

Regular Meeting Minutes

Warren County Government Center: Caucus Room, 220 N. Commerce Ave, Front Royal, VA

September 22, 2023

10:30 AM

Call to Order:

Mr. Jenkins called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM with the following roll call:

Walter, Present; Ashworth, Present; Townshend, Present; MacDougall, Present; Wolfe, Present; Martin, Present; Jenkins, Present.

Adoption of Agenda - Additions or Deletions:

On a motion by Mr. Townshend, seconded by Mr. Walter, and the following vote, the agenda was adopted as presented:

Walter, Aye; Ashworth, Aye; Townshend, Aye; MacDougall, Aye; Wolfe, Aye; Martin, Aye; Jenkins, Aye.

Approval of Minutes - August 25, 2023:

On a motion made by Ms. Martin, seconded by Mr. Walter, and the following vote, the Minutes were approved as presented:

Walter, Aye; Ashworth, Aye; Townshend, Aye; MacDougall, Aye; Wolfe, Aye; Martin, Aye; Jenkins, Aye.

Reports:

- **EDA Office/Records Relocation:** Mr. Walter stated that the Records relocation is complete, and all records were moved on the previous Thursday to the 15th street property location. Mr. Petty stated that they are located specifically in 'Classroom #2' next to the Registrar and Social Services. Furthermore, there are two sets of keys located in Mr. Petty's office. Some cleanup work and other testing will be completed today (Friday 9.22.23) to ensure safety for any tenants with assistance from Winchester Environmental.
- **I.T. Migration:** Mr. Petty stated that an email was shared yesterday and will look to schedule a meeting with Todd Jones (I.T. Director) in the following week and will seek to provide the EDA with County issued laptops. The migration work from Queen Consulting to the County's Microsoft platform.
- **Strategic Planning:** Mr. Wolfe stated that the Strategic Planning Committee met earlier this morning and presented a copy of the old strategic plan with markups. The next step is to receive input from the current EDA Board, specifically on tangible mission and a statement of vision for the future. Furthermore, Mr. Wolfe emphasized the importance of timing and would like to have additional interviews with local businesses and then a planning session. However, Mr. Wolfe stated that he will be unavailable for 2 weeks in October and the planning session will not be able to take place until mid-November. A poll will be sent to the other Board members about timing issues and overall data collection.
- **Asset Committee:** Ms. Martin stated that most of her information is for the closed session, however, she stated that the Front Royal Police Department will be taking the responsibility of patrolling Avtex as well as the parking lot. Furthermore, a motion needs to be passed and a paper signed by Mr. Jenkins, this will allow the Police to represent the EDA on the property and Trespass people out as well as represent them in Court. Additional signage will also be needed to allow the Police to Trespass people out on site as opposed to a warning.
 - On a motion made by Ms. Martin, seconded by Mr. Walter, and the following vote, the EDA board allowed the Front Royal Police Department to represent the EDA in trespass matters.
 - Walter, Aye; Ashworth, Aye; Townshend, Aye; MacDougall, Aye; Wolfe, Aye; Martin, Aye; Jenkins, Aye.
- **Finance Committee/Budget Update:** Mr. Wolfe discussed the interest expense and emphasized that it is the largest expense but there is nothing that can be done about it. He then recommended the Finance Committee meet with the County Administrator to discuss the next 10 years in terms of the debt and the best ways to manage it

moving forward in the long term. Mr. Petty reminded the Board that the numbers on the loan statements, in terms of principal and interest, aren't exact. However, since the 1st quarter is coming to an end, he will get with the bank to get an actual report on the principal and interest paid, in which the numbers will then be fixed to match. Mr. Wolfe stated that his overall goal with meeting with the County Administrator is to come back with an accurate and detailed balance sheet line item by line item. Lastly, Mr. Wolfe emphasized the need for public transparency and the public has the opportunity to see and understand what the balance sheet means.

- **Board Members Updates**

- Ms. Martin stated that the next Open Door Session will take place on Tuesday November 14th at the Library. Furthermore, the EDA has signed up for the 'Go Grant' as Avtex and Happy Creek are both eligible under two different programs.
- Mr. Walter asked when the Small Business Loan session was planned for the applicants. Mr. Petty stated that a soft open will start soon with the advisory committee in conjunction with the next Open Door Session.
- Mr. Jenkins stated that both he and Mr. Petty attended a gathering of representatives from other Counties, Towns, Non-profits, to meet with Senator Tim Kaine regarding the proposed Rail Trail. It was encouraging to see the broad level of support and from different perspectives. Mr. Jenkins also stated that Norfolk Southern is willing to sell their property, but they want to sell it to a single entity.

- **Warren County Director of Economic Development Update:** Mr. Petty stated that he spent 2 days in Winchester at the Worlds of Work program hosted at Shenandoah University, which is a career exploration program where 8th graders from the region to explore over 80 vendors for their future careers.

Closed Session

Ms. Pandak read the meeting into Closed Session at 11:05 AM. On a motion by Mr. Ashworth, seconded by Mr. Townshend, and the following vote, the meeting went into a Closed Session:

Walter, Aye; Ashworth, Aye; Townshend, Aye; MacDougall, Aye; Wolfe, Aye; Martin, Aye; Jenkins, Aye.

- A. 4 matters - Discussion of disposition of publicly held real property where discussion in open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, Stephens Industrial Park, Avtex Redevelopment Site, 1321 Happy Creek Road, 1325 Progress Drive, and legal advice related thereto, pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3711.A.3 and 8.
- B. 2 matters - Consultation with legal counsel pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body, EDA vs Jennifer McDonald et al, EDA v. Town of Front Royal et al, pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3711.A.7 and 8.
- C. 1 matter - Consultation with legal counsel regarding First Bank & Trust requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, pursuant to Va. Code § 2.2-3711.A.8.

At 12:03 PM Mr. Ashworth exited the closed session and certified only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by himself the Authority.

On a motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Ms. Martin, and the following the vote, the Board exited the closed session and certified at 12:29 PM.

Jenkins, Aye; Walter, Aye; Townshend, Aye; MacDougall, Aye; Martin Aye

Adjournment

On a motion made by Mr. Townshend, seconded by Mr. Walter, and the following the vote, the meeting was adjourned at 12:29 PM.