

Approved 04-28-2021

Industrial Development Authority of the Clarke County Virginia
Board of Directors
January 28, 2021, Minutes

A meeting of the Industrial Development Authority of the Clarke County Virginia, held in the Berryville-Clarke County Government Center, Berryville, Virginia, on Thursday, January 28, 2021, at 1:00 pm.

Directors Present: Brian Ferrell, Rodney Pierce, William Wolfe, Ben Cochran, Isreal Preston, English Koontz, and William Waite

Directors Absent: None

Board of Supervisors Liaison: David Weiss, Chair

County Staff: Chris Boies, County Administrator
Felicia Hart, Director Economic Development and Tourism
Tiffany Kemp, Clerk
Cathy Kuehner, Public Information Officer

Press: Mickey Powell, Winchester Star

Others Present: Janice Kuhn, Infinex Financial Group

1. Call to Order

At 1:02 pm, Director Ferrell called the meeting to order. The meeting was then turned over to Tiffany Kemp, Clerk.

2. Organizational Items

Elect Chair

Tiffany Kemp, Clerk, called for nominations of Chair 2021

**Director Pierce, seconded by Director Wolfe, moved to elect Brian Ferrell as Chair 2021.
The motion carried by the following vote:**

Ben Cochran	-	Aye
Brian Ferrell	-	Aye
English Koontz	-	Aye

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Rodney Pierce	-	Aye
Isreal Preston	-	Aye
William Waite	-	Aye

Following the vote, the meeting was turned over to Chairman Ferrell.

Elect Vice-Chair

Chairman Ferrell called for nominations for 2021 Vice-Chair

Director Waite, seconded by Director Wolfe, moved to elect Ben Cochran as Vice-Chair 2021. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ben Cochran	-	Aye
Brian Ferrell	-	Aye
English Koontz	-	Aye
Rodney Pierce	-	Aye
Isreal Preston	-	Aye
William Waite	-	Aye

Elect Vice-Chair

Chairman Ferrell called for nominations for 2021 Treasurer/Secretary

Director Cochran, seconded by Director Preston, moved to elect Bill Waite as Treasurer/Secretary 2021. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ben Cochran	-	Aye
Brian Ferrell	-	Aye
English Koontz	-	Aye
Rodney Pierce	-	Aye
Isreal Preston	-	Aye
William Waite	-	Aye

Set Meeting Date, Time, and Location

January 28, 2021 – Organizational
April 22, 2021
July 22, 2021
October 28, 2021
January 27, 2022 - Organizational

Director Cochran, seconded by Director Preston, moved to approve the 2021 Meeting Schedule as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ben Cochran	-	Aye
Brian Ferrell	-	Aye
English Koontz	-	Aye
Rodney Pierce	-	Aye
Isreal Preston	-	Aye
William Waite	-	Aye

3. Adoption of Agenda

Director Wolfe, seconded by Director Ferrell, moved to adopt the agenda as presented.

Ben Cochran	-	Aye
Brian Ferrell	-	Aye
English Koontz	-	Aye
Rodney Pierce	-	Aye
Isreal Preston	-	Aye
William Waite	-	Aye
William Wolfe	-	Aye

4. Approval of Minutes

- Director Pierce inquired into the estimated bond totals. Tiffany Kemp, Clerk, stated Shenandoah University's Bond Fees were received after the packet went out, totaling \$3,907.50. Grafton has provided documentation their bond payments are complete, and they do not owe. Director Waite further clarified the IDA's expected Bond Revenue amount is \$5300 for the year.

Director Pierce, seconded by Director Koontz, moved to approve the October 22, 2020, minutes as presented.

Ben Cochran	-	Aye
Brian Ferrell	-	Aye
English Koontz	-	Aye
Rodney Pierce	-	Aye
Isreal Preston	-	Abstain
William Waite	-	Abstain
William Wolfe	-	Aye

- Director Waite and Director Preston both abstained from the vote, as they were not present at the October 22, 2020 meeting.

5. Investment Status Update by Janice Kuhn

Director Waite stated this presentation by Ms. Kuhn is the annual review to ensure everyone is aware of our investment standings. 2020 was a crazy year, and feels the numbers are quite reasonable given what has transpired.

Highlights by Janice Kuhn:

- Thanked the Board for inviting her to attend and provide a review for the year 2020. No one anticipated pandemic and the impact it would have.
- When she met with the Board last year, the markets were doing well; interest rates were rising, and the accounts were doing great.
- At the end of March 2020, the market had a significant sell-off, though short-lived. The recovery was selective to companies who benefited from shut down; Zoom, Amazon, etc.
- The IDA has a diversified portfolio. When initially set up, it was divided very conservatively, a little more aggressive, and added a growth component to get a better return rate.
- In a floating rate fund last year, at the time doing well because they are short-term banknotes that turn over every 60-90 days. The idea was interest rates were rising, as the notes were maturing, getting new notes with a higher interest rate to help the fund.
- When the pandemic hit, there was a massive sell-off due to credit risk; many companies were not doing well and could default on loans.
- Reached out in April because of that concern, recommended moving the money from the Floating Rate fund to the U.S. Government Securities Fund, which is a safe haven until things leveled out.
- Overall did well. Made allocation in May 2018 with \$100,000; 2 ½ years later up to \$115,000 - 6% per year - doing well for a conservative/moderate portfolio.
- Felt comfortable with keeping it as is for next year.

Questions/Comments:

- Director Waite stated he believes this is aligned with the strategy adopted two (2) years ago. Recommends maintaining as-is for another year with an annual review in January 2022. Director Wolfe agreed.
- Board vocalized their appreciation of Janice Kuhn keeping an eye on and making changes as needed due to the pandemic.

Director Waite, seconded by Director Wolfe, moved to approve the investments as presented and maintain the strategy through the year 2021 with a re-evaluation in January 2022. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ben Cochran	-	Aye
Brian Ferrell	-	Aye
English Koontz	-	Aye
Rodney Pierce	-	Aye
Isreal Preston	-	Aye
William Waite	-	Aye
William Wolfe	-	Aye

6. Secretary / Treasurer's Report

A. FY2020 Year-to-Date Check Log

Director Waite Highlights:

- The majority of checks are for the Director Attendance fees.
- No reason to change the budget now. All significant purchases, except for the Audit and Insurance, have been made.
 - o Director Wolf asked the Audit frequency; Director Waite responded the audit is done once a year and is a small piece of the entire county audit.

B. Investments Year-to-Date Summary, Year-to-Date Budget, Bond Logs

- A complete list of Bonds was provided in the packet. Director Waite noted the Bonds have been running for a while and will continue to dwindle off. Other than investments, Bonds have been the sole source of revenue; at some point, that revenue stream will disappear.
- No new requests for bonds for as long as Director Waite has been on the Board.
- Other opportunities should be looked at when we need a new revenue stream.

Director Waite, seconded by Director Ferrell, moved to approve the Treasurer's report, as presented.

Ben Cochran	-	Aye
Brian Ferrell	-	Aye
English Koontz	-	Aye
Rodney Pierce	-	Aye
Isreal Preston	-	Aye
William Waite	-	Aye
William Wolfe	-	Aye

Chris Boies gave a brief update on the COVID-19 vaccination.

- Clarke County is above the average percentage of citizens vaccinated.
- Businesses should start creating a list of employees who are willing to get the COVID-19 vaccine. It would be helpful to know the numbers ahead of time.
- Coordinating through the Director of Emergency Management.
- The problem now is vaccine supply.
- Doing group 1B as quickly as they can.
- Health Department is willing to go into manufacturers and do vaccinations – depending on resources. The bigger the group, the more likely the Health Department will come out.

7. New Business

A. *Discussion on Economic Development Structure*

- Chris Boies stated when he first arrived, Economic Development efforts were fragmented/disconnected as far as direction and structure.
- The current structure of the County is as follows:
 - o Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)
 - o Industrial Development Authority (IDA)
 - o Berryville-Clarke County Joint Committee on Economic Development and Tourism (MOU Committee)
 - The town of Berryville has a Community Development Committee where pieces overlap
 - o NGO's (Non-Governmental Organizations)
 - Top of Virginia Chamber of Commerce
 - Berryville Main Street
 - Barns of Rose Hill
 - Historical Association/Mill, Equine Alliance, Farmers Market, Fairgrounds, and many others
- Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)
 - o Initially discussed/appointed by the Board of Supervisors in 1999/2000
 - o Initial Charge:
 - Review revenue needs and offers ideas for revenue generation
 - Offer advice to BoS, County Administrator, and the Economic Development Director concerning economic development activities
 - A broad charge for them to work on
 - Talented people on the group who feel they have not been utilized, as they would like to

- Industrial Development Authority (IDA)
 - A legal entity created by the BoS with authority granted by the Code of Virginia
 - They have special powers localities don't
 - Make grants to private entities
 - Buy/Sell/Lease property without a public hearing
 - Develop industrial parks
 - Issue bonds for the benefit of private entities
 - Make loans to private entities/forgive repayment of those loans
 - They are also:
 - The economic development cheerleaders
 - Eyes/ears of the business community
 - Help elected officials analyze opportunities, determine needs, and generally keep them informed on the status of the business community
 - Could become an "Economic Development Authority" with the same powers.
 - The only cost associated with this is changing the legal paperwork
 - A more encompassing type of name
 - IDA's, historically, are thought of as helping a business park grow and expand, but they should be helping small businesses too

- Berryville-Clarke County Joint Committee on Economic Development and Tourism (referred to as the MOU Committee)
 - Consists of two (2) members of the Board of Supervisors and two (2) Town Council members
 - Ensures the joint efforts/cooperation on economic development activities in and around the Town of Berryville
 - Provides one (1) direction to the Economic Development Director
 - Streamlines the direction she is receiving
 - Both Town and County contribute financially to the position
 - Ensures joint funding of the economic development position

- Basic Functions of a Local Economic Development Program
 - Placemaking/Tourism
 - Business Retention/Expansion
 - Growing Your Own-small business/entrepreneurs
 - Business Attraction

- Placemaking/Tourism
 - Showcasing your community's special attributes/vibrancy
 - Two-fold effort – bringing people to your community to visit, spend money, then go home/also key for existing and new businesses
 - Talent/Workforce number one concern for expansion/relocation

- Quality of Life - Schools, healthcare, events, recreation, neighborhoods, community pride, etc.
- Clarke is very strong in the Placemaking category – people want to live in Clarke County. Homes being built are sold faster than they are completed
- Talent is one of the biggest contributors. Southwest Virginia is struggling because people are leaving that area. Businesses that need 300 employees will not develop in an area people do not want to live.

- Business Retention/Expansion
 - 2019 Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP):
 - 67% of all announcements regarding new and expanding businesses were from existing Virginia businesses
 - 68% of job announcements were from existing Virginia businesses
 - 54% of capital investments were from existing Virginia businesses
 - Need a coordinated program, site visits, and check-ins
 - Thought would be to have members of these groups be assigned business to check in throughout the year
 - Anticipate local business needs/identify problems before they arise
 - Lack of available employees is the biggest complaint we are hearing from local businesses
 - Build a strong business climate/create business champions
 - If Director Cochran could be a spokesperson for the Economic Gardening Program, it would help with future referrals to that program.
 - Strategies/approach different for corporate vs. downtown businesses
 - A large business approach, such as Berryville Graphics, will be a very different approach than one for a small, Mom-and-Pop type of business on Main Street.

- Growing Your Own-small business/entrepreneurs
 - Extensive support networks needed
 - A high percentage of failure in the first two (2) years
 - Business incubators
 - Educational programs for would-be entrepreneurs
 - Small Business Development Center at Lord Fairfax Community College
 - State Agency, resources offered are free to businesses, working with seven (7) in Clarke County currently

- Business Attraction
 - By far the most expensive endeavor/most visible headlines
 - Very competitive – localities with strong incentive programs
 - In Clarke, very targeted and limited due to strong Comprehensive Plan
 - Ensures we maintain a sense of place

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- Focus right now on already properly zoned vacant properties/buildings
- History of a very successful business park

- Regional Perspective
 - Businesses look at regions, not just jurisdictional boundaries
 - Established relationship with Frederick County and the City of Winchester
 - Coordination with the State
 - Virginia Economic Development Partnership
 - Virginia Economic Developer's Association
 - Shenandoah Valley Tourism Partnership
 - Shenandoah Valley Travel Association

- Projects in and around Berryville (Starting Point)
 - Board of Supervisors and Town Council thoughts filter through the Berryville-Clarke County Joint Committee on Economic Development and Tourism (MOU Committee)
 - MOU Committee would be able to provide direction to:
 - IDA (or EDA)
 - EDA is a more inclusive term than IDA. The only cost to change is the legal paperwork. A name change could be done with the adoption of a resolution.
 - Would focus on:
 - ✓ Business Attraction
 - ✓ Business Retention
 - ✓ Business Expansion
 - Would send feedback back to the MOU Committee
 - EDAC
 - Would focus on:
 - ✓ Placemaking and Tourism
 - ✓ Small Business Marketing
 - ✓ Work with downtown merchants
 - ✓ Work with Berryville Main Street
 - Information would flow between EDAC and MOU
 - Economic Development Director reports directly to the MOU Committee
 - Works to achieve goals of the MOU Committee
 - Provide staff support to the IDA and the EDAC

- Projects outside of Berryville
 - Areas such as Waterloo or the Double Toll Gate
 - Board of Supervisors would be the main point of contact for all groups
 - IDA (or EDA) focus on:
 - Business Attraction

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- Business Retention
- Business Expansion
- EDAC
 - Placemaking
 - Small Business Marketing
 - Work with Boyce and Villages
- Economic Development Director
 - Achieve goals of BoS
 - Staff support to IDA and EDAC

Questions/Comments

Director Wolfe

- Feels this is a fantastic idea. It fills a gap that has been missing. He is frequently asked how to get in and whom to talk to. Gives us an idea of what works and what needs to be adjusted.

Director Waite

- Excited to see the allocation of resources to help. Each group has different skill sets; how do we define the role better for everyone, so there is a clear definition. Need an objective; what does contacting mean other than saying help – and how to report on an ongoing basis.
- From a Board position, where do we help get pads ready vs. not? What is our willingness in a financing role?
 - Chris Boies stated some areas in the County are defined. The biggest question becomes how Berryville and the County work together. Where the next spot for appropriate development is and what does it look like?
 - David Weiss stated he wants to utilize the IDA's ability and monies when development opportunities arise. Training is the critical component to implementing an exciting and good plan, specifically training to allow all groups to understand what the Council and the Board's expectations are moving forward. Committed as a Board with County properties to make things happen.

Director Ferrell

- Before speaking with anyone, should Directors get confirmation with Board?
Doesn't want to waste time if not interested.
 - o Chris Boies stated the MOU did very well providing direction over this last year. The next time the MOU sets goals, it needs to be determined whom we should be targeting, and what is the right size and fit for Clarke County? Staff needs to create a defined list.
 - o David Weiss stated a vital question is what companies need our demographics and then how to market them to those available properties. Not interested in Large Scale re-zonings. Need and will be very controlled in any expansions. Good to have a conversation with staff, to have an understanding of whom to talk to and what to talk about.
 - o Felicia Hart stated understanding ordinances, permitting time and costs, etc., is a big piece of the picture.

Director Cochran

- Would be happy to talk to people but would need tangible data that show plots available, fees for hook-ups, a cheat sheet of sorts.
- Went through an expansion in 2020 and his contractors felt County and Town were a pleasure to work with as opposed to other localities.
 - o Felicia Hart stressed all departments working as a team is the best way to be successful for new businesses coming in.
 - o David Weiss stated over the last several years, we have tried to identify single points of contact, get all departments on board so that when businesses talk to us, they get a straight answer. Be clear and have all information available so businesses can understand what is needed and welcomed in Clarke County.

Director Koontz

- What are the sizes of the properties, zoned appropriately? Concerned Clarke County's cost per acre is significantly higher than Frederick County's. The cost of the land may also be a factor.
 - o Chris Boies stated Clarke is in the middle, too expensive on one side, but others feel it is cheap.
 - o Felicia Hart added many other localities are offering pad-ready sites by working with developers.

B. Director of Economic Development and Tourism Update

- Convene a group of hospitality owners/operators (topics to include TOT, short-term rentals, Civil War)
 - o Group has met once in person. The discussion continues with business owners on a regular basis for updates/status

- Engage stakeholders on the feasibility of a hotel in Berryville (this would include owners/operators in the region)
 - Participate in a weekly update of the travel industry. This covers the hotel industry. Talked last week with regional DMOs who get the STR report (monthly hotel industry booking numbers) and many hotels are still understaffed and way under booked due to COVID. Talk now for the industry is that the numbers will not get better until at least 2023. Many travelers are now utilizing short term rentals.

- Continue efforts on business attraction, retention *and growth* (seminars, promotion, assistance).
 - Continue to work closely with the Virginia Employment Commission, Virginia Career Works, Lord Fairfax Small Business Development Center and other agencies as needed. We are currently working with the USDA and other Federal agencies to take advantage of their programs.
 - While in Front Royal, I collaborated with Page and Rockingham County to develop the Connect 340 program. We applied for and won a REDI (Rural Economic Development Initiative) grant from the USDA. USDA has allowed this program to follow me. This grant provides extensive research for our area(s) aimed at outdoor tourism-related businesses. It is based on our quality of life and the resources that we have. The research includes other areas/states that have been successful in recruiting these types of businesses and their overall marketing plan. We hosted our second Zoom meeting fine-tuning our research needs/areas.
 - We continue to work with our local businesses to promote their hiring and training needs.
 - We have had another status meeting with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership.
 - We have successfully completed our first extended conference call with Cochran's Lumber regarding the Economic Gardening program. From this call, researchers will work to determine Cochran's best opportunities for not only increased sales but better understanding their competition, where sales opportunities are, and how to better promote (and to who) their products.
 - Director Cochran is currently participating in this program. Was a bit skeptical at first about how it could help his company. Feels the market research they are doing for him will be extremely helpful. It is a state-supported process, but it has a nationwide reach.
 - Informing them of areas that are up and coming, what the jobs pay, historical data, infrastructure, etc.
 - Very impressed with the thoroughness done on the company, excited to see what they bring back.

- Director Ferrell asked if they will promote the business, Felicia Hart responded they would not promote a business. They find the relevant information to each business and help them improve.
 - Felicia Hart added C2Management previously went through the program once and will be going through it again.
 - Director Waite stated this is a great business retention program for County. Does Felicia Hart have a list of companies who should go after this next? Felicia Hart responded she has reached out to a couple of businesses and is prepared to help. Some not ready at this time but constantly talking.
 - David Weiss felt it was important to note businesses cannot take advantage of this service if we did not have an Economic Development Officer; they will not come to a community without that liaison.
 - Director Preston asked for clarification as to why C2Management was going through the second round of this program, and did they see any improvements after going through the first time?
 - Felicia Hart stated it took a while. Did not understand the value of what they were bringing and did not have time to implement the findings correctly.
 - David Weiss felt it would be helpful to provide a background of what C2Management is. Felicia Hart responded it is an electronic recycling company. They recycle materials across the east coast from hospitals, data centers, and people with metals. C2Management will salvage what they can, resell what can be refurbished, and recycle the rest. Works with technical equipment and has staff to do specialized testing. Has state and federal contracts refurbish old equipment.
 - Director Wolfe has visited. Felt it is an amazing facility and worth a trip to see.
 - We have initiated a conversation with a local business and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership regarding international trade.
 - Via conference call, met a couple of weeks ago with the USDA to continue the discussion on the USDA Rural Development Value-Added Producer grant with a local farmer.
 - We have been regularly communicating with local businesses/non-profits to make them aware of the new PPP 2.0 program. Lord Fairfax Small Business Development Center has already been working with local businesses to determine eligibility.
- Engage in a dialogue with property owners of vacant buildings and the developable land to spur economic activity.
- We continue the discussion with some local property owners.
 - Regularly run queries about new properties on the market to start dialogue.

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- We produced the graphics for the oversize "For Sale/Rent" posters designed to spur discussion.
- We have regular meetings/updates with Christy Dunkle, and she continues to make introductions.

- Evaluate what is needed to make the Berryville Main Street program viable and successful and report back to Joint Committee on recommendations.
 - Have initiated several meetings with both current and past board members for a better understanding of the history of the Berryville Main Street program. We are working on potential partnership opportunities for events, trainings, and campaigns. While the board members themselves will determine the fate of the program, we can definitely utilize the fact that they are at least trying and wanting to make a difference. They already have relationships with many of the business owners, and we can work to take advantage of that asset in getting the word out and helping us better understand current reality.

- Formalize website and social media strategies for economic development.
 - Work continues. We have talked with other localities to learn what does/doesn't work. What pages and community infographics to include. Then production of those individual pieces will be initiated based on budget. We have set up a meeting with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership to incorporate the VA Scan program into our site. This program includes land and property offerings in Clarke County. In our first training, we will be working to determine what properties would qualify to be included in this State listing database.

- Establish relationships, and provide training for, realtors in the area.
 - I am now planning one-on-one meetings with local realtors – both in Clarke County and surrounding areas.
 - Continue working with ED at the Blue Ridge Association of Realtors to collaborate on potential Zoom training meetings with the USDA, LFSBDC and others.

- Develop and implement an incentive program using the CARES funding
 - Currently, as stated earlier, we are working to educate business and non-profits as to what the PPP 2.0 version is offering.
 - The Clear Brook Welcome Center display was a great opportunity. We showcased Main Street and other Clarke County towns/communities, numerous non-profits including Long Branch, Blandy, Historical Association, Farmers Market, the Clarke County Equine Alliance and Shenandoah Spirits Trail that showcased our two wineries. *Special thanks to Chris Bates for getting organizations to participate.*

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- In the past, up to 60,000 people pass through this welcome center, this year, just over 40,000 visitors.
- We were able to produce three banners that will be used throughout the year at events/programs and at places like the Clear Brook Welcome Center.
- We produced a Profile Sheet that will be utilized to promote Clarke County to various travel writers, travel bloggers, and DMOs. Our profile sheet will be distributed at numerous shows (courtesy of SVTP, SVTA, and others) attending the shows.
- Regionally we are putting together another Shop Local campaign – but this time for Valentine's Day. This is a play off of our "Open and Safe" program.
- We produced short videos of local business owners and videos of our area. This will give us access to video that will be utilized for future projects – including those with the State Tourism, Shenandoah Valley Tourism Partnership, Shenandoah Valley Travel Association, Shenandoah Spirits Trail, social media, and many others.
 - Shows what Clarke County has to offer.
 - Thanked Betsy Pritchard for participating.
 - Noted Director Cochran and Cochran Lumber are in line to participate.
- Farmer's markets, since moving to the Primary School, have had 300-500 going through a weekend.
 - David Weiss asked if they were staying at the school or moving; Felicia Hart responded they are in negotiations with the town right now.
 - Director Koontz noted the farmer's market gets a ton of people visiting and is very popular; how do we capture those visiting and pointing them towards town.
 - Felicia Hart responded that was part of the discussion. There are opportunities for the Town/County to set up a booth as well as other businesses. Not sure where folks are coming from. Punch card idea to include names and emails to win a free "something." Build on that database. In contact with LFSBDC, VA Tourism point of contact, many small businesses don't realize, but the VTC website provides a free listing for businesses to take advantage of.
- We also produced the over-size (3'x4') for sale/rent signs that will be utilized by property owners. These are colorful signs that include my contact information and make mention of incentives that might be available.
- We continue to have weekly conference calls with EDAs from both Winchester City and Frederick County. Meeting also includes LFSBDC (Christine Kriz) and the Top of Virginia Chamber (Cynthia Snyder). It also includes the United Way as needed. This weekly communication helps us to better understand what our current reality is and how can we adjust sooner to meet those needs. We also serve as a clearinghouse of new information regarding grants and training opportunities. We continue to push the "Open and Safe" COVID-19 campaign.

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- We are in regular communication with our local community banks to ensure we are not missing areas of concern for our "Main Street" businesses.
- Way to see what is happening in our underserved in our community
- The next meeting is scheduled for 01/29/2021.

Other projects:

- Economic Development
 - We continue to regionally participate as part of the Small Business Resiliency Team program as part of a GO Virginia grant. This is in partnership with Lord Fairfax Small Business Development Center. This program assists small businesses with marketing, financial guidance, the creation of an e-commerce website, and accounting software.
 - Continue to utilize Christine Kriz and her staff from the Lord Fairfax Small Business Development Center.
 - We continue working regionally to promote the Workforce Initiative. This program works to put businesses in front of high school students to show them potential career opportunities.
 - Regionally we are producing an NSV Talent website. This site will highlight each areas' quality of life (including P&R), educational opportunities, and other pertinent information that people are looking for when job hunting.
 - We continue participating regionally in the Startup Shenandoah Valley program. This program works with businesses to identify and address their risks while scaling up.
 - I continue to meet regularly with Clarke County's Planning and Zoning Director for updates/catch-ups.
 - We continue to see some turnover in smaller businesses – i.e., restaurants and some others.
- Tourism
 - As part of the Shenandoah Valley Spirits Trail, we just finalized our latest video that highlights Twin Oaks Tavern Winery. This video is shared on the Spirits Trail website and the Virginia Tourism Corporation's site. It is hosted on YouTube and shared via numerous social media outlets.
 - We continue to update the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the Shenandoah Valley Travel Association, and other websites regarding Clarke County and our assets/businesses. This includes providing photography and video as time allows. Because of time constraints, we are missing opportunities to highlight Clarke County via blogs, itineraries, and "What's New" stories.
 - All have a website, updating to get our info out there.
 - If a new business has an expansion, new product, VTC wants to know so we can showcase it.

- We have been successful working with local photographers who have offered their works to us. They are providing their images to us for free with just a copyright credit. We are (and will be) incorporating these images in our websites and social media opportunities, in addition to other outlets.
- Both tourism and Economic development websites are sorely outdated.
- Images have previously been a chunk of her budget at other locations, getting for free right now.
 - Director Cochran stated he has drone footage from fall he can share with Felicia Hart for these pages.
- Following up with Mayor Arnold's suggestion about potential signage at the trailheads (special thanks to Alison Teeter for the introduction to the "Trail Boss" Chris Brunton), we have discussed where potential signage can go (VDOT vs. State Park properties) and what said signage could incorporate. In the works is a new Eagle Scout kiosk project at Bear's Den that we could also potentially include our messaging on.
- There are rules as to what can be posted; will need to get a graphic artist to assist with this project.
- Included tourism numbers in the handout. State Corporation puts together a report. 2019 tax receipts went up 3.1%
- Good to have to help justify why tourism matters.

C. *Waterloo Availability Fees Program Update*

Highlights by Chris Boies

- Permission by the Board of Supervisors to reduce the sewer hook-up fees by 1/3 of the current fee.
- Hook-up fees are high for a small system with not many efficiencies.
- Hook-up fees were developed around the Capital costs associated with building the system.
- There was old money due back to the Board of Supervisors. The Board agreed to waive payback if we get new hook-ups. The reduction lasts for the calendar year 2021 to help spur activity.
- There is an existing incentive program with the IDA to space payments out. No takers yet for this program.
- Conversations with Mr. Claytor, who claims interested tenants left when they saw water/sewer hook-up fees. Took feedback to heart, try to soften the impact to new businesses.
 - Director Ferrell Questioned how many pads sites the system can accommodate.
 - Chris Boies stated there is a decent amount of property that is zoned commercial but has not been built on.

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- David Weiss noted there are currently three-four businesses not on the system, but they can be connected through this; hopefully, this reduction will spur them to join.

Staff to do's:

- Process approved minutes

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 22, 2021, at 1:00 pm.

9. Adjournment

Director Waite, seconded by Director Ferrell, moved to adjourn the meeting.

Ben Cochran	-	Aye
Brian Ferrell	-	Aye
English Koontz	-	Aye
Rodney Pierce	-	Aye
Isreal Preston	-	Aye
William Waite	-	Aye
William Wolfe	-	Aye

At 2:37 pm, Director Ferrell adjourned the meeting.

Minutes recorded and transcribed by Tiffany R. Kemp, IDA Clerk