

Virginia:

At the monthly meeting of the Economic Development Board (EDA) held at the Charles City County Government Administration Building thereof on **Thursday, April 7, 2022, at 6:00 pm.**
Economic Development Authority (EDA) Board Members:

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

Present: Michelle Johnson, County Administrator
Gary Mitchell, Planner/Assistant Zoning Director

The County Administrator, Michelle Johnson, welcomed everyone on April 7, 2022. Ms. Dominique White - Chairperson, determined there was a quorum and called the meeting to order.

MINUTES:

The minutes from January, February, and March 2022 were presented.

On a motion made by Mr. Cotman, second by Mr. Day, and a vote of 4/0 the Minutes from January, February, and March 2022 were approved as presented.

PRESENTATION OF VIRGINIA GATEWAY REGION

Ms. Johnson introduced Mr. Keith Boswell to speak on behalf of the Virginia Gateway, President, and CEO.

Mr. Boswell, I have been in Economic Development for over 30 years, I am now the President and CEO of Virginia Gateway Region (VGR). Our mission is foster regional prosperity through business growth, powerful partnerships and delivering innovative resources to its communities. Currently we have seven community partners, Sussex, Surry, Dinwiddie, Prince George, Hopewell Colonial Heights, and Petersburg. What can we do to bring revenue, jobs, and advance prosperity? This is done through direct jobs, indirect jobs. VGR was founded in 1960 as Virginia's first regional economic development entity. We are one of the few successful Public Private Partnerships in the region, 70% of our funds are from private sources. Local Government is our main focus. An investment around \$50,00 yearly gives you access to a \$1.3Mn VGR budget. Our strategic plan is key industries which are advanced manufacturing, logistics and distribution, signature retail development and business process outsourcing. We look for opportunities for your community to grow. We will facilitate business opportunities, ignite partnerships, and deliver innovative resources to your community. We go out and look for opportunities that will grow. We have quarterly meetings that Ms. Johnson would be a part of. VGR will look for grants, go after the money. If Charles city decided to join VGR, then we could identify sites that would be most valuable through the process. We are involved with Go Virginia. VGR successfully secured a grant of \$1.63M to develop seventeen sites. This is the largest number of sites that any region in Virginia has been successful in securing approved funding. We have contracted with Timmons Engineering to help bring water to the Route 460 corridor. We work with Retail Strategies; we have seven communities that participates in that, and it will be a 3-year process. You should think of a 1-year trial and see if we want to work with each other. What I want to leave you with it is to know what you want; we can deliver a lot of things. We want

to meet your expectations. We want an Industry to come into your community and thrive. We want to deliver more than your expectations.

QUESTIONS:

If we join VGR, will we need to join VDEP? VDEP should work for you no matter what. That is a state organization, paid with tax dollars and they should work on Charles City's behalf no matter what you so. They have 133 political jurisdictions they work for. What is VDEP looking for in a site? VDEP lets say has four thousand sites in Virginia that range from twenty-five acres to twenty-five hundred acres. They would look to see where it would fit best. What else do they want besides land, sewer, water? That is its land, water, sewer plus near transmission line. What about Petersburg? We were instrumental in helping Petersburg get the Pharmaceutical Industry. Petersburg had a vacant Pharmaceutical Plant that was inactive. Covid started to happen, this became a National Security issue, so we had to start making medicines ourselves. So, with grant funding, location, building etc. That is how that came to happen in Petersburg. Ms. Johnson told Mr. Boswell that Charles City had entered into an agreement with Retail Strategies, Mr. Boswell stated they work with Retail Strategies all the time.

Ms. Johnson thanked Mr. Boswell for coming and they would be in touch. Ms. Johnson told EDA Members that it was a lot to process, I want to get us moving in the direction we need to go for Economic Development. Next month we hope to have someone from VDEP come to speak to you as well. Where does VGR get their money? Some comes from outside resources and from the seven communities they are currently involved with.

MARKET 5 PROJECT:

I wanted to get feedback on ROXBOX from our meetings. High quality one stop shop, verses getting different contractors ROXBOX does it all, they do all the design, we tell them the size and our vision. They will come back with pictures and a price tag. Everything will be built to code; we will not have to worry about any of that. Mr. Coadia went to Tampa to look at a site and came back with we need to go larger. Mr. Coadia and I went to South Carolina to look a container facility, where they refurbish containers, not the company for us. I have spoken to several companies, and they say ROXBOX is the way to go. Boxman Studios in Charlotte has sold out of containers for 2022 and half of 2023. Arby's, Duncan,

Jimmy John's and Chipotle have purchased all their containers. They are going to drive thru facility, and this is trending now. ROXBOX can get us the containers within 3 months, and it will take 2 months to outfit it. It will be in phases. It will be a 40' retail unit, 20' vending, 20' stage and 20' cooking kitchen. Two containers back-to-back.

Phase 1 – Design & Planning

Phase 2 – Permitting & Engineering

Phase 3 – Construction & Production

Phase 4 – Delivery

We get two revisions after we receive the design. We will have to get input from the Community on what type of shops they would like to see, definitely a bike repair shop, tourist information within the County. Once we get the actual square footage Retail Strategies will produce a rental price based on our area. The Board of Supervisors (BOS) has committee to one million dollars for this project to the EDA. I have had my second interview with Virginia Rural Leader Institute (VRLI), so we may get funding for this project. This facility can only be open 11 months of the year, so we will close the month of January. The Food Coordinator will manage the facility. It will be under the name of Charles City County

Economic Authority but the County will manage it the way we do all our facilities. Once it is up and running the EDA will sign it back over to the County. We should be able to make the fall deadline.

MOTION:

On a motion made by Mr. Cotman, second by Mr. Day, and a vote of 4/0 to solicit a contract with ROXBOX up to \$1,155,000 for the Market 5 Project.

Ms. White, Chairman EDA and Mr. Coad, Chairman BOS will sign the contract and we will send it to our County Attorney Mr. Boyd to make any adjustments if necessary and send back to the EDA for review. I will let Jason know at ROXBOX it has been authorized, and let the BOS know at the next board meeting, they will authorize the transfer of money.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT:

The bank account has been set up. Waste Management is set up to wire money, and Raymond James is coordinating with Ms. Welborn, and Ms. White to transfer the money from Raymond James to the EDA account in the amount of \$1,654,347.78.

VISION 2040:

This is a strategic plan for the county. We will have community meetings starting April 11, 2022, at 6:00 pm to see what they visualize the County to look like in 2040. These meetings will take place in person and virtual. We will have the dates posted on our web site and this will go through September 2020. We will then come back together as a group, collect all the data, develop strategies for each goal and set priorities. In October it will be presented to the BOS, and November get approval.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Breeze Inn opened in District III, ground breaking was done for the Food Pantry. Where are we on legal counsel for EDA? Ms. Johnson, we have four firms that responded, out of the four two has separate council just for the EDA. The BOS will make a decision April 26, 2022, and if it is one of the two firms, we will bring that decision to you for you to decide if you want them to represent the EDA, If you do not go with that firm you will need to solicit me to go out on your behalf and find legal counsel. Chairperson asked the members what they thought of Mr. Boswell's presentation for VGR? We like the concept but would like to look at their website, and also find out what will be VGR's priorities the first year.

Ms. Welborn reached out to Ms. Cooke by email for financial records and minutes and did not get a response. Ms. Johnson said the next step per the county attorney is for the EDA to send a certified letter to Ms. Cooke requesting all records.

ADJOURNMENT:

Madam Chair asked for a motion to end the meeting and to meet again on May 05, 2022.

On a motion made by Mr. Erda, second by Mr. Day, the meeting of the EDA adjourned at 8:05pm and will meet again on May 05, 2022.