

Bath County EDA

January 11th, 2021

PO Box 13

Meeting minutes from the January 11th, 2021 EDA meeting (to be approved at the March 10th Meeting) Warm Springs, VA 24484 (FEB meeting cancelled)

Chair Joe Wood opened its regularly scheduled meeting at the Bath County Courthouse Monday, January 11th, 2021 at 6:00 PM and led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members attending: D. Hahn, T. Richardson, T. Black, J. Wood, & P. Haynes
Members on the phone: S. Puller (traveling, but joined by phone) Absent: R. Garcia

Staff: EDA Attorney Chris Singleton & County Administrator Ashton Harrison

Guests: Mike Bollinger (The Recorder)

Agenda – The previously distributed original agenda was approved (motion by Hahn, 2nded by Richardson—approved unanimously)

Public Comment/Guests: none

Appoint Officers for 2021 calendar year: A motion was made to keep the same officers for year 2021 as we had last year 2020. (Motion by Puller, 2nded by Richardson—approved unanimously)

Select Meeting time for calendar year 2021. A motion was made to have our regularly scheduled meetings to be 6pm, the 2nd Wednesday of each month, in the District Court room---subject to room availability (Motion by Hahn, 2nded by Haynes--passed unanimously).

Minutes of the previous meeting as previously distributed were approved (motion by Hahn, 2nded by Black—approved unanimously).

Legal Counsel Report: nothing new to report

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Haynes submitted a written report showing a checkbook balance of \$247, 298.42 as of December 31, 2020, along with two (2) bills to pay: 1) a PO Box fee and 2) an annual insurance payment from Baycor for the Millboro building. (motion to approve report was made by Hahn, 2nded by Black--approved unanimously).

Old Business:

County Trails: Secretary Tom Richardson enthusiastically gave an update on the trail clearing project, reporting that there was a new group (the Appalachian Highlands Trail Club) meeting almost weekly (on Wednesday mornings) to clear area trails, and he has been joining them recently. The most recent trail is Piney Mountain Trail in the National Forest, on the east side of Warm Springs Mountain.

Review (and approval) of the Homestead’s request to received reimbursement for expenditures in accordance with the 5% TOT Performance Agreement (\$1.93M):

The group had received the report from County’s auditors where they found no discrepancies in the Omni/Homestead’s tally of capital expenses in accordance with the Performance Agreement signed between the county and the Omni, and so this EDA council approved the release of the requested \$1.93M funds and forwarded this action for Board of Supervisor action the following evening (Jan 12th). Motion by Hahn, 2nded by Richardson—passed unanimously.

Discussion of Proposed EDA Grant Program for NEW Business Activity and

Expansion: For the past few months, our EDA has been discussing the possibility of creating a Grant Program modeled after the one in Highland County. In stark contrast the CARES Act grants that were issued in the Spring & Summer of 2020 (designed to help existing businesses survive), THIS grant would focus on business expansion and award money for companies to either start NEW businesses or expand existing ones.

Noting that the EDA has almost a quarter of a million dollars in the checking account, Secretary Tom Richardson made the case for allocating as much as \$50K in each year of a two year program to help ‘kick start’ businesses as Bath County, the country (and the world) emerges from the COVID 19 epidemic—the \$50K strawman amount being roughly 20% of the money the EDA has at its disposal. The group discussed this idea at length, but worried about creating such a short duration (two year) grant program without Board of Supervisor (BoS) support for follow-on years. It was ultimately agreed to table this idea until a joint EDA/BoS planning session could be held, where we would seek such (ongoing) support for more than just two (2) years of funding. No particular motion was made of passed; item tabled until future meeting(s).

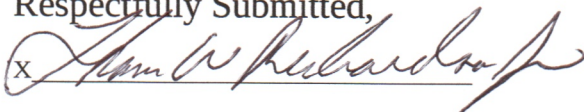
New Business:

Bath County Industrial Park Wetlands Study for the Army Corps of Engineers

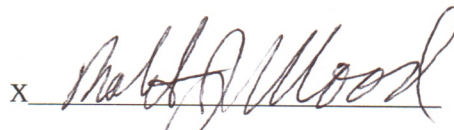
The group discussed the report received from the Draper Aden Engineering firm concerning land in the industrial park that they felt would be designated to be ‘wetlands’, which turned out to be a fairly small area in one corner of the largest parcel. A motion was made to sign a required wetlands and submit the application to the US Army Corps of Engineers. Motion by Hahn, 2nded by Haynes—motion approved unanimously.

Next Meeting: scheduled for February 10th, 2021 at 6:00pm in the District Courtroom (if available), A motion to adjourn was made and approved unanimously (1st: Black, 2nded by Hahn) a little after 7:00pm

Respectfully Submitted,

x 

Tom Richardson, Secretary

x 

Joe Wood, Chairman