

A SPECIAL JOINT SESSION WAS HELD BY THE NEW KENT COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY ON THE 16TH DAY OF DECEMBER IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE AT THE NEW KENT VISITORS AND COMMERCE CENTER, 7324 VINEYARDS PARKWAY, NEW KENT VIRGINIA, AT 8:30 A.M.

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IN RE: CALL TO ORDER – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (EDA)

EDA Chair Pat Bell called the December 16, 2021 meeting of the EDA to order at 8:30 a.m.

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IN RE: CALL TO ORDER – BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (BOS)

BOS Chair Thomas W. Evelyn called the BOS meeting continued from December 13, 2021 back into session at 8:33 a.m. He thanked the EDA for the invitation to join them.

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IN RE: ROLL CALL - EDA

Lawrence E. Haislip, Jr.	Present
Dr. Kevin Washington	Absent
Paul Robinson	Present
Charles M. Davis	Present
Mathew Starr	Absent
Pat Bell, Chair	Present
W.O. Isgett, Sr.	Present
Rodney A. Hathaway	Present

All members with the exception of Dr. Washington and Mr. Starr were present. Others in attendance included County Attorney Brendan S. Hefty and Economic Development Director Matthew J. Smolnik.

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IN RE: ROLL CALL – BOS

Thomas W. Evelyn, Chair	Present
C. Thomas Tiller, Jr	Present
Patricia A. Paige	Present
Ron Stiers	Present
John N. Lockwood	Present

All members were present.

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IN RE: WELCOME

Ms. Bell welcomed everyone to the meeting. Both Chairs called for a brief recess for breakfast. The meeting reconvened at 8:43 a.m.

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IN RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES - EDA

A motion to approve the November 18, 2021 EDA meeting minutes was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Haislip and carried.

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IN RE: TREASURER’S REPORT - EDA

EDA Treasurer Paul Robinson provided detailed information on various funds held in several local banks. The total available funds balance was \$326,417.80.

- C&F Checking Account Balance \$ 17,868.63
- C&F Money Market Account Balance \$ 30,068.75
- PRIMIS Bank Money Market Account Balance \$ 72,429.42
- LGIP Account (Local Government Investment Pool) \$206,051.00

Mr. Robinson reviewed November expenses and reported he would be making a \$14,000 payment to Timmons later that day. The EDA Balance Sheet reported cash on hand was \$326,417.80, a balance of \$25,201.23 was shown as approved but not spent and an unencumbered fund balance of \$46,706.73 was noted.

A motion to approve the December 16, 2021 Treasurer's Report was made by Mr. Haislip, seconded by Mr. Davis and carried.

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IN RE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT YEARLY REVIEW AND UPDATE

Economic Development Director Matthew Smolnik noted that in continued support of local businesses and educational institutions, the coffee served at this meeting had been purchased from Bugle Call Coffee on New Kent Highway, the breakfast had been prepared by the culinary students at Bridging Communities Regional Career and Technical Center and the donuts were from The Daily Fix. He reported it had been a busy year for the department and provided updates on recent activities as well as a yearly summary.

Recent updates included:

#### **Employee Holiday Gathering**

It had been great to see some Supervisors and EDA members at the employee holiday gathering on December 13<sup>th</sup> at the Visitors Center. Mr. Smolnik expressed appreciation to local businesses who had donated items valued at approximately \$2,400 for the employee raffle and reported hand written thank you notes had been mailed to all participating businesses. Supplemental gift cards had been purchased from local businesses and the food had been prepared by The Daily Fix.

#### **Strategic Urban Applications (SUA)**

Mr. Smolnik reported the contract with SUA would expire on January 15, 2021, which would be a few days prior to the EDA's January meeting. It would be necessary for the Marketing Committee to meet after the January EDA meeting as the contract renewal referenced a dollar amount which needed to be determined for the specific year of marketing services.

#### **EDA Board Appointments**

The terms of both Charles Davis and Larry Haislip would be expiring on December 31, 2021. Mr. Davis and Mr. Haislip had both been reappointed by the BOS on December 13<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Contract with Forester Erik Blake for Fisher Tract Timber Marketing**

A contract with Forester Erik Blake to sell timber on the Fisher Tract would expire at midnight on December 31, 2021 and Mr. Blake had requested an extension through the end of calendar year 2022. Mr. Smolnik reported he had asked County Attorney Brendan Hefty to draft an amendment, the fourth since the original contract had been signed, and the EDA Fisher Tract Committee would meet soon to discuss the extension. Ms. Paige asked what had happened with the contract thus far. County Attorney Brendan Hefty stated he did not believe there would be any problem if the contract lapsed. He noted Mr. Blake had not been

able to find a buyer for the timber and the question was did they want to give him more time to find a buyer. Ms. Paige asked if the County would be obligated to pay Mr. Blake if the contract lapsed. Mr. Hefty reviewed the contract and reported provisions had been included for a fee to be paid if the contract lapsed prior to the sale of the timber.

### **January Grant Meeting and Members**

A local business owner would be submitting an application for consideration at the January 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Smolnik noted the possibility of having a second application for January as well as a third for the February Grant Subcommittee meeting.

The yearly summary included:

### **Funding from the BOS**

Mr. Smolnik expressed appreciation to the BOS for their financial support over the past year. The Board had provided \$35,000 in early 2021 to fund annual EDA marketing efforts and \$35,000 to fund EDA operations. The Board had also allocated approximately \$28,000 for preliminary roadway engineering to spur economic development activities at a large industrial tract. All allocated funds would be returned to the County by either a state grant or the property owner. The County had fronted the money as a way to proactively go after large scale economic development end users.

### **Colonial Downs and Rosie's**

- The Dumfries Rosie's had opened in January of 2021 with 150 HHR (Historical Horse Racing) machines, which were providing New Kent with additional HHR revenue.
- Live racing had returned with a matinee schedule this past summer and New Kent County was once again the premier sponsor of The Virginia Derby.
- Colonial Downs had hosted a fireworks display on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July for the community.
- Mr. Hathaway, Mr. Stiers and Visitors Center staff had provided donuts and breakfast pizzas to stable workers at Colonial Downs to say thank you for their hard work. Hole Family Donuts and More on New Kent Highway had prepared food for this event.
- A business networking event had been held at The Virginia Derby with local landowners, brokers/agents, consultants, engineers and friends of horse racing.
- A referendum for another Rosie's had passed in Emporia in November but a similar referendum in Amherst had failed.
- The Vinton Rosie's had recently opened their expansion which included increasing the number of HHR machines from 150 to 500 and the addition of a parking deck.

### **EDA Business Incentive Grant Program**

The EDA Business Incentive Grant Program was going strong with numerous payments being made to local businesses who had met performance standards outlined in their grant approvals. Eight New Kent County businesses had received funds from the EDA.

### **Fisher Tract Logging**

VDOT had reported the easement for the road frontage at the Fisher Tract had been abandoned and it would be New Kent's responsibility to obtain easements. Easements had since been secured from adjoining property owners (Fisher and Batkins). Forester Erik Blake had advertised the sale of the timber but no bids had been received. The EDA would continue this process into 2022.

### **Changes at the Visitors Center**

- Visitors Center staff had gone through some unfortunate situations over the past year with the passing of Office Manager and Administrative Assistant Marilyn Mills and former

EDA member Eugene Williams. He called for a moment of silence to remember these individuals and encouraged all to keep these families in their thoughts and prayers during the holiday season.

- New staff members added over the past year included Office Manager and Administrative Assistant Gail Carey and parttime staff Matt Swartout and Meghan Shores. These individuals had brought a lot of energy to the Visitors Center and he expressed appreciation for all of their efforts. He specifically noted the efforts of Ms. Carey who had taken on the task of all administrative duties in a new department.
- Picnic tables and umbrellas had been added near the bike kiosk and he was pleased with the number of visitors who had utilized these new facilities.
- Cable television had been added in the main room and was set to play the news or The Weather Channel for visitors.
- The tourism map had been updated to highlight local assets.
- The Visitors Center had been designated as a Certified Tourist Information Center (CTIC) by the Virginia Tourism Corporation.
- The Visitors Center had also become the official Destination Marketing Organization for New Kent County through the Virginia Tourism Corporation.
- These certifications had opened New Kent up to grant money (\$40,000 of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds had recently been awarded to the Visitors Center) to assist with tourism efforts. New Kent could now place brochures and tourism maps in thirteen welcome centers and sixty other CTIC's in Virginia. This was free of charge and would save thousands of dollars. Ms. Paige asked if ARPA funds could be used to print and mail brochures. Mr. Smolnik confirmed it could.
- Contents of display cases had been updated. One case highlighted new businesses and the other highlighted different aspects of the County. The outdoors was highlighted for December and wineries, horse racing, golf courses, the farmers market and wedding venues had been featured during other months. These cases had previously displayed Native American artifacts and items from the New Kent County Historical Society.

### **Strategic Planning Process**

The County had gone through a Strategic Planning process over the past year and EDA member Paul Robinson had served as a member of the steering committee. A rolling open house with comment boards for the public had been held at the Visitors Center.

### **New Business Openings or Construction**

- Martha's Kitchen had opened over the summer and seemed to be doing very well.
- John Karaffa's Patriots Park was set to open in early 2022. The bottom floor would be leased to the Grub Group who would be opening another sit-down restaurant. Mr. Smolnik reported he was working with an existing business owner and assisting with the possible opening of another location at the Patriot's Park site. He noted Mr. Karaffa was the recipient of the largest EDA Business Incentive Grant to date and the EDA was looking forward to helping him cut the ribbon on the new location in 2022.
- The Daily Fix had opened at Chesapeake Circle near the Dairy Queen at exit 211 and was making a huge splash in the local market.
- Ace Hardware had purchased Providence Forge Hardware and the expansion was well underway.
- Pleasants Hardware had purchased Source Hardware in Quinton and was now open.
- The Route 106 water/sewer extension to serve approximately 600 acres controlled by Scannell Properties was under construction. A site plan had been approved for an 830,000 square foot building and a road into the site across from Business Park Road.

### **Marketing Efforts**

- Strategic Urban Applications (SUA) had expanded their role in digital marketing and social media accounts.
- Monthly touch point meetings had been held with SUA staff and EDA members had been invited to attend and provide feedback to guide them with production materials.
- SUA had recently provided updated metrics on EDA websites which had reached thousands of people who had previously been missed. Handouts on Facebook reaches on certain topics had been distributed prior to the meeting and information on website views had been presented in November.
- SUA had rolled out the "Voice of New Kent" video series.
- SUA had also rolled out videos on golf, wine, biking and kayaking in the County.
- New Kent had been featured in a seven-page spread in the May edition of Business View Magazine which had 840,000 subscribers. The magazine had interviewed Mr. Smolnik and Colonial Downs had been a major advertising partner for the story. All of this advertising of New Kent, our local businesses and business climate had been free.

### **Welding Program at Rappahannock Community College (RCC)**

The County, in partnership with RCC, had applied for GO Virginia grant funds to implement a new welding program. Mr. Smolnik noted appreciation to Assistant County Administrator Justin Stauder who had worked closely with RCC through the process. Mr. Smolnik had also worked with several local businesses to obtain letters of support for the application. He was pleased to report \$300,000 had been awarded to modify the cafeteria space in the Historic School into a welding classroom and lab. Ms. Paige asked when the construction would begin. County Administrator Rodney Hathaway reported plans were to begin as soon as possible. Design work was being completed and plans should be ready to submit to permits in January. Ms. Paige asked if New Kent would be responsible for the construction. Mr. Hathaway reported funding would come from the grant and RCC but, as owner of the property, the County would be responsible for the construction.

### **Community Speaking and Networking Engagements**

- ESPN radio interview at the Richmond Region Tourism golf tournament
- Richmond area Economic Development Summit - a 45-minute discussion for ESPN talk radio alongside The Greater Richmond Partnership and Henrico County EDA
- West Point Chamber
- New Kent and West Point Chamber joint meeting at Colonial Downs
- Part of the Grow Capital work group and interview panelist for GoVirginia grants
- Greater Richmond Area of Commercial Real Estate meetings
- Hampton Roads Area of Commercial Real Estate networking events
- New Kent University visit to the Visitors Center
- Amherst radio station interview regarding Rosie's and Colonial Downs
- Working with the New Kent High School honors government class on projects coming in January of 2022
- Attended the International Economic Development Council conference in Tennessee
- Attended the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals trade show for distribution centers and manufacturers in Atlanta
- Several shows with Virginia Economic Development Partnership focusing on logistics, manufacturing and warehousing are scheduled for early 2022.

Mr. Smolnik stated he loved talking about New Kent and the support of County staff made it easy.

Mr. Stiers noted the EDA had given grants which were free as well as loans which were to be repaid. He asked how the collection of repayments was going. Mr. Smolnik stated he was pleased to report payments were current on all loans.

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IN RE: COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no committee reports.

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IN RE: OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

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IN RE: NEW BUSINESS

The possibility of a resolution honoring former EDA member Eugene Williams who had recently passed away was discussed. Mr. Smolnik agreed and noted once a resolution was passed arrangements would be made to present it to Mrs. Williams.

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IN RE: MEETING SCHEDULE - EDA

Ms. Bell announced the next meeting of the New Kent County EDA would be held at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 20, 2022 at the New Kent County Visitors and Commerce Center, 7324 Vineyards Parkway, New Kent, VA 23124.

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IN RE: ADJOURNMENT - EDA

A motion to adjourn the EDA meeting was made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Haislip and carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:37 a.m.

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IN RE: MEETING SCHEDULE - BOS

Mr. Evelyn announced the next regularly scheduled meeting of the BOS would be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 11, 2022 in the Boardroom of the County Administration Building, 12007 Courthouse Circle, New Kent, VA 23124. There would be no December work session. Dates for the remainder of 2022 would be set at the January meeting.

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IN RE: ADJOURNMENT - BOS

Mr. Tiller motioned to adjourn the BOS meeting. The members were polled:

C. Thomas Tiller, Jr.	Aye
Patricia A. Paige	Aye
Ron Stiers	Aye
John N. Lockwood	Aye
Thomas W. Evelyn	Aye

The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.