

Economic Development Authority
Minutes
February 2, 2023
6:00 p.m.

The Lee County Economic Development Authority met in regular session Thursday, February 2, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the General District Courtroom of the Lee County Courthouse located in Jonesville, Virginia. Present were Chairman Greg Edwards, Vice-Chairman Paul Johnson, Secretary/Treasurer Ray Blair, Board Members A.J. Hatmaker, Mark Long and Richard Sprinkle Jr., Community Development Director Richard Johnson, Community Development Secretary Cathy Wilder, EDA Attorney Rick Callahan and Rick Watson with Powell Valley News. Board Member Chad Hines was unable to attend the 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 January 5, 2023 meeting.

Richard Sprinkle made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 5, 2023 meeting. A.J. Hatmaker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

None

Approval of EDA Financial Report, Bills & Payments

Mark Long made a motion to approve the financial report and paying the bills for the month of February. Richard Sprinkle seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Whistle Pig EDF Request

Director Johnson stated that he had met with Jan & Melissa Brown and they informed him that they are looking at an April start date.

Seed Capital Spring Round

Director Johnson stated that the cut-off date for the spring round will be March 31, 2023.

Produce Auction Reimbursement

Director Johnson stated that reimbursement from VDACS and the Tobacco Commission have been received amounts totaling \$12,387.74. Mr. Johnson said it is not included on the February financial report because we have not received the bank statement for the month of December yet.

Dryden Issues

Director Johnson laid out a timeline of events in reference to a small leak in the fire suppression system at the England Furniture factory owned by the Authority. He informed the members that he had contacted a licensed repair firm to remedy the situation but it was deemed non-emergent and could have taken up to a week to have been resolved. He went on to describe the discontent of the tenant and that they had taken it upon themselves to have the leak repaired by an unlicensed firm after being told that any repairs would need to be made by someone with the proper licensure in the Commonwealth. Director Johnson stated that he had been in constant contact with the Building Official and planned to meet with his office and the state fire marshal in the coming week to determine the scope of the work performed and if future inspections are needed on the system.

New Business

VCEDA Extension

Director Johnson informed the Authority that the disbursement deadline for the VCEDA England Inc. project was nearing expiration and he had submitted a request for an additional one-year extension prior to the deadline for the upcoming VCEDA Board meeting.

England Lease Expiration/Renewal

Director Johnson informed the Authority that it was nearing the 90-day notice window for England Furniture to exercise its option to renew its lease for an additional five-year term. He stated that the deadline would be March 3rd 2023.

Audit Information Request

Director Johnson stated that Rodefer, Moss & Co. has requested information for the EDA audit. Mr. Johnson stated that he would discuss the request in closed session.

Reports & Recommendations of the Board

Ray Blair asked if Charley Butcher is behind on her monthly loan payments.

Director Johnson stated that she is behind two months and would follow up.

Reports & Recommendations of the Director

Legislative Reception

Director Johnson said the reception was a great event and while in Richmond he was able to meet with the Attorney General and members of his office to discuss recoveries with an emphasis on Tobacco Commission claw-backs and the liability that has traditionally fallen upon counties in addition to requesting future meetings with staff to obtain official opinions. He said the Tobacco Commission is also seeking to create end-user focus groups in order to gather information from those utilizing their services. Director Johnson said he also has been working with the Department of Housing and Community Development on a couple of topics to include regional succession planning and code compliant tiny-homes.

UVA Wise-Gauntlet

Director Johnson informed the board that more than \$300,000 is available in cash and prizes from the UVA-Wise Business Gauntlet with Johnson encouraging the board members to share the information about the opportunities.

Marketing Stipend

Director Johnson said that a marketing stipend reimbursement request for website expenses has already been requested to VCEDA and was expected soon. He added that VCEDA is covering the cost for passes to the Data Center World in May with reimbursement of related expenses for travel and hotel eligible as well.

Paul Johnson made a motion to go into executive session to discuss 2.2-3711 A.5 Discussion of Prospective Business and 2.2-3711 A.6 Investing of Public Funds, 2.2-3711 A.7 Consultation with Legal Counsel and 2.2-3711 A.3 Acquisition and Disposition of Real Property. A.J. Hatmaker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ray Blair made a motion to come out of executive session. Mark Long seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Edwards polled the board that they only discussed issues pertaining to the entry of executive session.

Paul Johnson made a motion to sell property to Autry O.V. Debusk and to authorize the Chairman and Secretary to execute the necessary documents. Ray Blair seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Community Development Secretary
Cathy Wilder
February 3, 2023

Community Development Director
Richard Johnson
February 22, 2023