

**MINUTES  
KING WILLIAM COUNTY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
MEETING OF APRIL 14, 2021**

A regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority of King William County, Virginia, was held on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of April 2021, beginning at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

**Agenda Item 1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order.

**Agenda Item 2. ROLL CALL**

The members were polled:

Eugene L. Campbell, Jr.	Aye
Travis Longest	Absent
Meade Rhoads	Aye
Luke Hallman	Aye
Kenneth Holderied	Aye
Charles Piersa	Aye
Jay Brown - Chairman	Aye

**Agenda Item 3. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA**

Chairman Brown requested the Authority review the meeting agenda and bring any changes forward. He said he would like All Points Broadband to come to the meeting for an update. Mr. Campbell asked if APB was still meeting with county employees and a representative from the EDA. Chairman Brown said he didn't think that was happening and he'd talk with the Interim County Administrator to get that back on track. Mr. Piersa noted a cable laid by APB had been cut because it wasn't buried deep enough. He sent letter to APB and the Interim County Administrator.

There were no changes to the agenda. Authority Member Rhoads made a motion to adopt the meeting agenda, seconded by Authority Member Piersa. The meeting agenda was approved with no discussion and no opposition.

**Agenda Item 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Authority Member Piersa made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 10, 2021, seconded by Authority Member Rhoads. The minutes were approved with no discussion and no opposition.

## **Agenda Item 5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. Hill Studio Discussion**

Sherry Graham, Interim Planning Director, introduced David Hill and Evelyn Slone of Hill Studio Group.

Mr. Hill asked the Authority Members to introduce themselves and give a brief outline of their experience.

Mr. Brown said he is the CEO of Commonwealth Catholic Charities, a local nonprofit, and a volunteer on the Economic Development Authority Board.

Mr. Holderied said he has been on the EDA Board for about 1.5 years which included a period as Vice Chair. He has a business development background and owns an equipment distribution company. He has been recruiting new small businesses to the county.

Mr. Campbell said he is a life-long resident of King William County and has been on the EDA Board for 10-12 years. He has an engineering degree and worked as a project manager for a construction firm after his retirement.

Mr. Hallman was experiencing connection issues and was not available.

Mr. Piersa said he is a farmer, landowner, President of the King William Farm Bureau, and serves on the Wetlands Board.

Mr. Longest was not present.

Mr. Rhoads said he works with NHP Group constructing apartment buildings.

Mr. Hudgins said his background is in architecture and building.

Mr. Hill continued with his presentation outlining the project flowchart and timeline. He asked EDA Board members to consider the following: What is their vision for the County? Where are there opportunities to enhance the County or promote new investments? What recommendations do they have for the best ways to reach and engage citizens and businesses in the process?

### **VISION DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Campbell said he would like to see the County proceed in an orderly fashion, developing the economy while keeping the County's rural flavor. He noted the majority of businesses are located on Route 360 and Route 30. He emphasized the County's infrastructure needs to be brought up to par, particularly water & sewer and broadband.

Mr. Holderied said the County is currently split between those who want it to stay rural and those who want the ability to work and shop locally. He said the County needs an opportunity for professional-caliber employment. He noted that some newer subdivisions have very high standards in roads and infrastructure and others do not. He said citizens want to be able to live, work, and spend in the County. He said the County needs to be easy to do business with and noted a quicker zoning turnaround time or pre-zoned properties were needed.

Mr. Brown said the County needs consistent and stable leadership to be able to articulate and move toward any kind of vision. He reiterated the need to improve the County's infrastructure to attract and maintain citizenry and business.

Mr. Rhoads said the amount of turnover in the County government makes it hard on staff and citizens. He'd like to see a plan to get the County to an economically viable and sustainable future and is excited to start working in a unified direction.

Mr. Piersa agreed and stressed that stable leadership and improved infrastructure is necessary. He'd like County citizens to be more involved in attracting industry while keeping the County rural and attracting the kinds of jobs the citizens need.

#### WHERE ARE THERE OPPORUNTIES TO ENHANCE OR PROMOTE NEW INVESTMENT?

Ms. Slone said the Hill Studio team is familiar with the current economic areas of Route 360, Route 30, and Central Garage.

Mr. Holderied said Central Garage is looking good and he feels there is room for more robust commerce in Aylett.

Mr. Campbell suggested Mangohick may potentially be a good spot for development because of its proximity to the I95 corridor. He feels this area could really take off in the next 5-10 years.

Mr. Holderied agreed and mentioned that high speed rail was recently approved in that area so Mangohick could have great potential.

Mr. Brown said he didn't have enough information to help draw a conclusion on where growth should be targeted. It depends on what the purpose is and stressed the need to know the County's future plans.

Mr. Rhoads said it was important to realize the Board's suggestions may not be fully informed and said it would be helpful to have more information to help them understand the dynamics for the future.

Mr. Piersa noted there is rail currently from the Pamunkey Indian Reservation to West Point. Mr. Rhoads said it would be helpful to know details on how the rail is currently being used and that industrial opportunities may be available in that area rather than residential.

Ms. Slone mentioned the Hill Studio team are in the fact-finding period right now and asked if there was anything currently happening or planned they would need to be aware of such as the upgrades to the water system and Broadband situation.

Mr. Campbell said to keep the rivers surrounding the county in mind for recreation. Mr. Rhoads said the rivers will impact transportation and growth.

Ms. Slone said the Planner from West Point is part of their Committee and they will work to integrate the County's plans with theirs.

Mr. Holderied said he realized there are a lot of home-based businesses in the County that actually do a large volume of business. He feels if there were more affordable retail spaces available, these businesses would move out of the homes and hire more people. He noted the County's tremendous lack of open retail space.

Ms. Slone presented questions from Hill Group Consultant Aaron Arnett:

*How do you feel about the general state of King William County's economy – is it improving, declining, stagnant – and what is driving it.*

Mr. Rhoads said they don't fully understand the issues. Mr. Campbell and Mr. Piersa said the economy is stagnant because of leadership turmoil and turnover.

*What is the County's competitive advantage when trying to recruit involvement?*

Mr. Brown said he is one of the 80% currently leaving the County for work. There are trees, farms, some mining, a few subdivisions but he doesn't know what the County's ticket is to attracting investment. Mr. Holderied said he believes there are high-caliber employees available in the County but they currently leave the County for work.

*How is tourism in the county?*

Mr. Rhoads said there are no hotels in the County. Mr. Brown said the County has rivers but no access to them. Mr. Piersa said there are the Indian Reservations, plantations, Pocahontas' burial site, and a lot of history but nothing is being done with it to attract tourism.

What tools are needed to better facilitate economic development in the county (incentives, marketing, or recruiting tools)?

Mr. Holderied suggested the County have a paid EDA staff member dedicated to recruitment and retention to drive new business. He said other counties own a lot of property they lease out for economic development and King William County owns very little land. Mr. Campbell said the County is a good location between D.C. and Williamsburg.

Mr. Hallman added that, as a farmer, it's difficult to obtain land in the County because the large fields are being subdivided into 5 acre lots for homes. The County needs to control all the prime farmland and forestry being subdivided for homes as it takes away from the rural character and potential economic development.

Ms. Slone asked the Board members to send any other questions or information to Sherry Graham and she'll get it to them. Mr. Hill thanks the members for their time and said the meeting was incredibly productive. Ms. Slone urged everyone to take the survey when it comes out.

### **Agenda Item 6. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **a. Retail Study Proposal**

Authority Member Rhoads discussed homework he had conducted regarding retail and commercial studies with a study regarding traffic components of economics to prioritize actionable items for moving forward.

Chairman Brown discussed the need to put together an RFP to request various proposals. Due to time and money constrains, the Interim County Administrator suggesting utilizing Hill Studio and increasing the scope of their study to include those issues.

Chairman Brown and Authority Member Rhoads will talk with Hill Studio. The Board members had no objection to that approach.

#### **b. 2022 Budget Request**

Chairman Jay Brown discussed the 2022 Budget Request stating the following items are requested for the FY2022 Budget:

\$5,000.00: Dues to Middle Peninsula Alliance

\$15,000.00: Travel/Training/Conferences

\$45,000.00: Consultants/Studies

After much discussion from the Authority, the requested grand total of \$65,000.00 will be presented to the Board of Supervisors at the April 16, 2021 daylong budget session.

A motion was made by Authority Member Rhoads, seconded by Authority Member Piersa, approving the budget request as outlined.

Chairman Brown opened a Public Comment Period.

No public comments were made.

Chairman Brown closed the Public Comment Period.

**Agenda Item 7. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on May 12, 2021.

**Agenda Item 8. ADJOURN**

As there was no other business, Authority Member Campbell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Authority Member Rhoads. There being no opposition, the meeting was adjourned.

COPY TESTE:

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Jay Brown  
Chairman

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Christine H. Branch (Reviewed via Zoom)  
Deputy Clerk