

Approved January 25, 2024

Industrial Development Authority of the Clarke County Virginia  
Board of Directors

October 26, 2023

Regular Meeting

1:00 pm

At a regular meeting of the Industrial Development Authority of the Clarke County Virginia, held on Thursday, October 26, 2023, at 1:00 pm in the Main Meeting Room, Berryville-Clarke County Government Center, 101 Chalmers Court, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Berryville, Virginia.

Directors Present: Ben Cochran, Isreal Preston, William Waite, Rodney Pierce, Brian Ferrell, James George  
Directors Absent: Cabell Williams  
Board of Supervisors David Weiss  
Liaison Present:  
Staff Present: Chris Boies, Michelle Brown, Catherine Marsten  
Press: None  
Others Present: None

1. Call to Order

At 1:01 pm, Chairman Ferrell called the meeting to order.

2. Adoption of Agenda

**Director Waite made a motion, seconded by Director Pierce, to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:**

|                 |   |        |
|-----------------|---|--------|
| Isreal Preston  | - | Aye    |
| William Waite   | - | Aye    |
| Ben Cochran     | - | Aye    |
| Brian Ferrell   | - | Aye    |
| James George    | - | Aye    |
| Rodney Pierce   | - | Aye    |
| Cabell Williams | - | Absent |

3. Approval of Minutes

Director Waite made a motion, seconded by Director Preston, to approve the minutes of the July 27, 2023 Regular Meeting as amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

|                 |   |        |
|-----------------|---|--------|
| Israel Preston  | - | Aye    |
| William Waite   | - | Aye    |
| Ben Cochran     | - | Aye    |
| Brian Ferrell   | - | Aye    |
| James George    | - | Aye    |
| Rodney Pierce   | - | Aye    |
| Cabell Williams | - | Absent |

4. Secretary/Treasurer Report

Director Waite presented the following:

*FY2024 Year-to-Date Check Log*

- The only activity has been payment of Director’s fees from the July meeting and an insurance payment.
- Due to incorrect billing, there will likely be a second insurance payment made before the end of the current fiscal year.

*FY2024 YTD Budget/Investments Summary*

- Expenses are on track and within budget, as expected.
- Revenues on bond fees will continue to decrease until future projects present themselves.
- Investments are maintaining a consistent balance between \$250,000 - \$350,000.

Director Ferrell made a motion, seconded by Director Preston, to accept the Treasurer’s report as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

|                |   |     |
|----------------|---|-----|
| Israel Preston | - | Aye |
| William Waite  | - | Aye |
| Ben Cochran    | - | Aye |
| Brian Ferrell  | - | Aye |
| James George   | - | Aye |
| Rodney Pierce  | - | Aye |

Cabell Williams - Absent

5. Vote on Payment of Laurel Ridge Small Business Development Center Invoice \$6000

**Director Cochran made a motion, seconded by Director Preston, to pay the Laurel Ridge Small Business Development Center Invoice. The motion carried by the following vote:**

|                 |   |        |
|-----------------|---|--------|
| Israel Preston  | - | Aye    |
| William Waite   | - | Aye    |
| Ben Cochran     | - | Aye    |
| Brian Ferrell   | - | Aye    |
| James George    | - | Aye    |
| Rodney Pierce   | - | Aye    |
| Cabell Williams | - | Absent |

6. Economic Development & Tourism Update by Michelle Ridings Brown

Michelle Ridings Brown provided the following update:

- We received 58 proposals for development of the new tourism website; hope to conduct interviews and make a selection by November 1.
- We will be applying for funding through the Virginia Tourism Corporation for the website development.
- Recently attended the VEDA Fall Conference in Portsmouth; was a great opportunity to meet with our State Representatives.
- We hosted a successful FAM tour in September. Approximately 8 representatives from the state attended and toured local Clarke County businesses, including the LVG Group/Glass Projects Resource, Smith Meadows Farm, and the Barns of Rose Hill.
- Recently attended the Power Up Your Business Workshop at Laurel Ridge Community College. Topics included marketing, sales, tourism and business startup.
- Met with Jerry Johnson at the Battletown Inn; he has sold the property to Charlie Peret. Planning to meet with the new owner to discuss future plans for the property.
- New businesses are opening soon in Clarke County. Suecats restaurant, which is replacing the Berryville Grille, and Twisted Oak Farm Brewery in White Post.
- Renovations are being completed on the Pointer building; it will become an old style general store. Potentially opening in the springtime.
- The Pine Grove Restaurant has reopened after an extended closure.

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- The Widget Cup will take place in 2024. High School students from several localities will work on different projects that will help a Clarke County nonprofit organization. Director Cochran has kindly agreed to be the Clarke County representative/judge.
- Restaurant Week will take place March 18-23, 2024. Between 10-12 Clarke County restaurants will be participating, including wineries and farms serving food, and approximately \$9000 of ARPA funds will be used for this. A Love Local campaign will also be included.
- The Ruritans will be purchasing an electronic sign for use on Route 7, also using ARPA funds.
- The Visitors Center will be receiving \$12,000 of ARPA funds for necessary improvements.
- Remaining ARPA funds will be put towards the cost of the new tourism website.
- The EDAC Fall Tour was a success. Members of the EDAC and IDA visited several White Post businesses, including White Post Restorations, L’Auberge Provençale, Camp 7 and Dinosaur Land.
- The Camp 7 property has a lot of potential and would be an ideal project for the IDA to consider. An IRF grant to repurpose a vacant, publicly owned property could be applied for.
  - Director Waite enquired the estimated time for the state to transition the property over to Clarke County.
    - Chris Boies responded that an offer letter was supposed to be received from the state in January of this year. However, this has not yet been received.
      - David Weiss added that the state is required by code to give Clarke County first refusal on the property.
      - Michelle Ridings Brown suggested that during this waiting period it would be a good idea to start thinking about uses for the property.
        - Bill Waite suggested discussing a plan for IDA involvement moving forward, at the next meeting.
- Director Preston asked if the commercial kitchen at the Ruritans was still in the works.
  - Michelle Ridings Brown responded that she has spoken with Betsy Pritchard to see whether there was still an interest; there seems to be. Michelle continued that upcoming AFID funding could be applied for to develop a commercial kitchen. There is a group that is interested in doing a program called Cooking Matters, which provides cooking classes and nutritional education to underserved individuals; this would be a good use for a commercial kitchen, in addition to events.

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- Director Waite inquired if there had been any updates from All Points Broadband for the broadband project.
  - David Weiss responded that All Points gave a community update on 10.17.2023 and the completion date for the project is still July 2025, work will begin in Clarke County during the first quarter of 2025. The federal government has changed the definition of servability; therefore, a secondary grant will be applied for in order to serve people that did not meet the first definition. All Points has stated that Counties will not be asked to contribute any more local monies.
    - Chris Boies added that a meeting with Rappahannock Electric Cooperative took place earlier this week. The secondary funding will cover any households that have been missed; the Retreat may now meet the eligibility requirements of the project.

7. Next Meeting

- January 25, 2024 Organizational Meeting

8. Adjourn

At 1:43 pm, Chairman Ferrell adjourned the meeting.

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Minutes recorded by Catherine Marsten and transcribed by Indea Ford