



GREENE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 15, 2022, @ 6:30 p.m.
this meeting was held at Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

- A meeting of the Economic Development Authority Board of Directors was held at Town Hall on Tuesday, November 15, 2022. Call to order at 6:30 pm with Mr. James Tsikerdanos, Chairman, presiding.

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

- Members in Attendance:
- Corey Jacober, Rachel Clancy, Paul Reickart, Michael Payne, Matt Sweetanos, James Tsikerdanos, Whitt Ledford came late
- Members Absent: None
- Non-Members in Attendance: Alan Yost

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

- Minutes from September 20, 2022, EDA meeting were distributed electronically to all board members. Mr. Tsikerdanos moved to approve the minutes with one item needing to be edited. Mr. Reickart made a motion to accept the minutes with the edit. Mr. Sweetanos seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. The minutes were approved unanimously.

FINANCIALS

- Mr. Tsikerdanos asked if all members had an opportunity to review the financials for the EDA. Mr. Tsikerdanos asked to table the financials until the January meeting. Mr. Payne made a motion to table the financials until January. Mr. Reickart made a second motion to table the financials until January. The motion to table the financials until January was approved unanimously.

OFFICER REPORTS:

- Mr. Yost reported on projects that he is working on within the community. Mr. Yost discussed the site readiness program. "The site readiness program is a state program that evaluates properties based on their level of readiness in relation to development. For example, an empty field with basic utilities but would need further studies for further development for manufacturing. This would be a tier 1. The program goes up to tier 5 which is development ready. The Site Readiness Program allows property owners to qualify for next-tier study grants to achieve next-tier readiness."
- Mr. Yost stated "tourism has become a "hot topic" in Greene and surrounding communities. There is a negative public sentiment against expansive overnight lodging in the community. Data suggests the opposite. Restaurants, gas stations, and area businesses benefit from tourism."
- Mr. Yost stated that "terrace Greene benefited from the site development program. The grant made the difference as it allocated funds for the concept drawing which served as



the basis for the pitch presentation." Mr. Tsikerdanos asked, "if any groundbreaking updates were available for Terrace Greene?" Mr. Yost stated "that the site plans were approved. The whole development would be done in five phases. Phase one is only twenty percent of the property, they put this out for bid for the work to be done at the peak of construction demand one year ago. The bid came in five times higher than what was expected. It was decided to complete the engineering work for the entire site. The goal was to have it out for bid in the Spring."

- "Who is going into the Coppersmith's building?" Mr. Yost said that "a restaurant was going into the space."

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

- Mr. Tsikerdanos asked for comments from the public. There were none. Mr. Tsikerdanos closed the session for comments.

OLD BUSINESS

- Mr. Tsikerdanos gave the members a packet that included the mission statement for the EDA, approved plans, past projects, and current initiatives. Mr. Tsikerdanos stated that "the mission statement is in line with the state initiative. The EDA can purchase and transfer land for the county, and manage the affairs of the industrial park. Currently, the county does not own the industrial park." Mr. Tsikerdanos asked the EDA members "if a new industrial park should be built to support industry growth?" Mr. Tsikerdanos asked "if anyone had any questions about the mission statement or limits of the EDA?" Mr. Payne stated that "the management of natural resources and economic diversity was missing from the mission statement." Mr. Payne stated that "our number one sector is retail; our number two sector is tourism and number three was agriculture. What we can do to increase economic growth is increase economic diversity."

Mr. Tsikerdanos stated that the mission statement came directly from the bylaws but could be revised. Mr. Reickart asked about the management of the industrial park. Were there any revenues that came from the management of the park? If not, should there be a shift in the relationship such as a building inspection once a year to create annual residual revenue for the EDA? Mr. Payne stated that past conversations were had about the responsibility of mowing road frontage. Mr. Payne stated that the county took over the responsibility of mowing. Mr. Payne stated that "the EDA acquire the money to purchase one of the properties. The EDA has a deeded right that allows the purchase of the land at the lowest negotiated price. Whatever price the owners were selling the land for and could not raise the price because the county was interested in buying the property. Mr. Yost added that it was the responsibility of the EDA to enforce the covenant restrictions."

Mr. Tsikerdanos stated that "the property that was owned by the EDA in the past, was sold and the EDA could buy property in the existing industrial park or purchase land for a new park." Mr. Yost stated that "the advantages of purchasing existing farmland would make it available for existing grants." Mr. Yost used Orange as an example. "Orange had a fifty-acre property that was purchased to build a school. The school was never built and the land was given to the EDA. The EDA was able to attract five significant



manufacturers. Fluvanna and Orange are able to attract out-of-state businesses by offering the sites below market value. A USDA loan of 100,000 could be used to purchase a property. Once properties sell, the EDA could pay off the loan. This would help Greene to be more competitive in attracting businesses." Ms. Clancy asked "if there was potential existing land along the corridor for sale?"

Mr. Tsikerdanos "stated that owners want to sell at twice the market rate and that in the past the EDA has offered to sell the property as the intermediary but no one wanted to do this. Mr. Sweetanos asked "if Greene County had the infrastructure such as water, sewer, and internet to support new growth."

Mr. Yost stated that "the county was at fifty percent with sewer capacity. Water was at capacity. With the upcoming impoundment, there should be enough water for a hundred years. Sewer capacity, there is an existing line down 33 from Ruckersville to the town of Stanardsville, in an active sewer line, you have to have a force to push it along."

Mr. Payne asked for a status update about RSA.

Mr. Yost stated that "Greene County has to finish the legalities of propping the RSA as an authority. The director and the finance person have been hired. The rest of the staff needs to be hired. January 1st may be the switch. The impoundment project is based on the timeline of withdrawing from RSA. After withdrawal, it should move the project along."

- Mr. Tsikerdanos listed past projects funded by the EDA. "The list includes providing for the daycare, Jack's Shop Kitchen, the sale of Premier Vinyl's Property, the expansion of Frito Lay, advocating for the glamping project, and the \$250,000 grant from the CARES Act for local businesses during the pandemic."
- Mr. Tsikerdanos stated "current projects include putting together the feasibility study for the commercial kitchen, Mr. Tsikerdanos stated that "he felt that the EDA should proceed slowly on the project as a new county administrator would be in place soon."
- Mr. Payne stated that "offering quality daycare is still a concern in the county. Jack Shop Kitchen was a profitable endeavor for the EDA and is funding some of the other programs. Career Vinyl is a thriving business that contributes to business tax dollars in the community. Once Sojourners Glamping is up and running, there will be good-paying jobs within walking distance from Stanardsville. The EDA administered the funds from the CARES Act which provided a much-needed boost. The EDA supported the matching grant through the state for the Visitor Center. Tourism was under EDA at the time. Tourism had the opportunity to put in for a matching grant of \$200,000 through the state. This provided \$400,000. EDA loaned the tourism \$200,000 and the state matched it. Lydia's TOT monies made it possible to pay back the loan. The Visitor Center was a good investment for the county as it has paid for itself through TOT monies, come in under budget on maintenance costs, and no tax dollars were spent to acquire the building." Mr. Yost commented that "representatives from other Virginia visitor centers have said that the new Visitor Center is a great representation of Greene County." Mr. Payne commented that "the EDA supported through donations; the Stanardsville streetscape improvements including the Holiday Lights on Main, the replacement of new



light poles, and the construction of the pavilion providing a home for the Farmer's Market."

- Mr. Tsikerdanos asked, "what should be a focus for the EDA in the future? In 2023 and 2024?" Mr. Ledford " stated that "he would like to see the EDA work on strategy around weak points. Tourism is doing great but hospitality and lodging may be an area to focus. The focus may be too wide and need to be more concise to make an impact." Mr. Tsikerdanos asked, "if he was speaking about a master plan and what that focus should be"? Mr. Reickart commented that "the group could look at models of existing projects such as the Frito Lay model in the Industrial Park." Mr. Yost reiterated "Lydia Lodge was a loan to tourism. Tourism got a grant. Tourism then repaid the EDA with TOT from the monies." Mr. Ledford commented "we help agriculture by installing a commercial kitchen or a meat processing facility for the community." Mr. Tsikerdanos stated that "the meat processing was delayed." Mr. Tsikerdanos stated that "hopefully, the project would gain momentum in the upcoming year as there may be a prospective processor interested." Mr. Tsikerdanos spoke about the support through the donation of the 4-H Extension office program "Transferring of Farms" in the upcoming Spring. The current extension agent gave a good overview of the problems facing farmers. The Extension Office is working to introduce individuals to farming early and how provides programs that show how to build a business around farming and agriculture. Mr. Tsikerdanos that "Agriculture and Tourism will be at the top of the list in the upcoming year."
- Mr. Payne stated that "a focus will be on light manufacturing and high-speed internet which should cover all of Greene county by 2025 and that the internet coverage would open the county up to chip processing, light manufacturing, data science, data centers, and partnering with geothermal, and other internet-based industries." Mr. Payne commented that "the county has fiber internet that would be suitable for defense industries." Mr. Payne commented that "internet and big data should be a focus in the upcoming year". Mr. Payne commented that the "Keep your Green in Greene campaign should focus on local banks. The number one thing you can do to help your community is open a new account in your local bank. Local banks pay a tax on accounts that the county receives. This would attribute to the wealth of the community. Another area of focus should be wealth education." Rachel Clancy asked, "if it would be a good idea to focus on facilitating the revitalization of the 29 corridors in efforts to make it more appealing and would then in turn bring more people back into the area to shop". Mr. Payne proposed "low-interest loans, town color schemes, working with local signage companies for standardized signage providing low-interest loans with a payback guarantee, and the planting of daylilies which could help to beautify the community." Mr. Reickart stated that "curb appeal is a valid point. Help or motivation could be key." Mr. Payne stated that "recognizing the businesses with current good curb appeal on social media could work to encourage others." Mr. Tsikerdanos asked "who was managing the social media for the county?" Mr. Yost stated "that there are multiple outlets for social media. There is one for the county, one for Economic Development, and one for Tourism. The county's page does not post about individual businesses. The ED&T



Facebook page could recognize businesses. The Tourism page focuses solely on tourism. There is an opportunity with the ED&T Facebook page." Mr. Ledford stated, "that recycling needed to be a focus in the county." Mr. Payne stated, "that if there were any ideas, he would help champion ideas."

- Mr. Sweetanos stated that "he felt that the most "bang for the buck" would be investing in another industrial park to make Greene more attractive to businesses." Mr. Tsikerdanos stated "that growth in the North part of Charlottesville will spill over into Greene. A business park across the county line in Greene would be advantageous. The board of supervisors would have to approve bond money." Mr. Yost stated that "the planning commission has approved a training and research district. It will be in the new comprehensive plan in the upcoming year. A new industrial park in this district may be a good project in the new district." Mr. Tsikerdanos stated that "there is a lot of RC property in Greene County that could be developed." Mr. Yost stated that "Lovingson, Scottsville, and Culpeper are working with the Small Business Development center. A cohort group of potential entrepreneurs goes through a class. At the end of the class, each entrepreneur gives a pitch. Some of the entrepreneurs would qualify for reduced rent for a year. It is a main street revitalization effort." Mr. Tsikerdanos stated that "he would support a potential business park and revitalization of Ruckersville." Mr. Yost commented that "there is a Greene County Revitalization Committee. Perhaps the EDA would want to suggest a joint meeting for future collaboration?" Mr. Tsikerdanos agreed. Mr. Tsikerdanos commented that "exploring the business park, and revitalization of curb appeal for area local businesses are good focuses for the group." Mr. Tsikerdanos also asked that the members "bring ideas to focus on the initiatives to the January meeting for the creation of an action plan."

NEXT MEETING DATE

- Mr. Tsikerdanos stated that the next regular meeting of the EDA will be on Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 6:30 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

- Mr. Tsikerdanos asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Jacober made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Sweetanos seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.