

**THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 15, 2022 MEETING
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY
IN THE BOARDROOM OF THE HISTORIC COURTHOUSE
SALUDA, VIRGINIA**

Present: John Anzivino, Vice Chairman – Acting Chairman
Celane Roden, Secretary
Joe Heyman (Participating Remotely via Zoom)
Hallie Holmes
James Reed

Absent: Bill Cawthorn, Treasurer

Staff: Trenton Funkhouser, Executive Director

CALL TO ORDER

The December 15, 2022 meeting of the Economic Development and Tourism Authority of Middlesex County (the “EDA”) was called to order by Acting Chairman Anzivino at 9:30 a.m. in the Boardroom of the Historic Courthouse, Saluda, Virginia. Mr. Anzivino asked the Executive Director for a roll call and formal determination of a quorum. The Director noted a quorum was present and Mr. Anzivino noted Mr. Heyman joined the meeting remotely at

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Anzivino asked if there were any Agenda changes and, hearing none, requested a motion to approve the agenda. Agenda approved without changes on motion of Ms. Roden, seconded by Mr. Reed and approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the October 20, 2022 meeting were approved unanimously following motion by Mr. Reed, seconded by Ms. Holmes. (Note: the November 17, 2022 meeting was cancelled due to lack of a quorum)

TREASURER’S REPORT

Mr. Funkhouser noted the monthly summary of Savings, CDs and Checking Account information and that Mr. Cawthorn had taken action, per EDA authorization last month to establish a CD with Primis Bank for a total balance of \$50,000 using funds from a maturing CD and balance transferred from checking account.

On Motion by Ms. Holmes, seconded by Ms. Roden the EDA voted unanimously to accept the Treasurer’s Report.

OLD BUSINESS

A. ARPA Grant Planning Update – Mr. Funkhouser noted the application received final approval and discussions with Whitney Law (EDA Consultant) regarding a kick-off meeting in January with various groups such as Museums of Middlesex, Heritage Committee and Urbanna to discuss next steps to acquire data

No action required/requested.

B. BOS/EDA Steering Committee Meeting – Mr. Anzivino noted two meetings – 11/10/22 and 12/08/22. He noted Chairman White resigned during the November meeting due to an apparent belief the EDA was not receiving adequate direction and support in a timely manner. Mr. Anzivino noted his surprise and disappointment with the resignation but emphasized his belief the Committee meetings have been very productive and he looks forward to continued efforts to maintain and improve communications between the Board and the EDA.

Mr, Anzivino noted the various roles and priorities in pursuing economic development initiatives such as workforce development, future options with property management of surplus County properties, sports tourism, agri-tourism, equestrian facilities and generally pursuing the implementation of the updated Strategic Plan. He strongly believes the Board of Supervisors is committed to economic development and recognizes a higher level of cooperative effort is needed to meet the needs of citizens, residents, existing and future businesses, employees and visitors/tourists.

Mr. Funkhouser noted the Board of Supervisors has requested the EDA meet with the Board for a general worksession scheduled for January 6, 2023. This is a typical meeting the Board conducts with certain departments, boards, commissions, authorities and outside agencies in preparation for the coming fiscal year budget process.

No action required/requested.

C. Strategic Plan Update Process

Mr. Anzivino noted plan revisions to address certain minor text errors, additional data to reflect predominant recovery from adverse COVID-19 impacts and provide some insight regarding seasonal population increases due to campgrounds, seasonal housing occupancy and similar factors. Mr. Anzivino noted a model used by Neal Barber in various localities and Mr. Funkhouser's use of certain aspects of that model to determine a 40% increase is conservative subject to further review of more detailed data such as campground occupancies, boat occupancies, short-term housing rentals

Mr. Anzivino asked for EDA approval and adoption of the updated Strategic Plan subject to any necessary text revisions before publication. There was general discussion of the BOS/EDA Committee meetings and possible future economic development project ideas and options and how to pursue those ideas.

Mr. Anzivino noted the need to appoint another member to BOS/EDA Committee at the EDA's January meeting and his belief the EDA Chair, once elected, along with another EDA member should regularly attend the Committee meetings.

Ms. Holmes asked who businesses should contact if they want to start or expand a business in Middlesex County. Mr. Anzivino noted Mr. Funkhouser should be an initial point of contact to address basic zoning, business license and site options and the EDA should be publicizing its ability to serve as a resource for the economic development basics – retaining existing businesses, expanding existing businesses, forming new businesses and attracting businesses to locate in the County. Mr. Anzivino noted the need for improved website and other work to promote the role of the EDA and its interest in promoting economic development.

On motion by Mr. Roden, seconded by Mr. Reed, the EDA voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to adopt the updated Strategic Plan Update, subject to text revisions not changing policy substance and forward copies of the plan to the Board of Supervisors.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Rappahannock Westminster Canterbury (RWC) -2012 Series Bond Reauthorization. Mr. Jesse Bausch, Sands Anderson and EDA Bond Counsel and Martha Warthen, Hunton & Williams representing RWC reviewed the agenda item with Mr. Funkhouser noting this is primarily an administrative matter to establish a fixed rate with no other changes to amortization, current bond fee and related financial factors.

Mr. Anzivino asked for any questions or comments and, hearing none, asked for a motion to adopt the Resolution and associated paperwork. On motion by Mr. Reed, seconded by Ms. Roden, on a roll call vote, the EDA voted unanimously to approve the changes to the bond documents and authorize appropriate signatures on behalf of the EDA.

B. Committee Members – Mr. Anzivino noted the Executive Director is employed part-time and the need for more involvement by EDA members as economic development is more of a partnership and collaborative effort and not the responsibility of just one person. He noted various projects such as a Marine Industrial Park, improving existing county properties to position them for more productive use, workforce training and other topics included in the EDA's Strategic Plan. He noted possible committee names and responsibilities and asked Mr. Funkhouser for other examples. Mr. Funkhouser noted the lack of a Chamber of Commerce but also other community efforts such as dredging, Urbanna Main Street and Urbanna Business Association, Marine Industries, Tourism/Professional Services that would benefit from having some defined EDA member liaison/lead responsibilities to assist with work program needs.

Mr. Anzivino suggested linking Committee options to objectives in the Strategic Plan and listing those options for discussion at the January 19, 2023 meeting. The EDA also discussed details of the proposed Professional Services Committee such as using the Scope of Work of Whitney Law's current contract as a reference point for establishing work priorities, discussing grants requiring consultant support and addressing other procurement and subsequent administrative issues.

No action taken.

C. 2023 Meeting Calendar – A January 19, 2023, 9:30 AM, meeting date was approved unanimously following motion by Ms. Roden, seconded by Ms. Holmes. Action on the remaining meeting dates for 2023 was deferred until the January meeting to provide more time to discuss and consider any possible changes to the regular meeting date and time.

D. Appointment of EDA Member – Vacancy. Mr. Anzivino noted his pleasure with the BOS representatives of BOS/EDA Committee, Mr. Kimbrough and Mr. Harris encouraging the EDA to recruit members for recommendation to the BOS for appointment to the current vacancy. He encouraged members to discuss this opportunity with people they think would be interested in serving.

No action required.

E. FY 23-24 Budget Request to County - Mr. Anzivino noted the EDA is continuing its transition to more of an independent entity with regard to managing the Transient Occupancy Tax revenue

No action requested/required.

REPORTS/INFORMATION

A. Executive Director

Mr. Funkhouser thanked the EDA for employment over the past seven months, all that has been accomplished in 2022 and his optimism for coming year.

B. Tourism

Mr. Funkhouser noted the two VTC grants were still active with work continuing and planned for completion in early 2023. He referenced Mr. Anzivino's questions about Instagram activity and the need to work more collaboratively with various organizations and events to promote them through various social media channels, reduce duplicative efforts and improve consistent messaging.

Ms. Law noted the need to have more information on the County's She also noted Virginia's River Realm (VRR) Restaurant Week promotion in late January 2023. VRR is also updating the video footage for the various Towns (Areas) specifically featured on the VRR website. She is looking forward to specific EDA member questions and direction on how she can assist with educational and promotion efforts for the EDA's economic development and tourism efforts. She noted the challenge of trying to get businesses to send as much information and content as practical to Middlesex, VRR and the VA Tourism Corporation and the active, regular traffic she sees from certain other businesses in the VRR region,

Mr. Funkhouser and Ms. Law noted the need to create a County Media Kit to assist businesses with promotion techniques. Ms. Roden noted the need for brochures and other information EDA members can share with businesses as part of a Business Visitation/Ambassador program and while a Committee can have responsibility generally, all members should participate in this work.

Mr. Reed noted his wife's business in Urbanna and plans to expand or relocate in Urbanna. EDA members discussed the need to assist businesses with such plans and help where able to do so. Ms. Law noted the possible closing of Truist Bank in Deltaville and how the EDA might be able to help promote businesses and assist them with their development efforts. Ms. Roden suggested some regular articles in the Southside Sentinel to help educate the public on what the County and EDA can do to assist. She also suggested a quarterly meeting with various parts of business community such as Marinas, Campgrounds, Retail, etc.

Mr. Anzivino noted there was much to do and he was looking forward to January meeting where these types of discussions will continue.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Mr. Anzivino noted he had made ample comments during discussion of other agenda items but wanted to have a Resolution of Appreciation for Gordon White's service for consideration at the January meeting. He also reminded EDA members of the need to elect offices at the January meeting and be prepared to discuss committee creation and committee participation.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Anzivino noted he added this agenda item to encourage members to raise any matters and provide a dedicated opportunity to discuss things they believe are important for EDA to consider.

Ms. Holmes and Mr. Reed noted the need for community relationship improvements particularly relative to African-American residents and businesses. Mr. Anzivino agreed noting the need to bridge some divides that exist in Middlesex and throughout Virginia. Ms. Roden also agreed noting that bridging divides theme could be reflected throughout the work of the various committees to be created.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 11:17 a.m. by acclamation following motion by Ms. Holmes, seconded by Mr. Reed.

John Anzivino, Acting Chairman
Middlesex County Economic Development Authority

Celane Roden, Secretary
Middlesex County Economic Development Authority