

Economic Development Authority  
Minutes  
September 8, 2022  
6:00 p.m.

The Lee County Economic Development Authority met in regular session Thursday, September 8, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the General District Courtroom of the Lee County Courthouse located in Jonesville, Virginia. Present were Chairman Greg Edwards, Secretary/Treasurer Ray Blair, Board Members A.J. Hatmaker and Richard Sprinkle Jr. Community Development Director Richard Johnson, Community Development Secretary Cathy Wilder and EDA Attorney Rick Callahan. Vice-Chairman Paul Johnson and Board Members Chad Hines and Mark Long were unable to attend meeting.

Chairman Edwards determined that a quorum was present then called the meeting to order.

**Approval of EDA Minutes**

Chairman Edwards called for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 4, 2022 meeting.

Richard Sprinkle, Jr. made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 4, 2022 meeting. A.J. Hatmaker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment**

None

**Approval of EDA Financial Report, Bills & Payments**

Chairman Edwards had questions regarding the service charges from Powell Valley National Bank. Community Development Secretary Cathy Wilder stated that she had called the bank to question about the charges. She said it is a Super Now Account and when the balance goes below a certain amount the service charge is applied.

Chairman Edwards asked Director Johnson to check on the matter to see if we could get the charges removed.

Richard Sprinkle, Jr. made a motion to approve the financial report, bills & payments for the month of September. A.J. Hatmaker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

**County Budget Allocation**

Director Johnson stated that the Board of Supervisors discussed the budget at their August 16<sup>th</sup> meeting but failed to make a motion. He said they will take it up at their September 20, 2022 meeting.

A.J. Hatmaker made a motion to contingently approve VA Fairs Invoice for the amount of \$13,039.72. Richard Sprinkle, Jr. seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Whistle Pig EDF Request**

Director Johnson stated that there is correspondence in the board packet from County Administrator Dane Poe regarding action taken by the Board of Supervisors at their August 16, 2022 meeting to approve a \$25,000.00 disbursement from the Economic Development Fund to the EDA for Whistle Pig Farmers Market, which includes a performance agreement for two full time employees within two years of disbursement of the funds.

Ray Blair made the motion to approve a \$25,000.00 loan disbursement to Whistle Pig Farmers Market when the funds are received from the Economic Development Fund including the aforementioned performance agreement.

A.J. Hatmaker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Starlink Funding Opportunity**

Director Johnson stated that he was going to let Mark Long speak to the board regarding Starlink since the School system was involved with the survey.

Chairman Edwards stated that as far as he is concerned it could be removed from the agenda.

Richard Sprinkle, Jr. stated that it is not economically feasible.

### **New Business**

#### **Seed Capital Support Letters**

Director Johnson stated that he would request that the Authority consider preemptive approval for support letters for seed capital applicants. He said that the cutoff date is September 15<sup>th</sup> and the application due date is October 6<sup>th</sup> which is the date of the next EDA meeting. He said that the support letter is required to be included with the application.

Ray Blair made a motion to allow Director Johnson to send support letters for seed capital applicants. Richard Sprinkle, Jr. seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Year Ending June 30, 2021 Audit**

Director Johnson stated that the draft audit was included in the board packet and the original audit is included in the revised packets. He said to this point Tamara Greear with Roderfer Moss & Co. has not reached out to see if there is a date for her to present the audit to the Authority.

Chairman Edwards had questions regarding the long-term debt to the Board of Supervisors for the amount of \$451,875.00. (Page 10 of the Audit)

Director Johnson stated that it referenced the notes or lack thereof from the meeting the Authority had with the Board of Supervisors previously.

Chairman Edwards stated that the Authority did not sign the note.

It was the consensus of the board to not approve the audit. Chairman Edwards asked Director Johnson to set up a meeting with Tamara Greear to resolve the issue.

### **Reports & Recommendations of the Board**

Chairman Edwards stated that he had not had a chance to set up dates for the organizational meeting for the new Chamber of Commerce. He said that Cathy was out due to Covid and vacation. He said that he needs to get with Shirley Watson. He stated that Joe Wolfe has called his office and Winkie Witt with Southwest Insurance wants to join. Chairman Edwards said that it looks like it is taking off and that we want to get folks in that are business oriented and not antibusiness.

Ray Blair asked about the England building.

Director Johnson stated that he will be taking that up under the Director's reports and recommendations.

### **Reports & Recommendations of the Director**

#### **Inflation Reduction Act**

Director Johnson stated that we are serviced by an electric co-op there could be a development opportunity. These electric co-ops are now eligible for direct pay clean energy tax credits for the first time ever. He said that he is looking into setting up a meeting with Powell Valley Electric to see if they are looking at clean energy investments and if they are why not make them in Lee County.

Rick Callahan stated that he has noticed that a couple of the schools have gotten solar panels and along with that new roofs.

#### **VATI Support Letter**

Director Johnson stated that included in the packet is a copy of the letter of support to the Lenowisco Planning District from him. He said this is the fourth grant that Lenowisco has applied for and expects them to be successful once again.

#### **Virginia Housing Meeting**

Director Johnson stated that he met with the Virginia Housing Partners and other committee members August 30<sup>th</sup> at LMU to discuss projects in Western Lee. He stated that housing is a significant concern that these projects could potentially mitigate.

#### **Lee County TRAIID Fair**

Director Johnson stated that the flyer was left in the Community Development mail box to distribute to the Authority.

Director Johnson stated that VFP will be having an event September 14, 2022 11:00-2:30 at the Duffield Industrial Park. He said they are looking to hire 40-50 new employees.

Rick Callahan stated that they are one of the best employers in the area.

Director Johnson stated that he has been in contact with the Lee County Building Official regarding replacement of the plumbing in the England building, and he has also contacted Jeff Cochran with The Lane Group to see if they have as built drawings that they could make available to the authority.

Director Johnson stated that Jeff Cochran is retiring and that he is going to get him set up with new contacts with The Lane Group.

A.J. Hatmaker made a motion to adjourn. Ray Blair seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Community Development Secretary  
Cathy Wilder  
September 12, 2022

Community Development Director  
Richard Johnson  
September 29, 2022