

**TOWN OF ABINGDON, VIRGINIA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR STANDARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY, August 12, 2020, 4:00 pm
WebEx**

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

Meeting called to order.

B. ROLL CALL, ASCERTAIN QUORUM, REVIEW OF AGENDA

Members of the Board Present:

Shanna Carrico
Robert Trevorrow
Kenneth Shuman
Don Adams
Ernest Daniels
Nathan Berg

Administrative/Town Staff:

Tonya Triplett, Community Development Coordinator
Jayne Duehring, Director of Tourism

Guests:

Nicole Childress, Abingdon Main Street

Comprising a quorum of the Board

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- February 12, 2020

Nathan Berg moved to approve 02/12/2020 Minutes, Kenny Shuman seconded.

- Kenny Shuman asked that we confirm that the December minutes were approved since EDA did not meet in April. If they have not been approved, they will be emailed to the committee for approval.

C. Treasurer's Report

Shana Carrico will email the Treasurer's report.

D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR REPORT

Tonya Triplett made the following announcements:

- Serving on the Washington County COVID Committee. \$4.6 M was allocated to Washington County. The committee has disbursed \$1.2 M to 73 Washington County businesses to aid in the recovery of COVID related losses. They will allocate an additional \$500k of relief.
- Encouraging Abingdon businesses to apply to Rebuild Virginia Fund.
- Applied for a Hot Meals Grant through CDBG. If granted the funds will be used for Abingdon restaurants to prepare hot meals that would be distributed to those in need through Faith in Action. Still pending approval.
- Business Updates: New businesses Wolf Hills Coffee and The Girl & the Raven are undergoing renovations. The Mercantile has been sold. Dragonfly Spa has moved to 209 W. Main Street.
- Applying for Depot Square to get Federal recognition as an historic area so that building owners will be eligible for additional tax credits.
- Submitted \$15k CARES request to Washington County to fund technical upgrades for Small Business Incubator, Workforce Development, and Stonemill Tech Park.

E. TOURISM DIRECTOR REPORT

Jayne Duehring made the following announcements:

Abingdon CVB Current Funding

	Last FY Final	Current F Y-T-D	% cut	Use of Funds in Current FY
Town of Abingdon	713,000	180,500		2 staff salaries, Occupancy Costs
CARES Act Funding	-	48,000		Marketing thru December 31, 2020
VTC *	50,000	50,000		Marketing thru June 30, 2021
Total	\$ 763,000	\$ 278,500	-63%	

*VTC Virginia Tourism Corporation

Focused Mission:

As a destination organization, Abingdon CVB, is responsible for promoting Abingdon as an attractive travel destination and enhancing its public image as a dynamic place to live and work. Through the impact of travel, Abingdon CVB, strengthens the economic position and provides opportunity for the people in their community.

Our austerity plans include focusing energy and resources on:

- VisitAbingdonVirginia.com - 17,000 unique monthly visitors
- Facebook, Instagram and Youtube - combined 65,839 followers
- E-newsletters – 30,000 emails, segmented by interest.
- Digital advertising using the grant funding we've received
- Seeking press coverage or "earned media." Last year our PR work earned Abingdon almost \$3 million worth of free press coverage with over 314 million impressions.
- Respond to group tour inquiries.
- Abingdon Dining and Shopping Map - limited quantities.
- New alignment of key tourist attractors: Virginia Creeper Trail is top driver. Abingdon's Food and craft beverage scene, Arts & Culture, Scenic Drives & Trails, Downtown experience, history and variety of lodging and amenities are the "spokes" radiating from the Creeper "hub".

F. Abingdon Main Street Report

Nicole Childress reported:

- Tech grant available to Main Street businesses to enhance on-line presence and aid on-line sales.
- AMS does not have Façade Improvement funds at this time.

G. OFFICER & COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Mr. Berg reported the Delegate Will Wampler is leading an initiative to loosen the rules for outdoor alcohol consumption. Nathan will invite Delegate Wampler to next EDA member. It was discussed that having Abingdon's Police Chief attend that discussion would be beneficial.

2. Mr. Berg inquired about training updates (MY AUDIO WAS BAD FOR THIS SECTION)

3. Façade Improvements

Wolf Hills Coffee and The Girl & The Raven have expressed interest in a façade improvement grant through EDA.

After much discussion, Kenny Shuman motioned

EDA to provide 3 Abingdon businesses with façade improvement funds. The qualifying businesses must spend \$5,000 on approved façade improvements. Upon presenting receipts and proof of work completion, EDA will provide a \$2,500 match.

Shana Carrico, seconded. Members Don Adams, Kenny Shuman, Shana Carrico, Ernie Daniels, and Bob Trevorrow voted for. Nathan Berg abstained.

Tonya Triplett will amend the application to reflect the motion and promote the opportunity to Abingdon businesses.

4. Mr. Berg led a discussion about how EDA members would prefer to meet – in person or virtually. Members chose to meet in person, outdoors, socially-distanced, and masked in the tent behind Town Hall.

5. Next Meeting Date set for Thursday, September 10 at 3:00 pm.

6. Kenny Shuman encouraged everyone to review the Comprehensive Plan. It is nearing the final stage and public comment is invited. He also reported that the Planning Commission will be discussing short-term rentals at their next meeting August 24.

7. It was discussed that the Virginia Creeper Trail should be represented at EDA meetings. Lisa Quigley, Executive Director will be invited.

H. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

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

J. ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

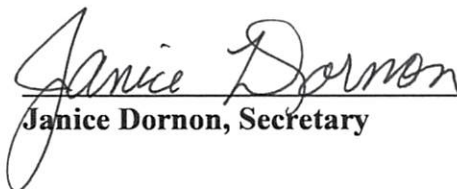
The roll call vote was as follows:

Ms. Shanna Carrico	Aye
Mr. Robert Trevorrow	Aye
Mr. Kenneth Shuman	Aye
Mr. Don Adams	Aye
Mr. Nathan Berg	Aye
Mr. Ernie Daniels	Aye

Meeting adjourned at 4:47 P. M.



Nathan Berg, Chairman



Janice Dornon, Secretary

