



Tucker County Development Authority

PO Box 176

Thomas, WV 26292

(304) 614-8839

tuckercounty@gmail.com

www.TuckerWV.com

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## Minutes

### Tucker County Development Authority

October 17, 2024 – 6:00 PM

NYSC - 494 Riverstone Road, Davis, WV 26260

#### **Board Members Present:**

Dan Dilly – President, J.R. Helmick - Vice President, Sandra Frank – Secretary, Roscoe 'Ronnie' Beall – Treasurer, Dennis Filler, Lucinda Nestor, Ben Nelson, Jody Flanagan, Mike Rosenau – Commissioner (via telephone)

**Board Members Absent:** Robert North (excused) April Miller (excused), Bruce Kolsun

**Quorum present?** Yes

#### **Guests:**

Steve Leyh, Executive Director, Tucker County Development Authority  
Ben Herrick, Tucker County Planning Commission

#### **Call To Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM by President, Dan Dilly

#### **Minutes**

Dennis Filler motioned to approve the minutes from the August 15 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Ben Nelson. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved unanimously.

#### **Communications and Billing**

A letter was shared regarding Economic Development Secretary Mitch Carmichael stepping down from his role.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

The treasurer's report was presented and filed for audit.

#### **Executive Director's Report**



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### **Unemployment Rate**

- The unemployment rate was 3.7% in July, and 3.4% in August

### **Real Estate Market**

- The median listing home price in Tucker County, WV was \$369.5K in August 2024
- The median home sold price was \$325K.

### **Infrastructure Construction Updates**

- PRODIGI was issued their notice to proceed with construction this week. The project consists of 141 miles of fiber in Preston and Tucker Counties. The nearly \$8 Million Dollar project will be completed by June 2026
- Canaan Valley PSD Phase II Sewer Extension is under construction and will provide sewer services to Canaan Village, Deerfield Village, Windwood, as well as parts of Route 32 and Cortland Road. It has an estimated cost of \$4.4 Million
- Town of Davis Sewer System Collection Improvements project will be under construction in Spring 2025 at a total cost of \$13.1 Million

### **Blackwater Canyon Sale**

- 2,700-acre tract of Blackwater Canyon owned by Allegheny Wood Products to be acquired by the US Forest Service for an estimated cost of \$14 Million
- Increases opportunities for tourism and resolves the divided ownership of the railroad grade

### **Tucker County Day Scheduled**

- Tucker County Day is set for Thursday, March 13, 2025, in Charleston
- Event will consist of meetings during the day with elected officials and various state government departments

### **West Virginia Hardwood Alliance Zone**

- HAZ continues to work on new branding, website, and marketing materials
- October is Woodworking Manufacturing Month, and I have been highlighting the industry in Tucker County on LinkedIn
- HAZ is supporting a coalition of community colleges in new grant efforts
- Eastern WV Community & Technical College is developing a new Wood Manufacturing Certificate that includes a Finish Carpentry Certificate and a Furniture Production and Business Certificate
- The closure of regional sawmills is impacting manufacturers who relied on their materials



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### **West Virginia Economic Development Council's Annual Fall Conference**

- Conference was held in Martinsburg September 16-18
- Participated in the September WVEDC board meeting and membership meeting
- First Energy presented a session on Solar Development in West Virginia. 12 MW Davis Solar Facility – can't begin construction until 85% of power purchase commitments are made – likely 2026, but could happen sooner
- Other sessions included panels on AI in Economic Development, Downtown Revitalization, Jobs & Hope program, Government Contracting, and Advanced Manufacturing
- Mayor Steve Williams joined via video conference, and was only candidate for Gubernatorial Session
- Announcement was made that LED Grant would increase to \$44,000 for this year only

### **Region VII Planning & Development Council Update**

- Attended the annual meeting in Buckhannon as a board member
- Continue to assist with Region VII on multiple projects
- Region VII has 18 projects in Tucker County with a total project cost of \$98.1 Million

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### **Office of Energy**

- Meeting with a liaison for the Office of Coalfield within the Office of Energy to discuss opportunities in the future

### **Generation WV Visit**

- Coordinating with Generation West Virginia for their Fellowship event in Tucker County set for November 7, 8, & 9

### **Business Retention Visits**

- Continue to meet with Tucker County employers and discuss challenges facing the business environment
- Workforce is a common theme and is now impacting higher paying jobs

### **Assisting Small Businesses**

- Continue to counsel and assist entrepreneurs

### **Unfinished Business**

### **Industrial Park Development**



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**Engineering Firm Task List**

During the meeting, it was reported that there are outstanding payments of \$3,973 owed to RK&K. In addition, there is still \$28,491 remaining on a \$40,000 loan from Grant County Bank. This brings the total outstanding amount related to the Engineering Task List for the Tucker County Industrial Park to \$32,464.

Recent survey results confirmed that the West Virginia Power and Transmission Company owns small parcels of land on both the east and west sides of the industrial park. However, state and county online maps incorrectly show WV DNR as the owner.

**YESWV Ready Sites Program**

On August 19, the Executive Director Leyh reported that officials from the West Virginia Department of Economic Development and Insite Consulting conducted site visits to the Tucker County Industrial Park in the morning and the City of Parsons Industrial Park in the afternoon. Representatives from several utility companies participated: Canaan Valley Gas and the Town of Davis (providing water and sewer services) were present at the Tucker County Industrial Park visit, while Mountaineer Gas and the City of Parsons attended the Parsons Industrial Park visit. Mon Power did not attend; therefore, data isn't available on excess electrical capacity at both sites. Additionally, the final report from InSite Consulting, initially expected by mid-September, is delayed.

**Industrial Park Wetlands & Stream Delineation**

On September 25, 2024, the Army Corps of Engineers approved the Jurisdictional Determination (JD) for the Tucker County Industrial Park. If there are disagreements with the approved JD, there is a 60-day window to appeal; failing to notify the Corps within this timeframe will result in acceptance of the JD and a waiver of all rights to appeal. There is also the option to submit new information for the district engineer's reconsideration. The approved JD is valid for five years, expiring on September 25, 2029.

The new JD has resulted in an increase in developable land along the access road, with the area expanding from 10.33 acres in October 2023 to 14.33 acres in October 2024. However, the new JD introduces a small wetland across the access road from Pro Poly of America and extends a large wetland to the highway, effectively dividing the property into two sections.

Additionally, the Army Corps of Engineers informed the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection about the JD issuance. They indicated that some wetland features deemed Non-Federally Jurisdictional by the Army Corps may still be classified as



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jurisdictional under state law, potentially requiring a State Waters Permit before any impacts. The revised Wetland Delineation has been provided to the DEP for their review.

Dennis Filler moved to accept the JD as presented. Ben Nelson seconded the motion, and it was passed.

### **Wetlands & Stream Mitigation Banking**

We have requested Western Pocahontas Properties consider transferring the mineral rights for the Tucker County Industrial Park. Currently, we are unable to proceed with wetland or stream banking until we receive confirmation that the mineral rights are secure.

### **New Business**

#### **BEAD Letter of Support Requests**

Internet Service Providers PRODIGI, Citynet, and Micrologic requested letters of support from the Development Authority to aid their efforts in securing funding from the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program.

Dennis Filler motioned to approve sending letters of support for all three providers - PRODIGI, Citynet, and Micrologic. Sandra Frank seconded the motion, and the motion carried. JR Helmick abstained from voting.

#### **Transfer of Proceeds from 1.48 Acre Sale to Tucker County Commission**

Following the sale of the 1.48-acre lot to Prodigy, the board discussed the transfer of proceeds. Dennis Filler made a motion to permit the Executive Director to transfer any remaining funds to Camp Kidd once all fees have been paid. Ronnie Beall seconded the motion, and it was approved.

#### **FY25 Action Plan**

The FY25 Action Plan was presented. Sandra Frank motioned to approve it, seconded by Jody Flanagan. The motion carried.

#### **Local Economic Developers Grant Resolution**

The LED Grant Resolution authorizing the executive director to contract with the Department of Economic Development was presented. Dennis Filler motioned to approve the resolution, seconded by Jody Flanagan and it carried.



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**Executive Director's Performance Review**

The Executive Committee reported they met with the Executive Director Leyh prior to the meeting for his annual performance review and noted his performance to be excellent.

**Public Comment**

Ben Herrick from the Tucker County Planning Commission presented a draft of the new Tucker County Comprehensive Plan. He provided insights on the county's aging demographics, highlighted transportation opportunities, and noted the numerous infrastructure projects currently underway in the county. Commissioner Rosenau thanked him for attending the meeting.

Executive Director Leyh reminded the board of a special ZOOM meeting on Tuesday, October 22 at 6 PM to consider sending Letter of Support for WVU.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 PM after a motion by Ronnie Beall, followed by a second from Ben Nelson.

The next regular meeting of the of the Tucker County Development Authority will be held on November 21, 2024, at 6 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

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Sandra Frank, Secretary