

VIRGINIA: A MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF SURRY COUNTY HELD ON March 7, 2019 AT 5:00 P.M. IN THE GENERAL DISTRICT COURTROOM OF THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER.

PRESENT: Mr. SAM EDWARDS, III; CHAIRPERSON
Mr. LAFAYETTE POWELL; VICE CHAIRPERSON
Mrs. GLADYS W. HARDY
Mr. ROBERT CHANDLER
Mrs. GWENDOLYN BROWN

ABSENT: Mrs. JENNIFER GWALTNEY
Mr. JASON SEWARD

ALSO

PRESENT: Mr. HAROLD JONES, CHAIRMAN SURRY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMERSE
Ms. MELISSA ROLLINS, ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINSTRATOR
Mrs. CAROL SWINDALL. EDA TREASURE, COUNTY INTERIM FINANCE DIRECTOR

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Sam Edwards called the meeting to order.

MOMENT OF SILANCE

Mr. Sam Edwards called for a moment of silence.

PLEDGE OF ALEAGENCE

Mr. Sam Edwardes called for the Pledge of Allegiance

RECORD ATTENDANCE

Mr. Sam Edwards called attendance. Mrs. Gwaltney and Mr. Seward were absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Edwards called for the approval of past meting minutes.

1. August 29, 2018 (previously not approved due to missing comments from Mr. Brendan Hefty's presentation)

Mr. Edwards commented that he had received comments from Mr. Bryan Hefty, and discussed the content of the correspondence.

Mr. Chandler concurred with Mr. Edwards and commented that the minutes would be corrected and provided to the member.

Mr. Chandler commented the Minutes had been adopted in the last meeting except for Mr. Hefty comments.

2. January 3, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Edwards requested if there were any questions or comments. There were none. The minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mrs. Swindell reported the beginning balance of \$67,473.80, and an ending balance of \$70,146.39.

Mr. Chandler made a motion to accept the Treasures report. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hardy.

Mr. Edwards asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none. Mr. Edwards called for the vote. The Treasures Report was accepted by all Directors present.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

There was none.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Edwards call for Committee reports.

A. Bylaws Committee:

Mr. Chandler reported the Bylaws were adopted in the January meeting will now appear on the county's website as well as the minutes from the EDA. He also praised the importance of the county's new web site for the information now available to the citizens.

B. Planning Commission:

Mr. Edwards reported that he has been attending the meetings and the Planning Commission work on the Comprehensive Plan for the County's future development. He expressed the importance of the process for the County. The Planning Commission is establishing the future growth, economic development, schools, and the strategy for county development for the next several years. He highlighted the importance of receiving citizen input and pointed out that the process in being accomplished in different modules and the next module to be work on is transportation. He also pointed out the last module provided for quality of life topics that were important for citizens.

Mr. Edwards also pointed out that the Planning Commission went back to the previous module and noted that they were concentrating growth along the Route 31 corridor between the ferry landing and the Sucick County line. He noted there was no significant development planned for the Route 10 corridor.

Mr. Edwards reminded the Directors that the plan will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Supervisors who have the option to make changes.

The next meeting is at the end of March and he would be at the meeting.

C. Economic Development Office:

a. Farmers Market:

Ms. Rollins presented the time line for the construction of the Farmers Market and asked if there were any questions?

Mr. Chandler noted the time line was short and asked if it could be met? Ms. Rollins responded that it is the intent of the county and builder to complete the construction as soon as possible targeting to have it ready for market opening or soon thereafter.

Mr. Edwards asked if there were additional questions. There were none.

b. Broadband:

Ms. Rollins noted that there was a monthly SCS report included in the EDA meeting information. This report is an item that SCS has started and the quarterly report would be issued at the end of March.

Ms. Rollins reported on the Prince George project (PG) including that PG has added information on the fiber installation information. She noted that Surry County had not yet been included but would be soon. She also noted that as the project progressed PG would commence community meeting to keep the citizens updated on their progress.

Mr. Rollins reminded us that PG services about 2,400 homes in the county and actual uses will be dependent on the number of homes signing up for the service.

Ms. Rollins reminded the Directors that the Board of Supervisors were committed to this project and had already provided \$500,000 dollars, and they would provide an additional \$500,000 dollars next year noting the EDA's involvement in the funding process.

Mr. Edwards asked about Dominion Powers' involvement in the process and has PG had discussion with them about using their power poles to provide fiber to the whole county?

Ms. Rollins responded that she was not aware at this time of PG efforts to work with Dominion and understood that PG was concentrating on their customers at this time.

Mr. Edwards commented that an EDA concern is that most of the businesses in the county were serviced by Dominion, and even though some had broadband access many did not.

Ms. Rollins stated she would follow up with PG.

Mr. Powell asked if the 2,400 PG customers were possible broadband customers are current power customers?

Ms. Rollins responded that they are one in the same noting that once fiber installation was complete each PG customer will have the opportunity to have broadband access.

Mr. Chandler commented that they were PG customers and had contacted PG and had been told PG planned to have fiber instated at their home by the end of this year.

Mr. Rollins commented that per the agreement with PG that PG would have fiber to the first 250 homes within 18 months of signing the agreement. This would be the end of March 2020.

c. Business Park Site Assessment:

Mr. Rolling reported the grant request to the Virginia Economic development Association for site assessment survey was approved in mid-February. The total cost of the survey is \$58,100 and the grant was for one half of that sum. The project will be presented to the Board of Supervisors at the April Meeting. She also noted the importance of the survey and the impact on Surry County ability to the Park's readiness for new business. The current tire rating is a 2 and the hope is to be able to be rated a tier 4 after the survey. This would put the county in a better position to attract business to the park.

d. Business meeting with VGR:

Ms. Rollins noted the importance of economic development in Surry County and that VGA was the regional arm of the county's economic development. Between the VGA and other regional organizations, the County has their help in assisting economic development. A site visit has been setup with a team from VCR lead by the president of VGA Mr. Keith Foswell the team was made up by highly qualified professional business men and others. The day long meeting included four site visits including Edwards Ham, Windsor Mill, Hampton Roads Winery, and the forth visit was scheduled with a new business but did occur. The tour was successful. The meeting with the business owners helped gather information that will help the economic processes in the County. This is an educational process for both the business owners and the VGA opportunities for assistance for example the Hampton Roads Winery is looking to exporting their product and the VGR will be able to put the winery into contact with someone able to help. Another benefit was the VGR representatives were able to identify tax credits to the Windsor Mill operators and forwarded the information to them.

Mr. Wanner attended some of the meeting, and other items discuss were workforce development, tourism, linking tourism to economic development, other aspects of economic development, the industrial site development, Board of Supervisor initiatives, and regional development.

Ms. Rollins reminder the Directors that the county does provide funds to VGR.

Mr. Edwards commented to Ms. Rollins about Go Virginia an origination that he serves on the council. He informed her that currently they have a \$44,500 minimum salary need in order to qualify to receive grants. This salary limit does not support Surry County; however, they are currently reconsidering the figure for lower income counties. Mr. Edwards informed Ms. Rollins that he had been requested to obtain some information and that he would meet with her later.

Mr. Edwards noted that district 4, which Surry County is in had received \$3.4 Million but none had gone to Surry County. This an opportunity of Surry County, but we must apply.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Edwards call for the Old Business items.

A. Creation of EDA Seal.

Mr. Chandler reported the seal is on order, and that the final cost is much less than the \$250 approved. Final cost will be approximate \$60.

B. Conclusion of the Financial history Review

Mr. Chandler reported the meeting package contained a spread sheet noting the final review information noting there were four possible Windsor Mill and three Obici annual fee payments still missing.

Mr. Chandler noted he and Mrs. Swindall had attempted to meet twice, and the meeting were rescheduled because of pressing County business on Mrs. Swindall part. The next scheduled meeting time is nest week.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Annual Budget

Mr. Edwards noted the presented budget was developed as a hypothetical structure. To put together a budget is a complicated process and needs to be discussed. We need to form a committee to discuss the content before we but it forth to the county.

Mr. Edwards asked if there were any questions or comments. Being none, he asked for volunteers to be on the committee to develop an EDA budget. Mr. Powell and Mr. Chandler volunteered. Mr. Edwards included himself so the will be three members of the budget committee.

B. New Item, EDA Director Appointment time expiring

Mr. Edwards announced that Mrs. Hardy will be retiring in June, and Mr. Seward has resigned noting that his business demands will not allow him to devote as much time to the EDA as he feels is necessary to be effective on the Board.

Mr. Edwards noted the Board of Supervisors have been notified and recommended that the Directors provide our representative with our recommendations of highly qualified individuals because it is the Board of Supervisors responsibility to appoint EDA Directors.

C. Create or locate EDA processing procedures:

Mr. Chandler noted the EDA requires certain process documents for its on operations. For example, the EDA needs documents that are use buy business to apply for grants or bonds to support start up or expansion. Ms. Rollins has provided current copies two existing documents she had. Mr. Chandler stated he will work with Ms. Rollins to see if additional documents can be found if they exist. He also said he would review the documents provided.

D. Presentation by Surry Chamber of Commerce:

Mr. Edwards noted one of the important functions of the EDA is to receive input from county citizens. We have selected to receive input from each Surry County City Council, and the Surry Chamber of Commerce. Tonight, we will hear from the Surry Chamber of Commers.

Mr. Edwards introduced Mr. Harold Jones the current President of the Chamber and asked him to come forward and introduce himself and provide comments. Mr. Harold provided a Power Point presentation which he discussed with the EDA Directors present.

The presentation is included as an attachment to the minutes.

Mr. Harold's presented the Chamber's top ten (10) items to support economic development with in the county and they are noted below.

The Chambers' top ten recommendations were as follows:

1. Broadband access.
2. New industrial businesses.
3. Focus on tourism.
4. Support from other businesses to help the member's business.
5. Commercial optimization of property in the county.
6. Having a voice to express chamber member concerns to government officials.
7. Highway access for transportation of goods.
8. Easier permitting processes.
9. More media exposure.
10. Tax considerations to promote new businesses.

Part of the presentation was citizen surveys conducted via face book. The survey information very informative with some surprises. The results are noted in slides 3 & 4. Please review the presentation. It will also be provided to all Directors.

Mr. Harold noted that during the survey period approximately 2,400 people responded representing a large portion of the county citizens.

Mr. Edwards thanked Mr. Jones for developing the presentation and the effort by the Chamber to develop the information. He also noted that the information provided is exactly what the Planning Commission needed. He also recommended that Mr. Harold Jones get on their agenda in order to give the presentation and information to them.

Mr. Edwards compared the EDA letter to the Planning Commission with the Chamber's presentation with both sharing many of the same items, but the presentation also addresses new and additional items that should be addressed.

Mr. Edwards asked what the EDA could do to help to push forward the top ten items presented? Mr. Jones responded with he did not think any one could speed up the high speed internet than what is going on now. He then addresses the second item on the top ten list, Industrial business growth noting the need for new businesses and work for citizens. His next item, the need to reserve land for commercial growth. If all the land in the county is reserved for agriculture, then we are all wasting or time in attempting to work on economic development.

Mr. Edwards asked if there were questions are comments?

Mr. Chandler discussed the problems associated with the permitting process in the county. He stated that no one knew or had a list of permits need to build new house or open a new business. He noted the difficulty in working through the permitting process. He suggested that this type of information be developed and placed on the county website.

Mrs. Brown thanked Mr. Harold and his Secretary for the presentation.

Mrs. Hardy commented on the presentation and how many of the items were similar to discussion items that the EDA worked on. She thanked them again for their efforts.

E. Presentation and discussion of "Shopping Mall" idea.

Mr. Edwards introduced Mr. Powell who will present the Shopping Mall idea to the EDA.

The Power Point presentation is an attachment to the minutes.

Mr. Powell presented the Shopping Mall idea to the EDA Directors as a strip mall that can be used to have many different business/stores. The current mall would have six possible businesses but could modified for more or less facilities for business use.

Mr. Powell discussed the prestation and its flexibility allowing different types of businesses supporting the needs of the citizens.

Please see the attached presentation.

Mr. Edwards asked the EDA Board if there were questions or comments. There were none.

Public Comments:

Mr. Edwards called for public comments and reminded the them of the three minute limit.

Mr. Eggleston commented of the Prince George Electric's progress of installing fiber in the county noting that they have pulled fiber from Wakefield to the vicinity of Rockyhock Road and turned down to Spring Hill. Hs noted they are installing poles and there currently concentrating on highway 31 and rout 617.

Mr. Harold commented on questions associated with what Dominion could do or not do in support of the fiber plan. He noted there was a link on the Chambers' website going to Dominion's website to the location with information on what they can and cannot do in support of Prince Gorge's efforts.

Mrs. Carvello noted that she had two questions associated with the "Shopping Mall" presentation.

The first question is what is the difference between the process for the develop of the "Shopping Mall" and the County's proposed store. The second is associated the accusation of new business, and a desire to ensure there is not overlap between the proposed Farmers Market and the "Shopping Mall".

Mr. Powell responded noting that the presentation is the first step in making the "Shopping Mall" visible to the public in order to get citizen input. His response to the second question was that at this time overlap could not be determined because the operating parameters of the Farmers Market is not yet know.

Mrs. Carvello Discussed the proposed bike trail and the potential positive impact it might have for the county. She noted she would provide information on some adjoining counties.

Adjournment:

Mr. Edwards noted that meeting time had expired. He asked if there were additional question before we adjourn?

Mr. Chandler made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hardy.

Mr. Edwards called for a vote. The motion was carried by all Directors present.