

John Milleson	-	Absent
Betsy Pritchard	-	Aye

Chairman Milleson entered the meeting at 1:09pm. Bev McKay entered the meeting at 1:17pm

4. Economic Development and Tourism Update by Felicia Hart

- Farm to Fork event was held at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds on March 14. Six businesses from Clarke County participated; Audley Farm, Harvue Cheese, Falling Bark Farm, Hawthorn Lane Farm, Love at First Bite Catering and Oak Hart Farm. This is the 2nd year that Clarke County has participated. This event allows businesses to display their products, take time to talk directly with buyers and educate them about their products and create new supplier partnerships.
 - Working on the next World of Work event (WoW), this will be held at the Shenandoah University Event Center. There will be eight Clarke County businesses participating.
 - Employer Expo will be held on May 10, there are currently five Clarke County businesses signed up to participate. The first hour of the event will be open to high school seniors only, to allow them face time with recruiters and businesses, the event will then be open to the public.
 - Shaine Coleman with Clarke County High School will be hosting a health and wellness trade fair in April; information will be provided to committee members if they would like to attend
 - Continue to work with Laurel Ridge Small Business Development Center. A Clarke County business had signed up for free social media, finance, and HR training through the GOVirginia grant, but then dropped out.
 - The Agritourism Summit has had some sub meetings, but things have changed enough in our localities to warrant hosting another event.
 - Continue to work closely with the Virginia Economic Developers Association (VEDA) and Virginia Economic Developers Partnership (VEDP)
 - Working with the Farmers Market on some upcoming projects
 - More information on the Love Local Campaign will be available soon
 - Continue to work closely with the Fairgrounds to make sure events are being well advertised and marketed
- Chairman Milleson asked Felicia Hart to verify the location of the Blue Ridge Community College for the Spring Tour
 - Felicia Hart answered that it is in Martinsburg and explained that an update on the Spring Tour will be provided later in the meeting

5. Berryville Main Street Update by Christina Kraybill

- In the fall, almost the entire board had resigned. Christina offered to assist but was unable to do so until the New Year due to the holiday season at her gift shop. Christina became President in January, and several new board members were appointed.
- Ninety percent of the board are doing something very significant on behalf of the organization right now; things are moving in the right direction
- The Hogans Alley Project is still underway; one building owner has given us permission, we are still waiting on the other. The first grant monies for the project have been received.

- The Berryville Main Street Planters have been adopted by several businesses; these will be maintained year round and signs will be made for them
 - o Christy Dunkle requested to see the signs before they are put up
 - o Chairman Milleson asked how many planters there are
 - Christina responded that there are thirteen total
- A parade for the 225 celebration will be held on June 3rd; Jay Arnold has taken on the responsibility of organizing this event
- Planning is well underway for the Yard Sale and Cruise In events; all major sponsors for the Cruise-In event are already in place.
- We will continue to focus on the important foundational things and make sure we do those well before we add anything new
 - o Felicia Hart added that she has been working with Jay Arnold on the Cruise-In event. There are 15 couples from a Fredericksburg based car club, coming into town for the event. Felicia has been able to secure hotel rooms in Winchester for them; welcome bags will be put together for each couple and left in the hotel rooms before their arrival; these will include maps and other Clarke County items.
 - o Christy Dunkle asked Christina Kraybill if there would be affiliation with Virginia Main Street
 - Christina Kraybill explained that there is a group called The Exploring Main Street, which Berryville Main Street is now considered. There are certain requirements, including submitting an annual report in January
 - o Felicia Hart added that starting up business meet and greets again would be a good idea
 - o Christina Kraybill responded that the board first needs to have an annual meeting; the last one was held in October 2021

6. Ruritan Fairgrounds Update by Betsy Pritchard

- The Fairgrounds are making lots of improvements; the show barn has been expanded for the FFA and 4H kids
- The horticulture building now has AC and heat. The next step is to work on the ceiling and refresh the bathrooms.
- Blandy has decided to move their Mother's Day Sale back to Blandy
- Juneteenth will be held at the Fairgrounds for the second year
- The horse ring is available for rent
- The Lockett's Fair will be back at the Fairgrounds in May
- Shawnee Kennel Club will be at the Fairgrounds for two days over the Easter weekend
- The Steam Toy Show is coming up and also a gun raffle for the Republican Woman's Club
- The beef barn needs a new roof; this is being looked at
- We need to let the downtown merchants know ahead of time that there will be lots of people coming into town for the upcoming events
 - o Christy Dunkle asked where the proceeds from the gun raffle will be going
 - Betsy Pritchard responded that she doesn't know
 - o Felicia Hart added that Blandy is in need of volunteers for the Mother's Day Sale; moving wagons, meet and greet visitors, help with parking etc.
 - o Felicia Hart added that the Ruritans will be sending out a postcard to every home and business in Clarke County to introduce the Fairgrounds and make people aware of what is available there
 - o Christy Dunkle asked Betsy Pritchard if the bad trees had been taken down

- Betsy Pritchard responded that the dead ones have been taken down and new ones are being planted
 - Felicia Hart added that nine trees in total were taken down
- Chairman Milleson asked if a commercial kitchen is still being considered at the Fairgrounds
 - Felicia Hart responded that this is still being looked at through a USDA grant. However, at the food stand, the floor and the ice cream shop have recently been renovated.

7. Farmers Market Update by Reid Dodson

- Farmer's market season is approaching. New and returning vendors are signing up, increasing the variety of products being offered.
- Looking to plan some events to have during the Farmers Market days to draw people in; open to all suggestions
 - Mark Gribble suggested that an event similar to the Cruise-in may draw people into the farmers market
 - Reid Dodson responded that something like this had previously been discussed, however, there are a lot of logistic involved, but it hasn't been written off
- Working with the Fairgrounds on the possibility of a winter market during the off-season; looking at using the new horticulture building as the location. Still working out the logistics
 - Felicia Hart asked if Reid had reached out to the Lockett's Market, as they had previously mentioned having them there for the Fall Show
 - Reid Dodson said he would follow up with Keri on this
 - Betsy Pritchard added that Watermelon Pickers may be a good spot to hold the Farmers Market one Saturday
 - Reid Dodson acknowledged that efforts are being made to increase the marketing of events at the Fairgrounds, and also suggested that an information booth be set up during events
 - Felicia Hart responded that there a dozen outdoor real estate boxes at the Fairgrounds for businesses to put their brochures in
 - Christina Kraybill asked Reid Dodson if there were more farms than craft vendors signed up this year
 - Reid Dodson responded that a poultry producer has signed up as well as two different mushroom vendors. Faucher Farms will be taking Reid's spot at the farmers market and will be selling pork
 - Felicia Hart suggested that Reid Dodson put together a report for the Town Council so they can be kept up to date; this can be given to Christy Dunkle
 - Christy Dunkle added that a downtown Christmas market would be a good idea
 - Reid Dodson stated that he would speak to the board about this and keep in contact with Christy Dunkle
- Chairman Milleson addressed the committee and asked who would be attending the upcoming Spring Tour to Blue Ridge Community College on April 19
 - Bev McKay and Christy Dunkle are unable to attend
 - Betsy Pritchard stated that she will be attending, her husband may also attend
 - Reid Dodson stated that he will be attending

- Christina Kraybill stated that she will be attending
- Mark Gribble stated that he will be attending
- Chairman Milleson stated that he may be able to attend
- Felicia Hart added that Indea will finalize the RSVP list and is working with Shaine Coleman to finalize travel plans and meeting times. Indea will be sending out an email to attendees regarding any dietary restrictions, as lunch will be served after the tour.
 - Chairman Milleson added that Shaine Coleman is up for the Chamber of Commerce, Teacher of the Year award
- Chairman Milleson addressed Bev McKay and Chris Boies and asked if another member will be added to the EDAC Committee
 - Bev McKay stated that he would discuss this with Chairman Milleson after the meeting
 - Chris Boies added that the Personnel Committee discussed it earlier this week and that Bev McKay would present candidate names

8. Town of Berryville Update by Christy Dunkle

- The Project Manager of LVG confirmed they are going ahead with the second warehouse.
- The Town received the Virginia Commission for the Arts Creative Partnership Grant; Northern Shenandoah Valley Quilt Show, Main Street Chamber Orchestra, The Barns of Rose Hill and The Blue Ridge Dance Studio will all receive part of the grant money.
- The Town Council recently approved the wayfinding design concept for the signage package for Berryville; including signs for Chet Hobert and the Fairgrounds. The necessary VDOT paperwork is being submitted and the project needs to be completed by the end of the year.
- 225 anniversary events are going well; Christy Dunkle showed the committee members a slide from her presentation at the last event. There will be a closing reception on March 30th at the Barns of Rose Hill
 - Betsy Prichard asked how the cidery is doing
 - Christy Dunkle responded that they are doing well; they were approved for production and a tasting room. The Town has met with them about expanding and parking. They also have locations in several other localities.
 - Chairman Milleson asked what the venue capacity is
 - Christy Dunkle responded that she was unsure
 - Chris Boies added that the inside could probably hold approximately 25 people; there is also outdoor seating available during the warmer weather
 - Betsy Prichard suggested that the cidery might be an option for the Fall Tour
 - Reid Dodson asked if there were plans to add a kitchen at the cidery
 - Christy Dunkle responded that they are unsure at this time

Chairman Milleson asked if there was anything else to come before the committee

- Felicia Hart added that she appreciated the Bank of Clarke County sending notices out and reassuring the community that their investments are safe in light of the recent headlines about some of the regional banks shutting their doors.

9. Next Meeting

- April 19th, 2023 – Spring Tour at the Blue Ridge Community College
- May 17th, 2023 – Regular Meeting

10. Adjourn

- 1:47pm Reid Dodson adjourned the meeting.
-

Minutes Recorded by Chris Boies and Transcribed by Indea G. Ford