

Economic Development Authority

June 18, 2018 Minutes

Page County Government Center
Board of Supervisors Room
103 S. Court Street, Luray, VA 22835
5:30PM

Members Present: Craig Lancto, Chair
Leslie Currle, Vice Chair
Jay Dedman
Mark Dofflemyer
Joshua Knight
Brooke Newman
Romeo Pugliese
Bart Price

Members Absent: Greg Foltz

Others Present: Liz Lewis Page County ED

Introduction of Members and Guests:

Call to Order: Craig Lancto called meeting to order. 5:30pm

Approval of Agenda: Mark Dofflemyer motion, Jay Dedman second

Approval of Minutes: Not approved

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer's report. Mr. Dofflemyer reported on balances and, regarding the loan that is in default, said that Mr. Starkey is organizing and consolidating his debts and they have agreed to develop a new payment plan. Mr. Dofflemyer suggested asking Mister Starkey to pay the loan in full so that we can make a clean break from what has been a very difficult loan arrangement. Mrs. Lewis said that she believed through her discussions with Mr. Starkey, that he might be prepared to do so, and we would then be able to make further loans.

Mr. Lancto presented the bill from Reed and Reed for \$610 to create leases for Isaac George of IBR Properties and Nelson Clark, the two entities who are currently raising and harvesting hay on the Economic Development Authority property usually referred to as the Clover project. Mr. Lancto said that he had been in contact with both parties and both had agreed in principle to the lease at \$35 an acre. He also said that he didn't understand why it had taken so long for the attorney to complete two standard leases.

Mr. Dedman noted that the attorney's fees had been charged at full price instead of the negotiated fee. Therefore, Mr. Dedman moved that the board approve an amount payable to Reed and Reed for up to \$600, although he would contact David Reed about the discrepancy in the charges.

Old Business: Mr. Dedman noted that the attorney's fees had been charged at full price instead of the negotiated

fee. Therefore, Mr. Dedman moved that the board approve an amount payable to Reed and Reed for up to \$600, although he would contact David Reed about the discrepancy in the charges. Motion was made by Mr. Dedman to pay the fee at the \$165 rate and/or up to \$600, seconded by Mr. Knight.

Vice-chair Currle discussed the revolving loan program. She and the treasurer had reviewed and revised the previous loan documents and added two points to the new documentation that is the guidelines for loans and loan applications. She said that the documents should be dated as of 2018 to differentiate them from previous iterations. She also emphasized that these are guidelines and not fast policies. Although their loans are no interest, there is a \$50 application fee. Default fees will be applied if the account falls into delinquency, and there is a Document Preparation fee. The board does have flexibility in making these determinations.

Mrs. Lewis said that a USDA official told her that he suggested the term of loans be three years, and the amount of each loan should not exceed \$15,000. Again, Ms. Currle said that those make good guidelines but we need not observe them strictly.

Ms. Currle also said that we need to start promoting this loan program as soon as possible. Ms. Lewis will develop a flyer with information about the loan program and how to apply for it. Information will be provided to the Chamber of Commerce, businesses, the SBDC, and the towns.

Chamber president Gina Hilliard noted that we may include a flyer in the monthly Chamber newsletter for \$25 and 400 printed copies.

Vice-chair Currle said that she would provide the board the updated documents when they are completed. In the interim, she requested that the board approve the new application and documentation. Mr. Dofflemyer seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

New Business: Chairman Lancto noted that Chamber president Gina Hilliard was present and had asked to make a request. Mrs. Hilliard noted that the annual Mudurance Race was about to take place, and that the EDA had voted a \$1,000 sponsorship the previous year. She asked whether we were willing to do so again.

After a brief discussion and a description of what sponsorship at the thousand-dollar level would entail, Mister Dedman moved that we the sponsor the run for \$1,000 again this year. Ms. Newman seconded and the board voted unanimously to sponsor the 2018 Mudurance at the \$1,000 level.

Roll Call approval.

Mr. Lancto moved on to revising the bylaws. As board members offered no revisions or corrections, Mr. Lancto quickly reviewed the changes that he had made to his copy. Most of them were grammatical, but the one substance of change was to delete a provision that meetings could be called without advance notice upon agreement of those who were in attendance and with signed waivers by those members who could not attend. The board agreed that this provision was unnecessary and confusing and it was deleted. The chairman also suggested changing the 24-hour notice for a meeting to 36-hour notice, the minimum required by the state. The chairman also ask staff to verify

that 36 hours is the minimum required by the state.

After researching the website, Ms. Lewis stated it seems EDA tried to cancel the "Page for Business" website in 2016, but it was never cancelled. Ms. Lewis said that traffic would be rerouted to the correct site beginning immediately.

Ms. Lewis reported that she had begun making enquiries about A HUBZone summit. Ms Currie said that she had talked to various HUBZone CEOs about such a summit and is trying to arrange one in the future. She said that Carl Knobloch, district director of the United States Small Business Administration, had indicated that he planned to send a subordinate in his place to lead the discussion. Miss Currie said that she is going to reconnect with Mr. Knobloch and ask him to personally make the appearance because this is a meeting of all the of our HUBZone businesses. Mr. Lancto asked whether Ms. Lewis had the list of HUBZone businesses she said that it is available on the Small Business Administration website, and that there are somewhere between 25 and 27. Ms. Currie also said that many of the HUBZone businesses had suggested topics for the HUBZone Summit.

Page County ED Report: Ms. Lewis then made a presentation about one of the solar farms that is before the Planning Commission for the county. There are two solar farms that have requested permission to build, the larger, more than 500 acres, near Luray and the smaller, over 300 acres, in the town of Stanley. After discussion about the size of these farms and what units would be included, Mr. Lancto said that the Planning Commission had learned that the one in Luray is expected to power the equivalent of 25,000 homes. The one in Stanley, 5,000 homes. There was a further discussion about what some of the drawbacks might be at, and Mr. Lancto mentioned that one of the planning commissioners, Bernie Miller, had expressed his concerns that the right-of-way for the power lines might be physically expanded, but that the representatives of Urban Grid, the owners of the proposed farms, had explained that any increase in capacity would take place in the generating equipment and not along the power lines, so there would be no additional farm land taken.

Ms. Lewis said that she had attended the USDA Workshop that discussed grants broadband and community facilities grants.

She also said that she had completed the strategic development plan and it is currently being reviewed by staff.

Mr. Lancto asked whether she had made any progress on hemp. Miss Lewis said that she met with Virginia delegate Todd Gilbert to express our interest in his support when it reaches his desk. The largest impediment at this point is federal legalization which is up for a vote in the US Congress in September. They also discussed for Go Virginia grants for hemp.

Committee Reports: Agriculture. Mr. Dedman said that the Farmers Assn had invited us to join them as they partner with Emergency Services for a day of planning what would happen if, for example, a large piece of farm equipment were to overturn. The board declined as we did not see how e fit.

Mr. Dedman also said that because he had paid for membership in the Farmers Association on behalf of the EDA, we were allowed to participants to attend the annual dinner. The board voted to reimburse Mr. Dedman the \$50 as

the fee was paid on our behalf.

Mr. Lancto reiterated his conversation with Bobby Clarke, the extension Agricultural Extension agent for Page County and Mr. Clark's proposal that The Economic Development Authority, Lord Fairfax Community College, Page County Technical Center, and businesses that produce heavy equipment come together to determine whether there is some combination of educational experiences, whether credited course work, or whether demonstrations by manufacturers if it seems that the goal. The goal is to train people to work on the heavy farm machinery. Mr. Lancto asked for volunteers who would help to organize such a meeting of the various stakeholders. There were none, although Mr. Dedman said that he might be interested but he needs to give it more consideration before committing to doing so. The chairman said that they would revisit the issue at a future meeting.

Mr. Dedman reported that he and Mr. Lancto had visited Tactical Walls in Shenandoah, and learned at the company is happy with support from the county and the Town of Shenandoah. He also reported that he and Mr. Lancto had scheduled a similar meeting at Bluemont Technologies. The chairman urged members to visit businesses in their localities, their towns and in the county to ask informally how their businesses are doing and what challenges they face. He reiterated that learning about the challenges does not mean that the EDA can solve them but that we might help to look for the various resources that can provide some assistance. Mr. Lancto gave several examples of businesses with which he has been working in formerly.

The Mr. Lancto made reference to Bluemont Technologies which had given specific concerns about a challenges that they face, to wit: decent, affordable housing for employees, and decent, affordable office space. Some discussion ensued about how we might encourage property owners to rehabilitate their properties so that businesses are more interested moving into them. It's a major problem with bringing new businesses to Page County. Mr Lancto asked whether for volunteers to help organize a meeting of those interested stakeholders of businesses, property owners, the Chamber of Commerce, etc, to address the shortage of quality housing in office space. Here were none. He said that he would revisit that issue also at a future meeting.

Adjourn: Mrs. Currle made the motion to adjourn and was seconded by Mr. Knight. Meeting adjourned.
6:55pm.

Liz Lewis, Clerk