

Industrial Development Authority of the Clarke County Virginia
Board of Directors
December 8, 2021 Special Meeting 5:30 pm

At a special meeting of the Industrial Development Authority held on Wednesday, December 8, 2021, at 5:30 pm in the Main Meeting Room, Berryville Clarke County Government Center, 101 Chalmers Court, 2nd Floor, Berryville, Virginia.

Directors Present: Ben Cochran, Rodney Pierce, Isreal Preston, William Waite

Directors Absent: Brian Ferrell, English Koontz, William Wolfe

Board of Supervisors Liaison David Weiss

Staff Present: Felicia Hart, Chris Boies

Others Present: None

Press Present: None

1. **Call to Order**

At 5:30 pm, Vice-Chair Cochran called the meeting to order.

2. **Adoption of Agenda**

Vice-Chair Cochran made a motion, and Director Waite seconded, to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

3. **Lord Fairfax Small Business Development Center Presentation**

Felicia Hart’s highlights included:

- If anyone has any questions regarding the presentation materials included in the packet, refer them to Felicia Hart, who will get them addressed.

- Presentation includes an overview of services the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides, some of the businesses they have worked with, and the outcomes.
- Christine Kriz and Dale Manza have visited numerous properties and businesses here and are working with them closely. Returns on investment for the businesses they have worked with are included in packet.
- Clarke County has not taken advantage of this relationship in the past, but it has recently blossomed.
- Christine Kriz has been introduced to officers from The Berryville Main Street and will start working one-on-one with some of those businesses so that they are aware of all the services and programs the SBDC provides.
- The relationship with Lord Fairfax SBDC helps us understand what is happening in other localities and helps us to stay current with reality.
- Vice-Chair Cochran asked if this is the organization that is responsible for the videos from the summer? Felicia Hart responded that no, those videos were from another group.
- Director Waite inquired if the SBDC has sent a request for funding? Felicia Hart replied that they did send an invoice for \$6,000 in October.

Director Waite made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Cochran to accept the presentation and make a \$6,000 contribution. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

- Felicia Hart advised that the plan going forward is to have the Lord Fairfax Small Business Development Center present in the month before the IDA’s budget discussions to address any issues or questions.

4. Approval of Minutes: July 22, 2021, Regular Meeting

Vice-Chair Cochran made a motion, seconded by Director Waite, to approve the minutes of July 22, 2021, as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

- Vice-Chair Cochran mentioned the Lucketts Fair seemed to have been a pretty big success in October. Felicia Hart confirmed that they were anticipating twelve to

sixteen thousand in attendance, but actually saw around twenty. The early-bird tickets were \$40, and they were sold out within two hours. Visitors came from as far as Texas, and both visitors and vendors stayed in area hotels and visited restaurants. We are working to raise awareness of what Clarke County has to offer. Suzanne of the Lucketts Fair is a Clarke County resident, and we have introduced her to local businesses so she could secure their services.

5. Secretary/Treasurer Report

- FY2021 Year-to-Date Check Log
 - Director Waite advised that the only expenditures since the last discussion have been Director fees, so nothing new to report. The \$6,000 payment will be the first real activity for the year.

- Investments Year-to-Date Summary, Year-to-Date Budget, Bond Logs
 - Director Waite stated that the budget is still on track.

- Income Received from Virginia Small Business Financing Authority
 - Director Waite advised that one item, a check for \$647.63, has been received and deposited. It will bring us above our budgeted revenue for the year.
 - Chris Boies clarified that the income was not budgeted because we did not know about it. Grafton School has a bond with the VSBFA, who has a revenue sharing agreement with the local economic development authorities. This check represents our share of the Grafton School bond fees for 2020 and 2021. An amortization schedule has been shared with Director Waite and it will be included in the budget in the future.

- FY2022 Budget
 - Director Waite explained that the net changes are down a little bit, but that is driven by changes in the market. We will wait and see what the next quarter looks like and update the budget in January. Overall, we are on track and investments are performing as expected.

Vice-Chair Cochran made a motion, and Director Preston seconded, to approve the Treasurer’s Report as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

6. New Business

- Economic Development & Tourism

- Felicia Hart advised that she has received calls about a number of people looking for real estate in Clarke County. We are working with real estate agents and contacts.
- David Weiss gave an update from the Berrville Area Development Authority (BADA) on the LGV Group application, they did not submit to DEQ early enough, so they requested a continuance, which was granted by the BADA. The BADA held public comment and will hold another public comment in January. There are two neighbors concerned with truck traffic and lighting. Landscaping regulations will address the lighting concerns. The traffic concern is legitimate, are secondary to larger intersection concerns and the use is granted by rights. Town and County are continuing efforts to address the intersection concerns.

– **Broadband Efforts Update**

Chris Boies highlights included:

- We have successfully gone through the challenge process with other vendors in the area. We expect to hear about the grant results in the next couple weeks and are hopeful that they will fund the project.
- Vice-Chair Cochran asked if All Points Broadband was approved. Chris Boies responded that All Points Broadband fought off challenges from others who said they provide service in the area. Currently, our entire project is in-tact and just needs funding, which we should hear about soon.
- Felicia Hart explained that this would serve over 3,000 homes in Clarke County.
- Director Waite inquired about project timing after funding is approved. Chris Boies replied that we would negotiate a contract with All Points Broadband, which would require Board approval. Construction could start within the first half of the year and potentially be completed in 18 months. Supply issues could impact the project, as well.
- Felicia Hart stated, and Chris Boies confirmed, that Clarke County is one of seven localities participating in the project.
- David Weiss advised that the Board has not taken final action, but has planned funding for the project. The school board generously returned their carryover. Due to additional Federal and state money this year, the carryovers were much higher than average. With the combined carryover of \$2.7 million and \$2.7 million in ARPA money, the Board expects the project to be fully funded.

– **Double Tollgate Update**

Chris Boies' highlights included:

- Have received final approval from the Frederick County Board of Supervisors to have water and sewer there. Frederick Water is currently drafting an agreement allowing them to operate in Clarke County. That agreement will have to be reviewed by counsel and then go to the Board of Supervisors in January or February.

- Once the operating agreement is established, the next step is to determine funding. There is hope that Federal infrastructure money can help, but no one has details on that yet.

7. Waterloo Water/Sewer Connection Fee Discount Update

- Chris Boies advised that no one has yet come forward who wants to connect to the public/water sewer system there. The discount is 1/3 of the connection fee, and it expires in a few weeks.
- The discount is meant to encourage development, as the connection fees are fairly high.
- We will have to make a recommendation to the Board on whether to extend the discount or be more strategic about it. Currently it is a blanket discount but we could change the parameters and target something more specific.
- That intersection could generate \$100,000 in meals tax this year. Getting another restaurant in there could be a big benefit.
- Any ideas for how to promote development at that intersection are welcome.
- Director Waite asked if the lack of discount use was an awareness issue. Chris Boies replied that property owners have other concerns, including the planning/zoning process and the availability fee structure. Currently the availability fee paid is based on the expected usage, which is very difficult to determine without knowing the exact architecture of the building. Prospective buyers are put off by not being able to accurately plan for the costs.
- Chris Boies clarified that other localities charge connection fees based on the size of the service line, which is much simpler to calculate. It would be advantageous to change that fee structure so that interested parties would know exactly what that up-front connection cost would be.
- Felicia Hart explained that Clarke County is the only locality who structures the cost this way, which makes it more difficult to attract developers. We've been working closely with the Blue Ridge Association of Realtors and have made them all aware of that program as well.
- Vice-Chair Cochran inquired if there was an ideal profile for a business or restaurant in that location. Chris Boies responded that the original sub-division plan had included a bank, a drive-thru restaurant, and a seated restaurant, and the county did not have any issues with it.
- Vice Chair Cochran further questioned whether putting a brewery in would be acceptable. Chris Boies replied that it probably would, provided it was an average water-user. The area is zoned Highway Commercial, so it would be best to take advantage of that traffic.
- Director Waite asked, and Felicia Hart confirmed, if other area franchise people were aware of the discount. Felicia Hart also explained that we have met with the local property owners as well, especially ones having known sewer problems, and made sure they were aware of this opportunity.

- Chris Boies stated that it would be best to make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors in December, before the discount expires, and solicited input from the group.
- Director Waite opined that it is better to put in some extra effort and make sure that the person or group that comes in is ideal.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 27, 2022, at 1:00 pm.

- David Weiss suggested that, in addition to quarterly meetings, it would be nice to have a chance to get better acquainted. Even though such a gathering would still have to follow the public meeting guidelines, he would be glad to facilitate a luncheon or other sort of meeting. Chris Boies responded that it is possible to have other meetings or a meal off-site, as long as they were open to the public.
- Director Waite agreed, stating that it would be a good opportunity to collectively brainstorm options and input for issues such as the Waterloo area.
- Chris Boies advised that he is planning a presentation to the Citizen’s Academy about the county’s revenue sources and process. He would like to do a shorter version of that presentation for this group, which would hopefully start some more targeted discussions or brainstorming.

8. Adjournment

Director Pierce moved, and Director Waite seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

At 5:59 pm, Vice-Chair Cochran adjourned the meeting.

Minutes Recorded by Felicia Hart & Transcribed by Catherine D. Marsten