



Minutes

Tucker County Development Authority

September 17, 2020 – 6:00 PM

Due to COVID-19 health concerns the meeting was held by videoconference

Board Members Present (by teleconference):

Wayne Smith – President, Al Tomson – Vice President, Sandra Frank – Secretary, Roscoe 'Ronnie' Beall – Treasurer, Robert McClung, Ben Nelson, Dennis Filler, Cory Chase, Matt Quattro, JR Helmick, April Miller, Steven Sponaule, Jon Bush – County Commissioner

Board Members Absent:, Bruce Kolsun, Dan Dilly,

Quorum present? Yes

Attendees:

Steve Leyh, Executive Director, Tucker County Development Authority

Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 PM by President Wayne Smith.

Minutes

Ben Nelson motioned to approve the minutes from the July 30, 2020 meeting. The motion was seconded by Cory Chase. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved unanimously.

Communications and Billing

No communications or billing was presented.

Treasurer's Report

The financial report was emailed to the board. Director Leyh asked if there were any questions about the report. There being none, the financial report will be placed on file for audit.

Executive Director's Report

Corridor H Authority



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- The Corridor H Authority met in July and approved the plan of work by *Bowles Rice* for fiscal year 2021. The workplan recognizes the significance of the highway as a national corridor and called for meetings with representatives from Virginia, Ohio, and Indiana. The goal is to secure funding and have all the remaining sections of Corridor H under contract by 2025.
- WVDOH confirmed there will be an intersection at WV 72 just north of Parsons near Holly Meadows. The intersection is being value engineered to a slightly new design than what was planned. It will have on and off exits in each direction.

Governor's Export Awards

- Two Tucker County businesses – Pro Poly of America and Nellie Rose Textiles were recognized by state officials for growing their business by exporting a good or service to a new country last year. They were among only 30 award winners statewide!

FY20/ FY21 Audit RFP

- Prepared the audit RFP and sent it to CPA firms. We received 3 bids and responses from 13 firms who were unable to bid.

Southern Economic Development Council Annual Conference

- Participated in the virtual Southern Economic Development on August 17-18. The event was scheduled to be held in Nashville. The theme of the conference was disruption and featured presenters discussing massive changes coming to the automotive industry, e-commerce, and business attraction during Covid-19.
- The keynote was Holly Sullivan, Director of Worldwide Economic Development at Amazon. She shared updates on HQ2 in Northern Virginia and presented information about site selection.

AML Application / Support Letters

- Worked to obtain support letters for the grant application to redevelop the Davis Center and the TAP Room building.

Preparing Local Economic Development Grant Application

- Working to prepare to apply for the Local Economic Development Grant for FY21.

Potomac Highlands Creative Economy & Tourism Summit

- Presented at the Potomac Highlands Creative Economy & Tourism Summit on August 27th about our business retention efforts during COVID and how the Support Our Shops website was implemented and could be modeled in other communities.

90 Acres

- The property was sold to Western Pocahontas for \$220,000.



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Tucker County CVB

- After a difficult spring, visitation to Tucker County has been strong this summer.
- The CVB is preparing a winter advertising campaign to promote the new Timberline Mountain and Canaan Valley.

Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Auction

- 5 census tracts and an estimated 2,152 locations in Tucker County are eligible for RDOF. The final list of eligible areas will be published at least 14 days prior to the auction.
- The start date for phase one of the auction is October 29. It is a two-phase auction.
- The Governor is committing another \$50 million in CARES act funding to target areas not served by RDOF.

Moving Files onto Google Drive

- Organized digital Tucker County Development Authority files and saved them to a Google Drive.

Business Technical Support

- Continue to help entrepreneurs and connect them to resources.

Planning Commission

- Attended the Tucker County Planning Commission meeting to provide updates on Development Authority projects including the wastewater feasibility study.

Old Business

Tucker Accelerator Project (TAP) Room

Executive Director Leyh explained that Woodlands continues to work on the TAP Room project. Most recently they met with Michael Mills and Kellie Cole who are architects with the Mills Group to design the first-floor office space. The proposal features 9 private offices, a common co-work area, a small kitchenet, a classroom, and a conference room that can be opened and combined into one large space. The design features a corridor connecting two sides of the building with restrooms. The project is contingent upon grant funding.

COVID-19 Economic Response

Unemployment rate was 8.8% in Tucker County in July, a decrease from 17.2% in April. Tucker County was second in the state for business growth in August. The number of business entities in Tucker County grew from 450 to 462. Since January 1, 2020 Tucker County is ranked fourth out of the 55 counties for business growth in the state of West Virginia. The county has added 55 new business entities for 11.81% growth this year.



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Redevelopment of Davis Center

WVDNR prepared the draft lease for the Davis Center complex. The board agreed the termination clause that states either party may terminate the agreement upon thirty (30) days written notice to the other party was a deal breaker. There was much discussion.

Ronnie Beall moved to not accept the lease. The motion was seconded by Dennis Filler. After much discussion Ronnie Beall withdrew his motion.

Robby McClung made a new motion to try to renegotiate the lease without the term in it. The motion was seconded by Cory Chase. The motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Selecting Engineering Firm for Wastewater Feasibility Study

The Wastewater Feasibility Study Selection Committee has been meeting to select an engineering firm to perform the feasibility study. The committee received 14 responses to the Request for Qualifications. They scored the responses and selected the top 4 firms to interview. The committee met with and interviewed those 4 firms and they have selected Potesta & Associates, Inc. as the firm they would recommend to the Development Authority board. During their interview, Dana Burns and Dave Sharp from Potesta presented an innovative idea that may be possible – it would incorporate using 25,000-gallon modular treatment units to help build temporary capacity until a permanent solution can be implemented. They also presented creative ideas around modifications to the existing lagoon system that could help increase capacity. The next step would be approval of the recommended engineering firm by the full Tucker County Development Authority board and then working with Potesta to refine the scope of work and cost for the feasibility study. Then we would apply to EDA for funding. Potesta estimates that it will take 4-6 months to complete the study once funding is secured.

Vice President, Al Tomson motioned to accept the Wastewater Feasibility Study Committee's recommendation of Potesta & Associates Inc. The motion was seconded by Ronnie Beall and the motion carried unanimously.

Appointment of Audit Committee

Dennis Filler motion to approve Wayne Smith, Ronnie Beall, Robby McClung and Steve Leyh. as members of the FY20 & FY21 audit committee. The motion was seconded by Sandra Frank. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of FY21 Action Plan



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The FY21 Action Plan was presented to the board. Secretary, Sandra Frank motioned to approve the FY21 Action Plan. Vice President, Al Tomson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Local Economic Development Grant Resolution & Certification

The following resolution was read:

Be it resolved that the Tucker County Development Authority hereby authorizes Steven B. Leyh, Executive Director of the Tucker County Development Authority to act on its behalf and enter into a contractual agreement with the West Virginia Development Office to receive and administer grant funds pursuant to provisions of the FY 2021 Local Economic Development Grant Program.

Dennis Filler motion to pass the resolution. The motion was seconded by Ronnie Beall and passed unanimously.

Authorize Credit Card Electronic Payment

Despite our best efforts we have been hit with a \$40 late fee on the credit card. Steve explained that he downloads the credit card statement the moment it is available - usually by the 5th of the month and emails it to the CPA to cut a check. However, the postal system has been experiencing delays. Steve waits to get the check from the CPA, sign it, and then drop it back in the mail to get a second signature, then mail it back to the credit card company. The payment is due on the 26th and it has been a challenge.

Robby McClung made a motion to pay electronically the full balance of the credit card. Ronnie Beall stated that we need to have some approval of the credit card bill. Sandra Frank stated that all credit card bills be sent to the Treasurer for approval before payment is made. The motion was seconded by Ben Nelson. The motion carried.

Dennis asked why there were charges and then credits on the bill? Steve explained that the introductory rates had ended on some website services and they charged full price. Steve cancelled those services, thus the refund.

Approval to Attend Virtual EDI

Steve is working on becoming a Certified Economic Developer. This requires 3 week-long institutes followed by an interview and multi-day exam. The fall institute was scheduled to take place in Louisville, Kentucky from October 31 to November 5. The training is now virtual and at a reduced cost.



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Ben Nelson motion to approve the Executive Director's attendance of virtual EDI October 31 – November 5. The motion was seconded by Robby McClung. The motion passed unanimously.

Tucker Co. Business Retention & Expansion Survey Results

More than 86% of respondents said their business was increasing over the past 3 years. 10% stable and 3% were decreasing.

More than 65% of respondents have unfilled positions or plan on hiring additional staff within the next year. An additional 13% of respondents said that they may hire additional staff.

48% of respondents said the availability of housing is one of the more serious issues and limits their ability to attract, hire, or retain employees. 20% identified it as a moderate issue. 3% said it was the most critical issue. 6.9% said it is a lesser issue and 13.8% said housing is not an issue.

Workforce was the primary barrier to expanding business in Tucker County.

In addition to workforce housing, one of the themes was a lack of contractors and it suggested the Development Authority look for opportunities to train and educate local people in the building, remodeling, home repair field.

Schedule October Executive Committee Meeting

October is the annual performance review of the Executive Director. Al Tomson suggested the Executive Committee meet October 15, 2020 at 5:30 PM.

Public Comment

No public comment.

FY20 & FY21 Audit Award

The audit committee met and scored proposals from three firms. The firm of BHM CPA was selected to perform our FY20 & FY21 audits. The cost will be \$5,300 for two years + 8% to be paid for the state. The total cost \$5,724.00 for FY20 & FY21 audits.

Secretary, Sandra Frank motioned to approve contracting with BHM CPA Group to perform the FY20 & FY21 audits. Dennis Filler seconded motion and it carried unanimously.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 PM.



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The next regular meeting of the Tucker County Development Authority will be held on Thursday, October 15, 2020 at 6 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Sandra Frank, Secretary