

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

June 25, 2020

The regular meeting of the Campbell County Economic Development Commission was held on Thursday, June 25, 2020, in the Campbell County Haberer Building Multi-Use Room, Rustburg, Virginia.

Members Present:

Frank Davis	Hugh Bragg
Kevin Davis	William Anderson
Scott Blankinship	Dean Monroe
George Rosser	

Members Absent:

Richard Carroll
Kathy Carson
Eric Fletcher
Willie Jones
Scott Tweedy

Also Present:

Frank Rogers, County Administrator
Mike Davidson, Director of Economic Development
Tyler Carraway, Director of Finance and Strategic Initiatives
Nina Rezai, Economic Development Manager
Sarah Johnson, Economic Development Specialist
Kim Stewart, Economic Development Administrative Assistant

// In Chairman Jones's absence, Mr. Davidson moderated the group's meeting. He began the meeting by announcing his impending retirement at the end of June and thanked the members for their hard work and time commitment to the Commission over the years.

// Mr. Rogers took over next to offer his congratulations to Mr. Davidson and to announce the new department structure to the group. He introduced Tyler Carraway as Director of Finance and Strategic Initiatives and explained that this department would assume responsibility and oversight of the Economic Development functions. He then introduced Nina Rezai as the new Economic Development Manager.

// Following introductions, Mr. Rogers turned the meeting back over to Mr. Davidson who asked for any questions or corrections regarding the minutes of September 26, 2019. Hearing none, Mr. Davidson called for a motion they be approved. Mr. Frank Davis motioned, and Mr. Rosser seconded. With all in favor and none opposed, the motion passed.

// Next, Mr. Davidson turned the meeting back over to Mr. Rogers to discuss the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to the Commission. Mr. Rogers explained that the county received around \$4.8 million in CARES Act funding, which is federal funds that were sent to the state and then redistributed out to the localities based

on their shares of the state's population. He continued that the county was obliged to take out a portion of the \$4.8 million for the towns of Brookneal and Altavista. Mr. Rogers explained that after this was removed, the county was left with about \$4.4 million that could be applied toward certain expenses associated with the COVID response. The expenses would include those incurred by both the county as well as by the business community. Mr. Rogers continued, saying that the funds could be used for a number of other things as well, including distance learning and telework to see if the county could leverage some of the dollars to expand the internet capacity and broadband in the county so that the students could get a better opportunity for remote learning and workers could stay engaged from home. He continued, adding that one of the provisions of the funds was that they would have to be spent by December 30 of the 2020 calendar year and that it would be a big challenge when dealing with large projects, such as county-wide broadband. However, Mr. Rogers told the commission that the county was pursuing the opportunities to the extent that they could. He had a meeting with the Board of Supervisors to determine how they would like to see the funds spent from a macro level, and it was decided to hold back around \$2.5 million for broadband, \$1 million for county expenses incurred to include Public Safety-related costs such as personal protective equipment (PPE) and sanitizer. It was decided to use the \$1 million remaining for a program for business-assistance grants. He further explained that Mr. Carraway had put together a team to assemble an application form and that the county would be reaching out to the business community to explain the grant program, to let them know that it was a reimbursement program in which the business owners would need to share what expenses they had incurred related to the COVID crisis. Mr. Rogers informed the commission that the funds could not be used for revenue replacement, which could be ambiguous to business owners. But items such as Plexiglas guards that have gone up in several stores would apply, as well as take-out boxes to adapt the way the businesses are run, etc. Mr. Rogers stated that the application form would be pushed out to the community in the coming days.

// Mr. Rogers asked the commission members if they had any concerns that they'd heard in the community or experienced themselves or anything else that they wanted to make sure the county was aware of before the committee rolled out the program. With no responses or comments given, he then asked Mr. Carraway if he wanted to add anything to the presentation. Mr. Carraway explained that the reason a committee was formed and that receipts would be required and reviewed was that the county could possibly be audited and would need to be able to prove that reimbursed expenses were in fact COVID-related. Otherwise, it would come back on the county to be held responsible.

// Mr. Rogers spoke up again to say that the plan was to have a cap at \$5,000 for each approved applicant but that special circumstances would be considered. Again the commission did not express concerns or comments. Mr. Rogers asked them to continue to ponder the program and if they later had anything to suggest to please be in touch with the county with that information and the related business.

// Next, Mr. Davidson brought the commission members' attention to the Project Updates and had Mrs. Johnson review these, which were provided in the commission's meeting packets prior to the meeting.

// Regarding the cell tower project, Mr. Rosser asked where the cell tower would go and Mr. Davidson answered that it would be located in the front of Seneca Commerce Park towards the south side of Mr. Watts's property.

// Mr. Rogers noted that the county had initiated two actions related to broadband. First, they had requested a county-wide engineering study to explore a plan for county-wide fiber to the home and the costs that would be involved to get that implemented; secondly, the county had begun working with Shentel on some service expansions. He explained that one such expansion had started out toward New Chapel Rd. and that the project would include almost 310 addresses. He stated that these projects are slowly moving the county forward both in the county's broadband initiative as well as the efforts with the COVID-related money to try to get a wireless solution pushed out quickly.

// Mr. Davidson brought the members' attention back to the next item of business, reminding them that at the last meeting Mrs. Johnson had explained the use of a Dashboard on the website and had given the commission members the homework assignment of bringing back ideas to this meeting of how they thought the county's dashboard should look. No comments or suggestions were provided.

// Mr. Davidson asked for any matters from the commission members they would like to bring up and, hearing none, he adjourned the meeting at 12:22 p.m.

// The next meeting of the Campbell County Economic Development Commission will be held Thursday, September 24, 2020. The meeting will be held in the Haberer Building Multi-Use Room, Rustburg, Virginia, at 12:00 noon.