

**TOWN OF ABINGDON, VIRGINIA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR STANDARD MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 13 2021 – 3:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS-MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A Regular Standard meeting of the Economic Development Authority was held on Thursday, May 13, 2021, at 3:00 pm in the Council Chamber, 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. Charlie Fugate
Mr. Robert Trevorrow
Ms. Shanna Carrico
Mr. Don Adams
Mr. Nathan Louis Berg

Members of the Board Absent: Mr. Ernest Daniels
Mr. Kenny Shuman

Administrative/Town Staff: Mrs. Janice Dornon, Administrative Assistant, and
EDA Secretary

Comprising a quorum of the Board

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- March 11, 2021

A motion made by Mr. Robert Trevorrow, seconded by Mr. Don Adams to approve the March 11, 2021 minutes as presented.

D. TREASURERS REPORT

Ms. Shanna Carrico gave the bank account total as \$44,160.00, with the March Prepared Meals pay down as \$21,600.00 and the April Prepared Meals pay down as \$18,000.00.

Mrs. Tonya Triplett added that per the MOU agreement with the EDA to distribute payments to the participating restaurants in the Prepared Meals Program, she would be asking for a \$7,500.00 administrative drawdown from the DHCD, the Prepared Meals Program, to be given to the EDA for their administrative services.

E. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORS REPORT

Mrs. Tonya Triplett announced that the Prepared Meals initial grant would be used as a statewide model. An additional \$200,000.00 has been issued to the Town of Abingdon for this program. Round one of the funding will carry the program through September 2021, having 16 participating partners, all were in business pre-pandemic. Round two will start up in November 2021 and will include restaurants that opened during the pandemic.

Mrs. Triplett said that the Washington County Business Challenge was a success. Crafts on Main was the big winner. A new business, the Peddling Goat will be housed at Wolf Hills and will feature men's wares.

Mrs. Triplett has been working with Washington County with hopes for the Town of Abingdon to join in the Enterprise Zone, Washington County is now considering this option. The County has 555 acres near the Washington/Smyth County line that could be usable space. The DHCD program allots funding to localities that create jobs and capital investments with commercial enterprises. The Town has petitioned the County to consider the Town of Abingdon; this will be presented at the June 2021 meeting of the Washington County Board of Supervisors. Farmville and Bristol Virginia are a part of the Enterprise Zone in their areas.

F. ABINGDON MAIN STREET UPDATE

Mrs. Triplett gave the following updates for Abingdon Main Street Ms. Childress;

- First Friday for May was a success.
- Fourth of July fireworks are on the schedule this year.
- Wolf Hills will hold a Grand Opening on June 9th.
- Virginia Highlands Festival is scheduled with Art & Crafts on the Barter Greens and all other events at the Southwest Virginia Higher Ed Center location.
- Airstream Campers are camping on Remsburg Drive through May 16th.

- Appalachian Long Distance Hikers will be in Abingdon in October, bring 250-400 people to the Virginia Higher Ed Center, with education classes at the Higher Ed Center.
- Mountain Bike Trail is currently on hold.
- Pump Track is currently on hold awaiting funding.

G. OUTDOOR REFRESHMENT ZONE

Delegate William Wampler announce that as of July 1, 2021, the Outdoor Refreshment Zone initiative would be ready to be voted on by each locality. The initiative will create economic opportunities and increase foot traffic for local businesses. The initiative will be presented to the Abingdon Town Council in July, to include public comments. Two hearings are needed to enact this initiative. Local law enforcement has already endorsed this initiative, stating that there will be able to police the zones without adding additional officers. The Town Council will set the boundary lines and the hours of consumption. The proposed boundaries are from Southern States to the Cinemall.

Mr. Wampler said, to be responsible that the taxi ordinance for the Town will need to be updated, this occurs in sequence with the updating of the Town ordinances, to include Ubers and Lifts, for ride-sharing.

Mr. Wampler explained that a business owner does not have to participate in this initiative, the business owner will decide if food and beverages are allowed inside their businesses. This initiative would add revenue to participating businesses.

Mr. Wampler asked the EDA for their support when the bill is presented to the Town Council. The bill will require signage for the boundary zone, hours of consumption, and apply for a license from the ABC. By inciting this ordinance, it may be changed or banned at any time by the Town Council.

Mr. Wampler explained that POS, Point-Of-Sale, would have control over who would be served, how many beverages a person could consume.

H. ABINGDON RESTAURANT CONSORTIUM

Mr. Joss Fuller & Micah Childress addressed the attendees about creating a consortium for restaurateurs, where ideas, schedules. etc., could be shared, using a venue like Facebook. The site would list local events, having the appropriate number of staff on hand, this site would be shared between businesses and town organizations.

Mrs. Triplett said that the Town has a Google calendar to announce events. Mrs. Triplett suggested that all businesses sign up on the Virginia Tourism Corporation site.

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

J. OLD BUSINESS/MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

A. Façade Update – EDA is waiting on information from one applicant. Mrs. Triplett is waiting on the new budget year to start the façade program back up, if the applicant is a recipient of the Enterprise Zone funding they will not be eligible for façade funding.

B. Mr. Nathan Berg announced that the Zoning & Subdivision Ordinance updates are in progress and will include the Enterprise Zone and the taxi ordinances.

C. Mrs. Tonya Triplett announced that she has received a \$40,000.00 grant for a housing study. This study will address housing inventory and what the housing needs are for the community.

D. Mrs. Triplett said that Creeper Trail Tourism Office is now open, located at the Creeper trailhead. Mrs. Triplett announced that when renovations are completed at the Fields-Penn House that the Abingdon Tourism office would be housed at that location.

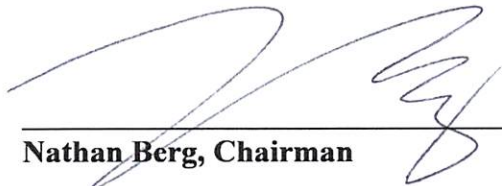
K. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The next EDA meeting will be July 15, 2021 at 3:00, in the Council Chambers, second floor of the Municipal Building.

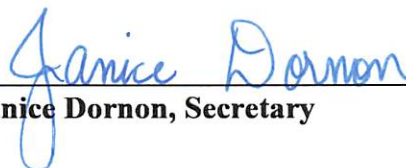
L. ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 4:24 P. M.



Nathan Berg, Chairman



Janice Dornon, Secretary