossing Technology Center will move from a tier two to a tier four site. Some additional engineering studies and an extension from the southern corridor road to the Waynesboro Commerce & Industry Park will bring that park from a tier two to a tier four site as well.

Consider Holding a Closed Meeting

Mr. Reed moved to recess into a closed meeting in order to be briefed by staff members or consultants about actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the local government’s negotiating or litigating posture, as authorized by section 2.2-3711(A)(7) of the state code. The subject matter of the meeting—and the litigation—is judgment to recoup Grow Waynesboro grant funds.

The motion passed on a roll call vote as follows: Mr. Fridley, aye, Mr. Reed, aye, Mr. Snyder, aye, Ms. Radecke, aye.

Ms. Radecke made a motion to reconvene to an open session and moved to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Economic Development Authority of Waynesboro has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and WHEREAS, 2.2-3711(A)(7) of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Economic Development Authority that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Economic Development Authority of Waynesboro hereby certifies 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 business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Economic Development Authority of Waynesboro.

The motion passed on a roll call vote as follows: Mr. Fridley, aye, Mr. Reed, aye, Mr. Snyder, aye, Ms. Radecke, aye.

Mr. Snyder then made a motion, authorizing city staff to move forward with legal counsel to recoup Grow Waynesboro grant funds. Mr. Reed seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:08.

Respectfully submitted 2/8/19


Stephanie Duffy
Recording Secretary

Certified as approved 2/8/19


Gregory E. Hitchin
Secretary/Treasurer