

**TOWN OF ABINGDON, VIRGINIA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR STANDARD MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2021 – 3:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

A Regular Standard meeting of the Economic Development Authority was held on Thursday, September 9, 2021, at 3:00 pm in the Council Chambers, Municipal Building.

A. WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER, AGENDA REVIEW, AND APPROVAL

Meeting called to order and agenda approved.

B. ROLL CALL, ASCERTAIN QUORUM, REVIEW OF AGENDA

Members of the Board Present:

Mr. Robert Trevorrow
Mr. Ernest Daniels
Ms. Shanna Carrico
Mr. Don Adams
Mr. Nathan Louis Berg

Members of the Board Absent:

Mr. Charlie Fugate
Mr. Kenny Shuman

Administrative/Town Staff:

Tonya Triplett
Janice Dornon

Guests:

None

Comprising a quorum of the Board

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- May 13, 2021

Motion to approve the minutes for May 13, 2021, were approved as presented.

Motion to table the July 15, 2021 minutes, due to not having a quorum of members that were present at the meeting.

D. TREASURERS REPORT

Ms. Carrico reported she has a check for \$18,000 to deposit. An admin amount of \$7,500 from the DHCD for the Prepared Meals Program is expected soon. The second round of admin fee money, \$7,500, is expected for round two of the Prepared Meals Program.

E. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORS REPORT

- Mrs. Tonya Triplett announced that the Prepared Meals program admin fee has been submitted for \$7,500 to be given to the EDA for their help with the distribution of funds to the local restaurants.
- An ad with the application was placed in the newspaper to submit for the second round of the Prepared Meals Program.
- Meals and lodging taxes have increased.
- Hosted bus tour from Richmond, visiting the SWVA Cultural Center, local restaurants, with Donna Marie Emmert giving them a driving bus tour.
- Four buildings in Town have changed ownership and could make the Town eligible for downtown revitalization funding. To be eligible a percentage of the renovations must be low-to-moderate housing.
- Hosted a travel writer for CNN from Atlanta, GA., collaborating with the Martha Washington Inn, Luke's Café, and the VA Creeper Trail Bike Shop to sponsor lodging, dining, and activities for the travel writer.
- Hampton Inn opened on September 9th with 87 rooms. They plan to put a mural on the concrete wall adjacent to the hotel, adding the LOVE letters for a photo opt for patrons. They may apply for a grant from the VA Tourism Corp for \$1,700 for the LOVE letters.
- 1.8 acres behind the Sports Complex will be turned into a Skilled Bike Track. A firm has been hired to create a conceptual design for the Skilled Pump Bike Track.
- Grant was written to the VA Outdoors Foundation for \$110,000.
- Mount Rogers Planning District is applying for 10 million in grant money. Tourism proposes to add the Skilled Pump Bike Track and restroom at Watauga to this grant.
- Meet with the Emory & Henry Workforce Development Department, enrollment is up 63% with 47% from out-of-town. Tenille created a Google document for jobs at local small businesses, which will be turned into a form to be sent to the college to help students with job searches.
- Hosted the Town Wide Yard Sale, with 77 patrons having yard sales on the interactive map and another 25-30 that did not make the deadline for the map.
- Christmas decoration driving tour to bring tourists into town.
- Holiday Market at the Martha Washington Inn. Christmas Parade December 4th.

- Half-page ad in the VA Travel Guide, with 16 businesses paying \$400.72 each for the other half-page ad.
- Collaborating with Damascus to offer a giveaway (2-night stay in Damascus, 2-night stay in Abingdon, with dining and activities, featured in the Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine, with website presence and print ads.
- Grants from the VA Tourism Corp for \$10,000 to the Town of Abingdon, Martha Washington Inn, Barter Theatre, VA Creeper Trail Conservancy, and Abingdon Main Street.
- Washington County gave the Town of Abingdon 580 acres in the Enterprise Zone.
- American Long-Distance Hiking Association to be at the Higher Ed in October.
- Barnwood Builders visited Fairview and local artisans.
- Airstreams to be back in Abingdon in 2022.
- UVA Political Leadership Program to be at the Cultural Center and downtown Abingdon on September 10th.
- Virginia Senators Finance Committee to be in Abingdon September 13 & 14 for the VA Political Leadership Program at the SAVA Cultural Center and a visit to downtown to discuss economic development.
- YETI race on 9-24 & 9-25 with 304 participants from 29 different states. Registration is to be held at Wolf Hills Brewery.
- ARC to be at the Cultural Center.
- VA Commission for the Arts will be in Abingdon in December.

F. ABINGDON MAIN STREET

Mrs. Tonya Triplett gave the announcements for AMS.

- Abingdon Main Street to host the Second Annual Halloween Scavenger Hunt.
- Winter Jams looking for a venue.
- Grant for Bench-Bike Racks on Main Street, holding an art contest for decorating the Bench-Bike Racks.

G. OUTDOOR REFRESHMENT ZONE

Mr. Nathan Berg, the Town Council received signatures promoting the Outdoor Enterprise Zone initiative by local restaurant owners. The Town Council wished to educate the citizens on this initiative as they have seen pushback from the community. Mr. Berg asked the members if they would be in favor of sending the Council a letter supporting the Outdoor Refreshment Zone. The members agreed to write a letter in support.

Mrs. Triplett informed the members that the next Council Work Session would be on September 23rd. The letter is expected to be sent in time for this meeting to be entered

into the minutes. The zone would be from the Historical Society to Main Street, (including the Farmers Market and Wall Street), to the Girl & the Raven.

A motion was made by Mr. Berg to support the Outdoor Refreshment Zone by sending a letter to the Town Mayor and Town Manager, seconded by Don Adams.

G. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

H. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Mr. Nathan Berg asked if any members have reviewed the new Town Zoning Ordinance. He suggested that they make suggestions and send them to Mr. Kenny Shuman, acting liaison to the Planning Commission.
2. Mrs. Tonya Triplett plans to continue the façade grant program this year, with up to a \$2,500 match for Town businesses not on the Main Street footprint. Her budget allows for two grants.

A motion was made by Mr. Nathan Berg to continue the façade grant, with reimbursements up to \$7,500, seconded by Robert Trevorrow.

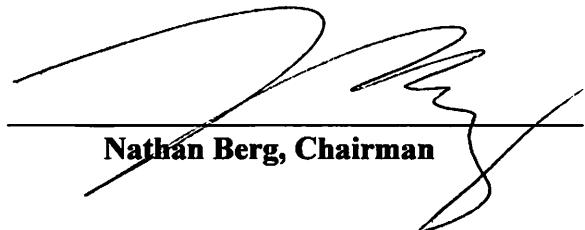
Mrs. Tonya Triplett graciously agreed to handle the administrative tasks of the façade grants for the EDA.

3. Mr. Berg announced that the new owner of the Carter Bank on Main Street plans to turn the building into small boutique-style shops with the entrance beside the Municipal Parking Lot. The same developer will be creating housing in another building he recently purchased. There are no plans yet for the vacant Treasurers Building on Main Street.

The next EDA meeting is to be held on Wednesday, November 10, 2021, at 3:00 in the Arthur Campbell Room of Town Hall.

I. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Nathan Berg declared the meeting was adjourned.



Nathan Berg, Chairman

September 9, 2021
Regular Standard Meeting



Janice Dornon, Secretary