

**TOWN OF ABINGDON, VIRGINIA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR STANDARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2019 – 3:00 P.M.
ARTHUR CAMPBELL ROOM – MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A Regular Standard meeting of the Economic Development Authority was held on Thursday, October 17, 2019, at 3:00 pm in the Arthur Campbell Meeting Room in the Municipal Building.

**A. WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER, AGENDA REVIEW and APPROVAL - by
Nathan Berg – Chairman**

Meeting called to order and agenda approved.

B. ROLL CALL, ASCERTAIN QUORUM, REVIEW OF AGENDA

Members of the Board Present: Mr. Alex Brown – called in at 3:00 p.m.
 Mr. Kenneth Shuman
 Mr. Don Adams
 Mr. Ernest Daniels
 Mr. Robert Trevorrow
 Mr. Nathan Louis Berg

Members of the Board Absent: Ms. Shanna Carrico

Administrative/Town Staff: Tonya Triplett, Community Development
 Coordinator
 Jayne Duehring, Director of Tourism
 Mrs. Janice Dornon, Administrative Assistant

Comprising a quorum of the Board.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- August 15, 2019

A motion made by Kenny Shuman seconded by Robert Trevorrow to approve the August 15, 2019 minutes as presented.

D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR REPORT

Tonya Triplett made the following announcements:

- She attended training presented by Virginia Tech and the Institute for Community Development in Richmond. During this conference, she was alerted to training to take place the third week in May 2020 for EDA Training. Ms. Triplett suggested that all the EDA members save this date and plan on attending the training.
- Ms. Triplett announced that she has received two grants, one from the Department of Historical Resources to be used at the Arts Depot and one to conduct a survey for Contributing and Non-Contributing developments in the town.
- Ms. Triplett said that the Internet City Managers Group is interested in Southwest Virginia Agriculture; they would like to see how things are done in our area. The group will be visiting the Creeper Trail, Winery along with other locations in town. These members include Mayors, Government Officials and, Entrepreneurs.
- Mr. Adams and Ms. Triplett attended a Rev-Up workshop; the topic was How to Reach People in the Community.

E. TOURISM DIRECTOR REPORT

Jayne Duehring made the following announcements:

- Ms. Duehring announced that the Virginia Restaurant & Lodging Association received 200 nominations statewide and our very own Joel Jenkins came in third for community involvement.
- Ms. Duehring stated that Tourism is measured by the meal & lodging taxes and through August 2019, taxes are up by 2% from the previous year.
- Mr. Duehring has spoken to Richard Rose from the Barter Theatre and was made aware that Barter ticket sales are down by 20% which will result in the spring opening dates to be pushed back, with Stage 2 opening on March 26th and the Main Stage opening on April 2nd. This information was presented to the Town Council during a work session on October 16, 2019, and the Town Council agreed to fund six music events from the Ken Burns Music Phenomenon. These events will take place in February 2020 to help local businesses during the dark time at Barter. These productions will be considered a gift from the town to the citizens from the Town Council and will be named the Abingdon Sessions. The first episode of the Ken Burns Music Phenomenon features Southwest Virginia.
- Ms. Duehring announced the Virginia Tourism Marketing Program is working on an outdoors recreation program to include Abingdon, Bristol and, St. Paul. Graduate students from the DCU Brand Center will be in Abingdon on October 18, 2019, to obtain the highlights. The Presentation will take place in December for a national campaign.

F. TREASURY REPORT

- Mr. Brown was elected Treasurer at the August 15, 2019, EDA meeting and is working in Atlanta, GA which could cause a problem with his duties as Treasurer. The committee agreed to ask Shanna Carrico to take over this position.
- The committee needs to have the names changed on the bank account to current members only since the only members who should have access to the account are the Chairperson and the Treasurer. The Treasurer is the only one who can make withdrawals from the EDA account.
- Mr. Berg is to email all the EDA members a copy of the EDA Bylaws.

G. OFFICER & COMMITTEE REPORTS, UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Comprehensive Plan Update

- Mr. Shuman and Mr. Berg attended the meeting on the Comprehensive Plan. The plan will include changes for Main Street being an all-Commercial format to becoming a Multi-Use format.
- Mr. Shuman attend the meeting at the Community Center presented by EPR on Transportation and Land-Use. The presentation had a good turnout of various citizens from all aspects of the community, these groups stated their opinions and ideas. The new comp plan will have actionability and accountability. The idea is to make the comp plan a working achievable working document and to be used for land preservation.

2. Façade Improvement Update

- Air Serve is waiting for the weather to let up and business to slow down to start their renovations, Ms. Triplett has given them a date to have the renovation completed, and if they do not comply, the money will be given to the Ski Haus to help with their unforeseen building renovations.
- The Humphreys Flower Shop has been sold and the new owner seems interested in renovations to their façade.

3. Courthouse Discussion

- EDA had previously submitted a letter to the Washington County Board of Supervisors about their thoughts on the community development impact that moving the Courthouse to the old Kmart location, this letter received no feedback from the County offices.

- A second letter was then sent to the Abingdon Town Manger and the Abingdon Town Council members. After discussing this matter, the EDA members decided to ask the Abingdon Town Manager to release the content of the second letter to the press and citizens of Abingdon. The EDA is taking a stand that if the Courthouse is moved that it will be detrimental to the downtown area. The county will need to be held accountable for maintaining the old Courthouse if the referendum passes and the Courthouse location is moved.
- The EDA believes that moving the Courthouse would be bad for the County as well as the Town Economic Development. The EDA members believe that all the options should be available to the public, not just one option for the project.

A motion made by Ernest Daniels to ask Mr. Morani to release the second letter that was sent to him by the EDA committee members to the press for publication, which was seconded by Don Adams.

Mr. Alex Brown	Aye
Mr. Kenneth Shuman	Aye
Mr. Don Adams	Aye
Mr. Ernest Daniels	Aye
Mr. Robert Trevorrow	Aye
Mr. Nathan Louis Berg	Aye

All voting members unanimously voted to approve this motion to have the second letter publicized.

4. VA Business Magazine Ad

- The ad for the VA Magazine is currently being worked on and the final draft will be reviewed by Amanda Livingston.

5. EDA Webpage Discussion

- The idea is to create a webpage and link the Town of Abingdon website to the Tourism page. Ms. Triplett has already checked with the Towns IT Department and they are ok with connecting the webpage to the Towns website. At some point, it can be connected to the Counties webpage as well.

I. NEW BUSINESS

A. EDA Training

- Mr. Berg spoke with Cal Stanley of Emory & Henry College about a workshop for Economic Development to be held at the E& H College campus for the Southwest Virginia area.
- After discussion the members decided to take the training as before mention and after that session decide if they need to pursue additional training for the EDA members.

B. Priorities for the Upcoming Year

- Establish a Mission Statement – which has been established
- Development of the EDA Webpage – the project has been set in motion
- Identify Criteria to Attract Businesses
- Incentives for Economic Development
- Comprehensive Plan – the project is in the development stage
- Town Ordinances Update - the project is in the development stage

Mr. Berg noted that the EDA members need to pick three objectives to achieve by a certain date in 2020.

C. Next Meeting – Date and plan for program

The next EDA meeting will be December 12, 2019, in the Arthur Campbell Room, first floor of Town Hall.

J. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

K. OLD BUSINESS/MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA - None

L. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The next meeting objection should be the election results for the Courthouse.
2. Response to the publication of the second letter that was addressed to Mr. Morani about the Economic Development impact of moving the Courthouse to the Kmart location at the Towne Center Complex.
3. Washington County is offering a tour of Wolf Hill Fabricators, Appalachian Plastic and Utility Trailer.

M. ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mr. Alex Brown	Aye
Mr. Kenneth Shuman	Aye
Mr. Don Adams	Aye
Mr. Ernest Daniels	Aye
Mr. Robert Trevorrow	Aye
Mr. Nathan Louis Berg	Aye

Meeting adjourned at 4: 35 P. M.



Nathan Berg, Chairman