

**Virginia:**

At the monthly meeting of the Economic Development Board (EDA) held at the Charles City County Government Administration Building thereof on **Thursday, March 3, 2022, at 6:00 pm.**

**Economic Development Authority (EDA) Board Members:**

Dominique White – Chairperson  
Robert Erda - Vice-Chairperson  
Brooke Welborn - Secretary/Treasurer  
Arnold Brown  
Donald Charity  
Gregory Cotman, Sr.  
Johnny Day

**Present:** Michelle Johnson, County Administrator  
William Coad, Chairman Board of Supervisors  
Rhonda Russell, Assistant County Administrator  
Gary Mitchell, Planner/Assistant Zoning Director

The County Administrator, Michelle Johnson, welcomed everyone on March 3, 2022. Ms. Dominique White - Chair, called the meeting to order.

**AMEND AGENDA:**

The meeting proceeded with Ms. Johnson asking to amend the Agenda. We would like to add VII. Project Update, and VIII. Virginia Gateway Region. Madam Chair asked for motion to approve the Agenda with revisions.

On a motion made by Mr. Erda, second by Mr. Day, and a vote of 7/0 the EDA Board passes to amend March 03, 2022, Agenda with revisions to include VII. Project Update, VIII. Virginia Gateway Region. No one opposed.

**MINUTES:**

Ms. Johnson asked for approval of Minutes from January 06, 2022, and February 03, 2022.

On a motion made by Mr. Erda, second by Mr. Brown, and a vote of 7/0 The EDA Board passes to defer the approval of minutes from January 06, 2022, and February 03, 2022, until the April 07, 2022, meeting.

**EDA FINANCE PRESENTATION:**

Ms. Johnson stated she was absent at the February meeting and said Dr. Russell explained to me there were questions concerning the state of finance of the EDA. I wanted to spend some time with you to make sure everyone understands. What you have before you are the Raymond James accounts as of January 31, 2022. We were setting up the new account at BB&T which is now Truist. So, we had to start over again. That is why we are still with Raymond James.

**Mr. Erda. Please remind us again why we are switching?**

According to the Code of Virginia, the EDA cannot have funds in an investment account. For years, the former EDA elected to have the account with Raymond James. In the event the accounts move any money by the Code of Virginia, you as the EDA, are personally liable for your own account to replenish your own account. Our auditors stress to us to have a treasurer manage all bank accounts.

**Mr. Erda. So, we are moving from a brokerage firm to a commercial bank account?**

Yes. At the April meeting we will have the bank account set up and you EDA will get monthly Treasurer's reports with the beginning balances, and expenditure's and then adopt your final statement moving forward. These are questions that you asked at the previous meeting in February:

**Where did the money that we currently have come from?**

The funds currently held by the EDA were collected as proceeds from a lease revenue bond issued with Waste Management in 2003 in relation to the County Landfill site.

**Do we have existing revenue sources?**

Yes. The EDA is still due to receive payments (\$50,000 annually) from Waste management lease revenue bond. The landfill should have expired May 2019, but that has been extended for 28 years.

**Will the revenue continue for another 28 years?**

No. The landfill will continue for another 28 years.

**Do we have any other income?**

No. Waste Management, for right now. We have a call in with Waste management for all of you to meet with them to better understand all of their dynamics. We will ask Ms. Welborn to send an email to Linda Cooke, former treasurer for the EDA requesting the records.

**What are the revenue projections right now?**

Only the \$50,000 thousand from Waste Management. We will be requesting from the Board of Supervisors to transfer an annual contribution to the EDA in this Fiscal Year.

**What is the timeframe for FY 23 budget request from local funds?**

In April I will give my budget request for all the departments and agencies in the county to the Board of Supervisors, then we will conduct a public hearing in May with the adoption of the budget in May. By law we have to have the budget adopted by June 30<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Johnson went over the budget for the EDA that came from the Auditors. There was not one to present from the previous EDA Board because they have not released the records. We have the deposits from Waste Management from 2013 to 2021, but we are missing about 1 ½ years deposits. I hope to have all this resolved by the April meeting.

**Mr. Charity. Waste Management owes us 1 ½ years?**

Yes. According to Mrs. Cooke they always struggled to get the deposits. We want to get a monthly deposit, and once the Treasurer gets this set up, we want automatic monthly deposits.

**Mr. Erda. So, there were bonds issued to Charles City County?**

The bonds were issued to Waste Management.

**Mr. Erda. Charles City County borrowed five million dollars to give to Waste Management?**

Yes. That was the incentive for them to come here. They were to pay it back between 2013 and 2019. Technically it was the EDA that gave them the money, but Charles City County had to borrow it.

**Mr. Erda. That money came from outside Virginia? Correct. It comes to Charles City, they hand it to Waste Management, they agree to pay it back over 5 years with percentage?**

Any process like that a company cannot pay back the community, it has to be through the EDA.

**Mr. Erda. The EDA has to pay back the investors?**

That goes through a loan payment, once we get the money back from Waste Mmanagement it goes to the county, the county gives it to the EDA, and the EDA makes a payment on the principal.

**Mr. Charity. When a bond is issued, and payments are late do we have a penalty process?**

This would not have happened except we lost the EDA Board. The old board is holding the records and will not release any information to Charles City County only to the new EDA Board. We are going to have Ms. Welborn send a request to Ms. Linda Cooke that they release the records to the new EDA Board.

We have requested this information from Waste Management as well. Ms. Johnson asked if everyone understood or had any questions.

**Ms. Welborn. Why there were two different accounts with Raymond James?**

I do not know why but we would find out once the papers have been released to us, however going forward we will have one commercial bank account. Sands Anderson has shown interest in becoming our legal counsel, and we put out an RSVP for a legal counsel on February 18, 2022, through March 18, 2022, then we will start the interview process. The EDA has the right to choose their own legal counsel.

**RETAIL STRATEGIES UPDATE:**

This is a retail strategies update. In March we will present at the Board of Supervisors meeting a public presentation as to what the findings were. We had a group from Alabama do a study on what we want and need retail wise for us. We had a virtual meeting, and one on-site group meeting. This is some of the findings. It was based on residential population, daytime employees, median household income. The mobile tracking service used county residents with their permission to track their location by their smartphones. It allowed us to know where they shop. This information is used to find the trade area, assist retailers in site selection. They developed a customized trade area. How this might increase the population. They looked at the daytime population who is going to come to Charles City County. Most likely would be restaurant's, hardware & garden, grocery, and miscellaneous retail. Some retailers are contacting county residents to purchase their land. Everyone wants to be on (SR5).

**Mr. Erda. When you say everyone wants to be on (SR5), do you mean on (SR5) or within a ½ mile of (SR5)?**

No. Actually on (SR5).

**Mr. Charity. Is there any interest in looking at any business other than retail?**

No. We wanted to start with retail first, then industrial.

**Mr. Brown. In order for these businesses to come, do we have a time line for water and sewer?**

It is not a requirement. We are working on getting grants and having it in certain areas. We would like to locate retail on (SR106). We have forty some acres purchased on (SR106) near the new fire station.

**Ms. Russell said at the last meeting it was asked about incentives, and how does that process track?**

Once the counsel has been obtained, we should set up an incentive policy for all.

**Mr. Charity. Ms. Johnson, Mr. Coada, didn't the Board of Supervisors take up the issue of developing the infrastructure for water and sewer so individual business will not have to purchase their own septic and water?**

Mr. Coada, Board of Supervisors committed all the personal property tax from sPower to be used toward infrastructure on (SR106)

**Mr. Charity. Is it possible for us to put a system in that area?**

You have to have in place a future development plan in order to get the permits from DEQ.

The county cannot give incentives, but the EDA can. The EDA can set up an incentive plan.

**Madam Chair. Who makes the recommendation?**

Legal counsel would decide, help set up the policy, then it would come to the EDA. It also depends on what they are asking for.

**Mr. Charity. The EDA has two roles right now?**

Mr. Coada, Ms. Johnson, the EDA has many roles.

**Madam Chair. What is the role of the EDA? It would be helpful if we had a list of what is the role of the EDA, things EDA is responsible for.**

We can have that for you for the meeting in April.

**Brook Welborne. What are the commercial spots they want to be at on (SR5)?**

They want the area in the bottom here where we purchased the 11 acres, and the Courthouse area near Dollar General. The land owners that sold the property to Dollar General did a no compete clause, they cannot bring a Family Dollar for example next to Dollar General. The majority of (SR5) is zoned A1.

**Brook Welborne. Where else on (SR5) is it zoned for business?**

Ms. Johnson, Ms. Russell, most of (SR5) is zoned A1, Wilcox Neck Road and (SR5), and Courthouse area zoned business. They could petition to rezone the property that is A1, but they would have to go through the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

**Mr. Charity. Any other areas being looked at besides (SR106)?**

Mr. Coad, we have purchased property on Courthouse Road.

### **CONTAINER PROJECT:**

We heard from the Board of Supervisors; they agree with it. It's amazing but it has to be professionally done. What we heard from our continuants is they want retail, to shop local. I did research, and I came across ROXBOX Container. These containers are what we're going for. Three forty-foot containers broken up into three stores per container. That will be nine retail units. We will have three retails, one vending, and one stage, the stage will serve multiple purposes. The cost will be from \$474,000 to \$555,000 to have them outfitted in Colorado, delivered, engineered, and set up in Charles City County. We do not need water and sewer that is on site, electric is Dominion Energy. We have to get the area ready for the project. Each unit will have heating and air. We are working with the school, if this works and we expand we will work on a regional water and sewer facility.

**Mr. Charity. If you don't have a need for water and sewer where will the workers and, visitors go?**

The hair salon on site now will be renovated and used as bathrooms for the area. That is why the containers will not need water or sewer.

**Mr. Charity. Is this a permanent type of structure or can it be reconfigured?**

We are not putting the containers on a concrete slab for that reason. It can be moved. It will operate at least ten months out of twelve.

**Mr. Charity. Will there be a study on how sustainable this is?**

That is why we have the courthouse area plan, this is where retailers want to be, and this is part of that plan.

**Ms. Welborn. Do local retailers want to be in a place like this?**

First, we are going to present it to the community to see if they are interested, then we will put it out to the public.

**Mr. Erda. How much parking?**

Ms. Johnson. Spencer Architects are going to design the project to show the outdoor space. We will see what it will look like then.

**Mr. Day. What do you foresee the EDA's incentives, if any?**

The EDA is the conduit for this project. When we have a final budget, the county will give you a check and it will be your project. You will pay ROXBOX, it will be advertised as an EDA project.

**Mr. Charity. Why is this project being passed to the EDA?**

You will be funding the project; you will have a representative be on the project management team. Our Food Pantry coordinator will manage the project, collect rent, and handle vendors.

**Mr. Erda. EDA is yet to vote for this project, would we have to say yes?**

Probably next month once The Board of Supervisors approves, we will request your approval.

**Mr. Erda. If it is an EDA project do, we say yes to everything that comes to us?**

Mr. Coada. What is your role as EDA? That has to be defined very clearly. You need to know what the Board of Supervisors expects of you. EDA is a mechanism that is to carry out the Board of Supervisors visions.

Ms. Johnson. Whatever we bring to you the Board of Supervisors has already approved, do you say yes to everything, that is up to you, but we want to know what it would take to get you to say yes. We have the Courthouse Area Plan, and this executes that plan. This is an award-winning project for Charles City County, nothing like it in the state of Virginia. I am not doing it for that, I am doing it for the citizens.

Mr. Erda thinks it is a great idea, and Mr. Charity agrees that it is important that we communicate with each other, no one wants to be a nay sayer. Ms. Welborn would like the roles of the EDA defined, where in the order of events does the EDA fit? Ms. Johnson said the next step is get a representative for the Board, then meet with the EDA for approval and accept being a conduit for the project, conduct kick off meeting with the staff, get a quote from Bruce Howard Contracting for site plan and preparing site for container delivery, develop and finalize total project of the budget, and then meet with the Board of Supervisors for final approval in April 2022. I want you to identify a person that can meet with staff during the day. I like to identify things that could go wrong, what do you think that is? EDA members said under-utilized, over budget, over saturate the amount of places you can go. I think that is important, that is why we are not including restaurants in the first phase. We should have more retail and recreational.

**PROJECT UPDATE:**

The EDA wanted updates, so I meet with Ms. White this week, and the following projects are in the development stage as of March 03, 2022. Charles City County purchased 87.89 acres over the last year supporting the Comprehensive Plan and The Strategic Plan, worth \$938,389.

**Land Acquisition:**

Tax Map 23 23 – 47 acres = Housing project with retail

Tax Map 40 33, 40 32, 40 31 – 8.49 acres = Across from Dollar General

Tax Map 40 58, 40 59 – 11.74 acres = Container Project

Tax map 28 57, 28 54 – 19.89 acres = Recreation Center(behind), future projects

**Fire Department:**

Contracts have been executed, including signatures of Ms. White and Ms. Welborn.

Site plan has been completed and presented to Timmons Group for first review, water and sewer design has started, ground breaking ceremony will be in May or June 2022 with the staff, Board of Supervisors and EDA members. Groundbreaking will be July 2022, and completion should be March 29, 2023, according to timeline.

**Dollar General:**

Site plan has gone to Timmons Group for review, returned to Dollar General with comments and corrections. Land disturbance permit and fees have been submitted to the County.

**Food Pantry:**

Contract has been executed; site plan submitted to Community Development. some changes were given back to the contractor, ground breaking ceremony March 2022, hired Food Pantry Coordinator, operational plan has started, volunteer plans and logistics for operation. Plans to open January 2023.

**Mr. Charity. Where is the Food Pantry?**

It is located behind Elam Baptist Church and the Charles City County work shop on The Glebe Lane.

**Mr. Erda. What will happen to the current food pantry?**

They will still operate, our goal is to operate on opposite weeks, and work together.

**Mr. Brown. The money set aside for the Food Pantry is that money being cycled in or a one-time thing?**

Mr. Coada. For your information Ms. Johnson, and Ms. Russell has gotten over nine \$900,000 in grants for the Food Pantry.

We have received grant money to fund the position for one year. We will have funding funnel through the Board of Supervisors for operations. The County will match the grant of \$200,000. The rest will be from a grant and donations. We will have an operating budget moving forward.

**Chickahominy Pipeline Power Project:**

This has been cancelled, will not be coming to Charles City County.

**Internet:**

Staff is working on future grant request from state and federal programs. Waiting to hear the outcome from Congressman McEachin for District III fiber project.

**Brewery:**

Building plan has been submitted and approved. Permit fees provided to developer. Building has some water issues being looked at now. It is scheduled to open late summer 2022.

**Harrison Park:**

Received grant to do walking trail around entire park. The contract has been awarded and is scheduled to be completed May 2022.

**Mr. Charity. On the Courthouse Area Plan has environmental impact statement, and traffic site plan been done?**

Ms. Russell. Environmental is usually site specific, usually new construction associated with federal dollars.

**Mr. Charity. The creek where the containers are going?**

Ms. Russell. The project will have to go through a site plan review relative to the buffer areas adjacent to environmental features and the maximum buffer area is 100' from most landward features, and this has not been done yet. VDOT has not done an impact assessment. Parking is still being discussed.

**VIRGINIA GATEWAY REGION:**

We talked about the EDA getting a staff person. I think that is very important. Virginia Gateway Region is a regional organization that offers a staff person without the County having to pay benefits. It cost \$45,000 along with .20 cents per capita. We can get a person dedicated to Charles City that analyzes, markets to VA Economic Development Authority and VA Economic Development Partnership. They have helped Petersburg and Hopewell. They do a lot of work across the region for small communities that do not have the capital. After one year if you do not see a value in it, we can cancel the contract. Next month I would like to have their CEO, Keith Boswell come and talk about the organization, and the program. It is a great opportunity. This is something for you to consider moving forward. I believe we should have someone that eats, sleeps, breaths, economic development for Charles City County.

Ms. Russell, at your last meeting you asked us for non-residential county projects: What you have before you are the number of permits issued since the beginning of the year for building, and zoning. As for major site plans, sPower on Roxbury, are complete. Breeze Inn is complete, but just selling gas, should open completely April 01, 2022, Dollar General on Roxbury in progress.

Ms. Johnson asked what member or members of the EDA would like to be on the project team for the container project. We will present this to the Board of Supervisors on March 22, 2022. Mr. Arnold Brown, Mr. Johnny Day, and Ms. Dominique White will be on the container project. This will take place during the day.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Madam Chair asked for a motion to end the meeting and to meet again on April 07, 2022. On a motion made by Mr. Brown, second by Mr. Erda, the meeting of the EDA adjourned at 7:42pm and will meet again on April 07, 2022.

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