

Economic Development Advisory Committee
January 18th, 2023 Organizational Meeting 1:00 pm

At an Organizational meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee held on Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at 1:00 pm in the Main Meeting Room, Berryville-Clarke County Government Center, 101 Chalmers Court, 2nd Floor, Berryville, Virginia.

Members Present: Christy Dunkle, John Milleson, Betsy Pritchard, Bev McKay, Mark Gribble, Reid Dodson

Members Absent: Christina Kraybill

Staff Present: Felicia Hart, Indea Ford

Others Present: Shaine Coleman

Press Present: None

1. Call to Order

At 1:00pm, Indea Ford called the meeting to order.

2. Organizational items

- Elect 2023 Chair
Indea Ford called for nominations and election of the 2023 Chair

Christy Dunkle made a motion, seconded by Betsy Pritchard, to nominate and elect John Milleson as 2023 Chair. The motion carried by the following vote:

Reid Dodson	-	Aye
Christy Dunkle	-	Aye
Mark Gribble	-	Aye
Christina Kraybill	-	Absent
Bev McKay	-	Aye
John Milleson	-	Aye
Betsy Pritchard	-	Aye

- Elect 2023 Vice-Chair
Chairman Milleson called for nomination and election of 2023 Vice Chair

Betsy Pritchard made a motion, seconded by Christy Dunkle, to nominate and elect Reid Dodson as 2023 Vice Chair. The motion carried by the following vote:

Reid Dodson	-	Aye
Christy Dunkle	-	Aye
Mark Gribble	-	Aye
Christina Kraybill	-	Absent

Bev McKay	-	Aye
John Milleson	-	Aye
Betsy Pritchard	-	Aye

- Set Meeting Dates, Time, and Location
Third Wednesday at 1:00pm, Berryville-Clarke County Government Center Main Meeting Room:
 - o January 18, 2023 Organizational Meeting
 - o March 15, 2023
 - o April 19, 2023 – Spring Tour
 - o May 17, 2023
 - o July 19, 2023
 - o September 20, 2023
 - o October 18, 2023 – Fall Tour
 - o November 15, 2023
 - o January 17, 2024 – Organizational Meeting

By consensus, the Committee Members adopted the meeting schedule as presented.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Christy Dunkle made a motion, seconded by Betsy Pritchard, to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Reid Dodson	-	Aye
Christy Dunkle	-	Aye
Mark Gribble	-	Aye
Christina Kraybill	-	Absent
Bev McKay	-	Aye
John Milleson	-	Aye
Betsy Pritchard	-	Aye

4. Approval of Minutes

- November 16, 2022 – Regular Meeting

Betsy Pritchard made a motion, seconded by Mark Gribble, to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2022, Regular Meeting as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Reid Dodson	-	Aye
Christy Dunkle	-	Aye
Mark Gribble	-	Aye
Christina Kraybill	-	Absent
Bev McKay	-	Aye
John Milleson	-	Aye
Betsy Pritchard	-	Aye

5. Presentation by Shaine Coleman

Shaine Coleman introduced himself to the Committee Members as the Transition Coordinator for Special Education and the Work-based Learning Coordinator at Clarke County High School. Shaine explained that his main responsibility is connecting high school students with businesses, jobs, apprenticeships and internships.

- On October 21, 2022, the Clarke County High School hosted a Trades Fair, bringing in approximately 50 businesses from the surrounding area, giving students the opportunity to discuss future trade careers, including welding, electricity and HVAC. Approximately 250 students attended, 10-15 of which walked out with on the spot job offers. Several law enforcement departments also attended; they will be returning at the end of January to provide students with demonstrations of crime scene investigations.

Shaine called attention to the Innovation Center section of the presentation packet:

- Starting this next school year, students will be able to use the Innovation Center in Winchester; there is not a tech center in Clarke County. The following classes will be available for students to sign up for:
 - o Electronic Systems I
 - o Welding I
 - o Technical Drawing and Design
 - o Emergency Medical Technician I & II
 - o Medical Laboratory Technology I
 - o Physical/Occupational Therapy I
 - o Firefighter

Shaine called attention to the Blue Ridge Community and Technical College section of the presentation packet:

- **Culinary Arts** - Students have expressed an interest in culinary arts; none of the surrounding counties besides Warren County has a culinary arts program. The Clarke County High School has been working with Blue Ridge Community College for two years to design a culinary arts jump-start program specifically for Clarke County. Students will learn under a professional chef, attending half days and will leave with 17 credits in culinary arts.
- **Cyber-Security Program** - Also being offered is a cyber-security program; that will allow students to finish their first year of college with 16 credit hours. Students will then be able to continue with their associate's degree in cyber security at Blue Ridge Community College or transfer to Laurel Ridge, George Mason or Shenandoah.
- **Megatronics and Engineering Technologies:** Conversations with Amazon and other local manufacturing companies have highlighted a need for technicians in the megatronics area; this includes robotic arms. Students will be able to learn this technology, including, welding, electrical, and some automotive. When students finish this program, they will be able to enroll directly into working at Proctor and Gamble and Clorox.
- **Welding** – One-year program, allowing students to leave with a certification. There is an agreement in place with W. Bowers that students will, at minimum, get an interview upon completion of the program.

Shaine called attention to the course tuition and fees section of the presentation packet:

- The cost per program is listed. The Clarke County School Board has agreed to cover the tuition and fees cost for the students, which is considerably less per class than Laurel Ridge Community College
- The cost of textbooks is significant and can act as a deterrent to students wanting to enroll. Two businesses have agreed to donate towards a general fund to help students cover the cost of textbooks.
- We are looking at either partnering with businesses that will agree to donate to a general fund or guarantee students a job placement or at the very minimum, a job interview upon completion of the program.

- Chairman Milleson asked Shaine how much funding is needed altogether
 - o Shaine responded that so far 20 students have signed up; 5 will be taking the culinary program and the remaining 15 are split between Cyber-security, Welding and Electronics programs
- Bev McKay asked Shaine if he had spoken with any local people working in these trades to see if they can help
 - o Shaine responded that he had spoken with people that attended the trades fair
- Bev McKay suggested Shaine speak with Wayne Whetsell about the Firefighter and EMT programs
 - o Shaine responded that Wayne attended the trades fair and is willing to cover the cost of student's EMT classes; if a student is just wanting to do that they can
- Bev McKay asked Shaine if he had spoken with L'auberge Provencale owner, Celeste Borrell about the culinary arts program
 - o Shaine responded that he has not
- Betsy Pritchard asked Shaine if he had reached out to the Clarke County Foundation's fund raising unit
 - o Shaine responded that he had reached out and, although not yet approved, they stated they are willing to contribute to ensure the financial goal is met
- Bev McKay suggested that some of the local businesses may be willing to front student funds if they agree to work for them for a certain amount of months after they graduate; this could be a win-win situation
 - o Felicia Hart added that Shaine would be meeting with the Society of HR Managers (SHRM) and working directly with the HR Managers to let them know exactly what the students are looking for. All Points Broadband has already guaranteed jobs for students who pass and receive their certification. Shaine will also be meeting with the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Group; they have some additional monetary resources, specifically for low-income, pregnant, single parent students.
- Bev McKay suggested that Shaine talk with the Borrell's and offered to make that connection
- Betsy Pritchard asked Shaine a clarifying question; approximately \$6000 for culinary funds needed?
 - o Shaine verified - yes
- Bev McKay asked how many students \$6000 would cover
 - o Shaine answered that amount would provide textbooks for 5 students
- Chairman Milleson asked what the long-term plan would be to cover these costs after the first year

- o Shaine answered; as long as the textbooks do not change, the plan is to keep at least one set available to use. Hoping the plan to build a tech center at the high school comes to fruition by the time changes are made to textbooks
- Felicia Hart added that it's important for Shaine to get out in front of the community to help citizens understand that there are students that want to stay and make a living in Clarke County and that this is an opportunity to help them to do this
- Bev McKay asked if there are scholarships available for students
 - o Shaine responded that he has reached out to Virginia Restaurant, Lodging and Hospitality (VRLTA) to see if they would be able to help cover the cost of the culinary textbooks. Shaine added that he has also spoken with the Department of Education about scholarships for welding and aviation; however, their scholarships are only \$500.
- Bev McKay suggested that Greenway Welding may be willing to fund a student in exchange for an apprenticeship placement
- Betsy Pritchard added that the proposed cost of these welding classes are a fraction of the cost of Laurel Ridge
 - o Shaine added that Blue Ridge's classes are a third of the cost because it's considered the metro-region
- Shaine added that several students have expressed interest in becoming linemen, and working for River City Construction or Rappahannock Electric. However, the State of Virginia does not have a course that would match, so we are unable to offer a lineman program to students.
 - o Mark Gribble added that Rappahannock Electric appear to be very community minded and willing to develop young talent
- Felicia Hart suggested Shaine speak with V-Dot, as they have a lot of openings
- Betsy Pritchard asked if a degree is required to become a lineman
 - o Shaine answered – students would need a high school diploma or equivalent and be at least 18 years old
- Felicia Hart informed the committee that Shaine will be meeting with Ashley Shickle, who manages the Go Virginia Grants, to identify potential areas of need and possibly get a Go Virginia grant
- Chairman Milleson asked who would be controlling the money and where would it go
 - o Shaine answered – the money would go straight to the school system and sit in a fund until textbooks are due, at which point it would come out of the fund and be paid directly to Blue Ridge Community College
 - Chairman Milleson asked if the money is tax deductible
 - Shaine stated that he believes it's tax exempt
- Betsy Pritchard asked Shaine what the interest in agriculture is at the high school
 - o Shaine answered – the interest unfortunately is waning. Agribusiness and horticulture classes are being added this year
 - Betsy Pritchard asked if horticulture had been previously dropped
 - Shaine answered – it was dropped as there has to be at least ten students enrolled, which there wasn't at that time
- Chairman Milleson asked where in Winchester the innovation center is located
 - o Shaine responded – the old elementary school behind Handley High School
- Felicia Hart added that a field trip to the innovation center could be a good idea
 - o Betsy Pritchard asked if this can be added to the Spring Tour
- Shaine Coleman offered to arrange a tour of the Blue Ridge Community College facilities

- Felicia Hart asked a the committee a clarifying question – are we agreeing to visit Blue Ridge Community College for the Spring Tour and the Innovation Center for the Fall Tour?
 - o Committee agreed
 - o Idea to provide tour dates to Shaine
- Betsy Pritchard provided feedback from a tour that Blue Ridge Community College were thrilled to have someone from Clarke County visit and are excited about the program
- Shaine added that students attending these programs at Blue Ridge Community College will be provided with breakfast each day at no cost to them
- Bev McKay added that society has neglected the trades and looked down on them and believes this program is a good idea
 - o Shaine Coleman added that survey results show an increase in students showing interest in trade school instead of a 4 year school leaving them with long term debt
- Felicia Hart asked Shaine to discuss the results of the ASVAB test
 - o Shaine responded – twenty-six students took the test, of those, twenty are interested in joining the military, specifically the United States Coast Guard. One student in particular scored very well and is receiving calls from every military branch.
- Felicia informed the committee that Shaine is also working with the Winchester Airport
- Mark Gribble added that United Airlines runs an annual summer internship program for high school students, and suggested this as a possible work placement option for students
 - o Shaine added that one student is currently getting flight hours and will earn his pilot license when he graduates
- Chairman Milleson asked Felicia to provide Shaine with all committee members contact information and let Shaine know they would be available for any questions
- Felicia informed the committee that Shaine will also be presenting to the IDA next week
- Shaine shared that a Clarke County high school senior interned with the Army Corps of Engineers last year and completed an architectural design of an educational facility; the student was offered a job upon graduation
- Shaine invite the committee members to attend the health and science fair on April 14 from 1-3pm at the Clarke County High School; currently 42 people from the healthcare and vet science fields will be available to talk with students. BVFC and Enders Fire Department will also be attending
 - o Bev McKay added that Wayne Whetsell is a great source of information
 - Shaine added that Wayne has helped two high school students’ complete EMT classes. There are four high school students that are currently volunteering with Wayne
- Chairman Milleson invited Shaine to come back in 6 months’ time to provide the committee with an update

6. Economic Development and Tourism Update by Felicia Hart

- Clarke County’s first ever Groundhog Day event will be held at the Ruritans Fairground building on February 2 in partnership with Valley Wildlife Center, Blue Ridge Wildlife Center and radio station Shenandoah Country Q102. School groups and seniors will be attending; flyer provided in packet
- The half day USDA training event was well attended; two other localities are now wanting to host the same event in their areas

- Go Virginia Small Business Resiliency Grant flyer in packet; several options for small businesses to take advantage of; Clarke County has 5 businesses that have taken advantage of this
- Started reaching out to the Clarke County Farmers Market to help promote their events
- Love Local campaign; logo design in packet. ARPA funds were used to design the logo; stickers and other marketing materials will be made for use on items produced in Clarke County.
- Restaurant Week; logo design in packet. ARPA funds were used to design the logo. A date for this campaign is still to be determined
- LVG Group site; pictures provided in the packet show the construction progress of the warehouse buildings
- Continue to meet weekly with the Frederick County and City of Winchester EDA's; there are many regional projects in the works. Working closely with Virginia Economic Development Partnership and Virginia Economic Developers Association on these
- Continue to work with Shaine Coleman making introductions to local businesses to find potential jobs for students. It's really important to support the school system and students wanting to pursue careers; justification for tax increases
- Continue to have a good working relationship with the Ruritan's Fairgrounds, Betsy Pritchard is regularly updating me on new events as they sign leases
- Hungry for History Food Week; a week-long event with historical cooking demonstrations, working with the Josephine School Museum and Clarke County Historical Association, and partnering with Winchester and Frederick County Historical Association, Belle Grove Plantation, the National Park Service and others.
- Virginia 250 state celebration; working in regional partnership with the Clarke County Historical Association to provide education on slave dwellings
- Report from Laurel Ridge Small Business Development Center in the packet; these show the number of local and regional businesses who have participated in some of their training programs as well as unemployment numbers for the first part of January

Felicia Hart handed over to Betsy Pritchard to provide an update on the Fairgrounds

- Buildings are being rented out for Luttrell Auctions. Hadley's has gone completely online, they are no longer meeting, lunch is no longer being served
- Implementing monies being taken in and investing in necessary repairs and improvements. Air conditioning is being installed in the horticulture building and the bathrooms are being upgraded inside the Ruritan building. Fortunate to obtain some free fixtures and fittings
- Horse ring is going well; a lot of events coming up
- Show barn extension is coming along well and will provide more seating
- Question to Reid Dodson – would a winter farmers market every Saturday at the fairgrounds be a good idea?
 - o Reid responded – it has been discussed many times and could be an option; marketing could be a possible hurdle and would need to be looked at
 - o Betsy added that continuance of a year round market is incredible; customers will continue to attend even when the location changes
 - o Felicia added that a sandwich board at the school stating the new location would be helpful.
 - o Mark Gribble added that Chilly Hollow Farm has put up several hoop houses and has extended their growing period

- Reid Dodson added that Mackintosh Fruit Farm has done the same thing with their greenhouse and their tomato and pepper plants are already started for this coming year
- Chairman Milleson added that the Fairgrounds are looking very good
- Betsy Pritchard added that they looking at installing a room divider in the Ruritan building to allow meetings and events, such as afterschool 4H to be held at the same time
- Chairman Milleson asked if the road sign near 7 is going to be updated
 - Betsy Pritchard added that this is being worked on
 - Felicia Hart added that some of the ARPA funds will also be used for additional signage at the fairgrounds
- Chairman Milleson asked if there were any updates to the annual distributions provided in the packet that the committee needed to be aware of
 - Indea Ford answered no
 - Bev McKay stated that he was not aware of any updates
- Bev McKay asked if EDAC members needed to complete the conflict of interest forms or training
 - Indea Ford answered no
- Felicia added that part of Indea's role is to ensure that committee members are informed of any changes in a timely manner

Chairman Milleson invited Christy Dunkle to provide an update from the Town of Berryville

- Berryville celebrates 225 juried art show at the Barns of Rose Hill on April 1st
- Awarded \$4M Smart Scale grant for sidewalk connection on East Main Street
- Bev McKay added that Dan McKay Smith retired from the Sanitary Authority at age 94

Chairman Milleson listed action items from the September meeting; these will be added to the next meeting's agenda for discussion:

- Livestock auction
- Schools and local food
- Kitchen co-op
- Hay auction
- Raising hooved animals
- Chairman Milleson added that some local people on Facebook and Twitter had been enquiring if there are any Clarke County lead share groups
 - Felicia Hart added that there are several BNI groups that meet in Winchester but none that she knows of in Clarke County. A person who previously managed a BNI group in Front Royal stated that they would also be interested in starting a local one

7. Next Meeting

- March 15th, 2023 – Regular Meeting

8. Adjourn

- 2:09pm Chairman Milleson adjourned the meeting.

Minutes Recorded and Transcribed by Indea G. Ford