

**Campbell County
Economic Development Commission/CEDS Committee**

September 20, 2018

The regular meeting of the Campbell County Economic Development Commission was held on Thursday, September 20, 2018, in the Campbell County Citizen Services Building Conference Room, Rustburg, Virginia.

Members Present:

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| Willie Jones | Richard Carroll | Eric Fletcher |
| George Rosser | Hugh Bragg | Scott Tweedy |
| William Anderson | Kathy Carson | Scott Blankinship |

Members Absent:

Richard Metz
Frank Davis
Kevin Davis

Also Present:

Frank J. Rogers, IV, County Administrator
Mike Davidson, Director of Economic Development
Sarah Johnson, Program Manager, Economic Development
Kim Stewart, Administrative Assistant, Economic Development

// Chairman Willie Jones called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m.

// A motion was made by Mr. Scott Blankinship to approve the minutes of June 28, 2018, and seconded by Mr. William Anderson. With all in favor and none opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

// Mr. Davidson, County Administrator Frank Rogers, and Mr. George Rosser offered brief comments regarding the recent Stakeholders Meeting, which took place on Tuesday, September 18, 2018. Mr. George Rosser noted that a common theme of the evening was Broadband and the lack of reliable access.

// Mrs. Sarah Johnson reviewed the Project Updates that were handed out to the members at the start of the meeting. Mrs. Johnson and Mr. Davidson explained site certification and the importance to prospects of sites that have been certified. They also summarized a webinar they attended where site selectors explained that they are looking to “get rid of” potential sites as quickly as possible in order to narrow down their search, and if a site is not certified, they are immediately eliminated from the running.

// Mrs. Johnson then informed the group that the Brookneal Campbell County Airport Authority contract has been signed for the Crack Seal and Re-Marking project and work should begin in October.

// Other new Project Update news includes a boutique hotel project for Brookneal that Councilwoman LaPrade is interested in and has approached Mr. Davidson for discussion.

// Coldwell Banker Commercial Read & Company was awarded a contract for professional Real Estate services following an RFP, proposals, and interview process.

// Mrs. Johnson also informed the group that she and Mr. Davidson attended a training session recently in Richmond on VEDP’s new website and were shown how to enter our industrial properties in their database.

// Mrs. Johnson then handed the floor over to Mr. Davidson who updated the group on a new policy regarding the Tobacco Commission in which they will now be requiring revenue sharing from the local governments on all of the grants that they issue. Currently, this only applies to the Tobacco Region

Opportunity Fund, which is a deal-closing fund used for businesses doing expansions or new business attractions locating in the area. The county has to pay five percent of revenue to the Tobacco Commission until the Tobacco commission has recovered 105% of the grant. The payback period will be long-term. It also has implications on return on investment (ROI) to the county.

// Mr. Davidson then reviewed the Incentive Policy once more, which has been reviewed in past meetings, to refresh everyone's memories and to wrap up the Incentive Policy discussion and compare with some of the surrounding localities' returns on investment. Mr. Davidson reminded the group that although incentives are important, they are not the most important thing companies are looking for now. The biggest factors companies are looking for now are workforce, existing buildings, and ease of transportation to get goods and products moved efficiently. However, incentives do enter the conversation before the final decision is made.

// Mr. Davidson then explained that over the next few meetings, the group will review aspects of the CEDS that was adopted in 2017 to work on implementation of the goals and objectives. Mrs. Johnson then went on to review the Goals and Objectives that were determined from the CEDS meetings.

// Chairman Jones stated that a Broadband Authority for Campbell County was mentioned at the Stakeholder's Meeting and questioned if serious work was in progress regarding it. Per Administrator Rogers, this is a serious endeavor that is in process of being established and will require a public hearing, articles of incorporation, by-laws being drafted, as well as filing with the Commonwealth of Virginia. He indicated that it will probably be the beginning of the next calendar year by the time the public hearing has taken place and the proper filing with the state has been done, and a response has been received that the county will be formally authorized to proceed. He emphasized that the Broadband Authority would be simply an instrument, not an answer, to the situation. It will be a good next step and as good as the follow-through that occurs as a result.

// When speaking of housing, Mrs. Kathy Carson spoke up, stating that all those she comes in contact with regularly, including building inspectors, electricians, plumbers, and those with water and sewer and septic, are overworked and there are not enough workers to go around.

// Mr. George Rosser asked about the possibility of bringing drag races to the Brookneal Campbell County Airport to bring in some revenue, comparing this to the New London Airport. Mr. Davidson answered that the biggest difference is that the New London Airport was privately-owned whereas the Brookneal Campbell County Airport is a public use airport, funded construction-wise by the Federal Aviation Administration and Department of Virginia Aviation and they won't shut down a public use airport for an event of that type.

// Mr. Davidson then explained that the group will be looking over the next several meetings at the goals that were reviewed and that staff would be producing some performance measures or implementation structures. The staff would like input from the Economic Development Commission especially regarding if they know of any workforce training programs, even ones out of this area but within a drivable distance, that they can bring to the staff's attention to list as a resource for the public. He also mentioned that CVCC is one of the primary workforce training credentialing organizations, and in 2017 they issued more workforce credentials than any other community college in the Commonwealth. Mrs. Carson mentioned a private program recently approved to provide grant programs towards workforce training, and stated she would get more information to Mr. Davidson.

// After setting the 2019 meeting schedule, Mr. Davidson turned the meeting back over to Chairman Jones, who asked for matters from committee members. Mr. Rosser suggested adding an automotive technician program to workforce training programs. Mrs. Carson then mentioned the growth of conveyor work in Lynchburg. Mr. Hugh Bragg questioned broadband company HughesNet, for access to areas unable to have broadband. It was discussed that the expense is too high and that cable internet is much faster. Mr. Scott Blankinship mentioned a local internet provider called Infinisky that uses microwave technology and suggested the group research them for more details.

// With nothing further presented, Chairman Jones called for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Carson motioned and Mr. Fletcher seconded. With all in favor and none opposed, the meeting of the Economic Development Commission was adjourned at 1:12 p.m. The next meeting will take place on March 21, 2019.