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## Minutes

### Tucker County Development Authority

December 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 (arrived late), Roscoe ‘Ronnie’ Beall – Treasurer, Dennis Filler, Bruce Kolsun, JR Helmick, Matt Quattro, Dan Dilly, Robert McClung, Steven Sponaugle, Ben Nelson, April Miller

**Board Members Absent:** Jon Bush – County Commissioner, Cory Chase

**Quorum present?** Yes

#### **Attendees:**

Steve Leyh, Executive Director, Tucker County Development Authority

#### **Call To Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Wayne Smith, President.

#### **Minutes**

Dennis Filler motioned to approve the minutes from the November 19, 2020 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Bruce Kolsun. The minutes of the previous meetings were approved unanimously.

#### **Communications and Billing**

No communication or billing.

#### **Executive Director’s Report**

##### **Broadband - Rural Digital Opportunity Fund**

- The RDOF reverse auction is complete. All 8 blocks in Tucker County were bid on by internet service providers.
- Citynet won two of the blocks and Frontier Communications won the remaining 6 blocks in Tucker County.
- Senator Capito has expressed concerns to the FCC about Frontier’s ability to deliver service given



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the company's current financial situation.

### **Other Broadband Expansions**

- Multiple internet service providers are considering expanding their service areas within Tucker County and announcements are forthcoming.

### **Unemployment Rate**

- Tucker County unemployment rate dropped to 5.3% in October – down from 7.3% in September. It was 4.4% in October 2019, so it is nearly back to pre-pandemic levels.

### **Median Household Income**

- The new data estimates Tucker County median household income during 2019 to be \$47,222. This is a minor decline from \$48,070 in 2018. Tucker County recognized a nearly \$10,000 increase in median household income between 2017 and 2018.

### **St. George Medical Clinic Pharmacy**

- The new building is in place in Parsons, but interior still needs to be built out.
- Expecting operations to begin by March with drive thru as well as evening and weekend hours.

### **New CD at Grant County Bank**

- Coordinating signatures and finalizing paperwork for the new 6-month CD.

### **Participated in Tucker County CVB December Meeting**

- Tom Price, Director of Operations has joined the board of the CVB. The new Timberline Mountain had a successful preview weekend. Timberline will open for the season on December 18 and Canaan Resort on December 19.

### **Business Technical Support**

- Continue to help entrepreneurs and connect them to resources.

*6:08 PM – Sandra Frank joined the meeting*

### **Old Business**

#### **Tucker Accelerator Project (TAP) Room**

An announcement has yet to be made regarding the AML Pilot Program Grants. Woodlands is still moving forward with securing funding for the housing portion of the project.



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### **Wastewater Feasibility Study**

Last month, the Development Authority board approved a letter of support from the Tucker County Development Authority to U.S. EDA for the wastewater feasibility study. Executive Director Leyh reported that the Tucker County Commission and Virgin Hyperloop also provided letters of support for the wastewater feasibility study. Working in collaboration with Shane Whitehair of the Region VII Planning and Development Council, the Tucker County Development Authority submitted a grant application to U.S. EDA for \$50,000 - 50% of the cost of the study. The U.S. EDA grant application will be considered in January 2021.

The Tucker County Development Authority with Region VII also presented a request for funding to the West Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council at their monthly meeting. IJDC agreed to commit \$50,000 – 50% of the cost of the study, contingent upon U.S. EDA committing the other 50% (\$50,000). If U.S. EDA agrees to fund the other 50%, this would eliminate the need for local matching funds, thus saving money for the Town of Davis, City of Thomas, Tucker County Commission, and the Tucker County Development Authority.

### **FY20 Audit**

BHM CPA, has completed the Tucker County Development Authority audit for the year ended June 30, 2020. Board members received a copy by email. The FY20 audit only had one finding - Material Weakness – Segregation of Duties. This is the same finding TCDA had last year - a typical finding within small organizations.

### **Workforce Housing at Industrial Park**

The Workforce Housing Task Force Committee continues to meet monthly. Kate Somers from the Home Ownership Center in Elkins provided an overview of their services to the committee. She also presented information about no down payment USDA Rural Development Loans and how to help prepare potential home buyers. The committee is also considering how and when to promote the workforce housing project to the public and is considering a public meeting in February or March. It was communicated to the committee that the board's preference is for workforce housing be located near Davis.

### **New Business**

#### **Virgin Hyperloop**

Kelsey Kirby from Virgin Hyperloop joined the meeting to introduce herself and discuss the new Hyperloop Certification Center. She is looking forward to getting to work with the community on the project.



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**Industrial Park Development**

Executive Director Leyh explained that he has received some preliminary inquiries about the industrial park. He asked the board for initial guidance regarding the process of selling land if the wastewater could be provided and the protective covenants and restrictions are finalized. The board suggested each prospect be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and preference given to prospects which would provide the most economic benefit to the community such as the number of jobs created, higher salaries, etc.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 PM after a motion by Ronnie Beall, seconded by Matt Quattro.

The next regular meeting of the Tucker County Development Authority will be held on Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 6 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

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Sandra Frank, Secretary