

JOINT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Minutes of Meeting
May 23, 2024

The Joint Industrial Development Authority of Wythe County, Wytheville, and Rural Retreat held its regular meeting on Thursday, May 23, 2024, at 3:00 PM, in the Council Room of the Wytheville Municipal Building at 150 East Monroe Street, Wytheville, Virginia.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Michael Cole, Chairman
Sherrri Case, Treasurer
Matt Clarke
Dennis Manuel
Vicki Parks
Aaron Robinson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jeff Lucas, Vice Chairman

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT

Stephen Bear, Wythe County Administrator

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT

Brian Freeman, Wytheville Town Manager
Jason Childers, Rural Retreat Town Manager

JOINT IDA STAFF PRESENT

David Manley, Executive Director
John Matthews, Deputy Director
Jessica DeHart, Administrative Assistant

JOINT IDA STAFF ABSENT

None

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Cole called the meeting to order and determined a quorum to be present. He then offered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZENS’ TIME

Chairman Cole welcomed Elaine HOLETON, Assistant Town Manager, Town of Wytheville and Mr. John Woods, Planning Director, Town of Wytheville to the meeting. Chairman Cole asked if anyone would like to address the Board. Mr. Manley introduced Ms. HOLETON to the board.

JOHN WOODS, TOWN OF WYTHEVILLE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

Mr. Bear entered the meeting at 3:07 PM.

Mr. John Woods, Director of Planning of the Town of Wytheville, presented to the board the comprehensive Unified Development Ordinance the town will consider adopting. It focuses on the concepts of form-based codes and missing middle housing. He added the Town of Wytheville will be engaging with focused groups for public comment on the proposed ordinances. The current and original zoning ordinance has been in place since 1969 with 108 amendments. Mr. Woods noted the new ordinance will help respond to developers, homeowners, businesses, and residents in a more consistent and fair manner. Chairman Cole thanked Mr. Woods for presenting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 25, 2024

Chairman Cole asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding the minutes from April 25, 2024. There being none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Case made the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Clarke. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS AND APPROVAL OF INVOICES

Chairman Cole entertained a motion to approve the financial statements April 26, 2024, through May 23, 2024, as presented. Mr. Clarke made a motion to approve the financial statements as presented, which was seconded by Mr. Manuel. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

**Joint IDA of Wythe County
Check Register
April 26, 2024, through May 23, 2024**

Check #	Date	Payee	Amount
EFT	05/23/24	Brightspeed	\$ 165.08
EFT	05/23/24	Robert G. Moore	\$ 1,100.00
EFT	05/23/24	First Bank-Mastercard	\$ 59.99
EFT	05/23/24	Appalachian Power Company	\$ 137.04
EFT	05/23/24	First Bank-Mastercard	\$ 4,609.05

8216	05/23/24	Brook Hill Lawncare- Joshua Neal	\$	125.00
8217	05/23/24	Town of Wytheville	\$	23,874.72
8218	05/23/24	Office of the University Bursar	\$	500.00
8219	05/23/24	Cowan Perry PC	\$	200.00
8220	05/23/24	David Manley-Reimbursement	\$	2,682.46
8221	05/23/24	Brook Hill Lawncare- Joshua Neal	\$	165.00
8222	05/23/24	John Matthews-Reimbursement	\$	443.32
8223	05/23/24	Wytheville Golf Club	\$	7,795.00
Total			\$	41,856.66

REVOLVING LOAN FUND REPORT

Mr. Manley reported the current loans are up to date except for one borrower who typically pays at the end of the month.

STAFF REPORTS

STAFF REPORT- DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Activity

140 S 1st Street Development Work – Department of Historic Resources, Grant Applications, Grant Onboarding calls, Historic Tax Credits, Project Updates

Business Solutions Unit- Chair

Business Symposium Planning – September 17

Federal Reserve of Richmond: Investing in Rural America – Roanoke, VA

GenEdge – Lean 102 May 8 – 15 attendees

Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament

Mt Rogers Regional Partnership- BRE meetings

New River Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board – Partner Meeting

Opportunity Appalachia – Technical Assistance Award for Co-Workspace Study

Performance Agreements (existing)- Compliance and Reporting: Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Tobacco Commission

Projects- 7

Properties- Database Update
Real Estate Professionals
Property Owners
Property Research

Revolving Loan Fund

Small Business Assistance

USDA Rural Development

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services- Fall Conference Planning

Virginia Economic Developers Association (VEDA)-

Board of Directors Meeting

ImpactED – Webinar

Business Retention and Expansion Special Interest Group

Workforce Special Interest Group

STAFF REPORT – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Manley reported the Joint IDA’s application for US Congressman Morgan Griffith’s congressionally directed spending funding was not selected. He noted the office approved 18 out of over 40 applicants.

Mr. Manley said there have been no new RFIs this month but there has been quite a bit of expansion activity being discussed. He added that Crossroads Regional Industrial Facility Authority (CRIFA), which is a collaborative entity between Wythe County, Town of Wytheville, and Bland County, will have a meeting on May 30. CRIFA has supported past industrial investments in the community going back around 20 years including Pepsi, Gatorade, and Somic.

Mr. Manley said the Joint IDA is currently working with multiple data center prospects.

Mr. Manley said the GO Virginia Region 1 application is due at the end of May. He also said he has asked for an update on the decision-making timeline for the Virginia Business Ready Sites program. He said they had originally hoped for a decision in the middle of June.

Mr. Manley reported Mr. Matthews has created a video showcasing Lot 8 for prospects which they played for the board.

PROJECT BRIEFINGS

Mr. Manley said the CEO of Blue Star, Scott Maier, was invited to the White House last week for an event announcing the application of tariffs to Chinese-made PPE. He added there are new discussions with federal partners for potential opportunities with the Department of Energy, through the CHIPS Act, and other potential programs all with the hopes of enabling the Blue Star project to go forward.

OLD OR ONGOING BUSINESS

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Mr. Matthews noted the Joint IDA’s Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament was a great success with one of the biggest turnouts in the last few years. Mrs. DeHart reported there were 24 teams, ten hole sponsors, and seven other financial sponsors. She added that once all the financials are settled, she will bring an income vs expense report to the next board meeting. Mrs. DeHart said they received a lot of positive feedback and mentioned that staffers from Mount Rogers Regional Partnership volunteered their time to help with the golf tournament, which was crucial in how smoothly everything went. Chairman Cole said despite the considerable number of teams, the tournament moved briskly, and he thanked the Joint IDA staff for their efforts with the tournament. Mr. Manley added the goal of the Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament is to celebrate the industries and businesses in our county instead of being a money-making event.

OTHER

None.

NEW BUSINESS

AUDIT – AUGUST 15, 2024

Mr. Manley said the audit engagement letter from Robinson Farmer Cox and Associates is included in their packets which is the formal engagement of the firm for the Joint IDA’s annual audit. Mrs. DeHart added the audit has been scheduled for August 15, 2024.

ASSIGNMENT OF EVATRAN CLAW BACK

Mr. Manley said the Evatran project began prior to his appointment as Executive Director of the Joint IDA and that it was the second claw back he remembers working on. He added that Evatran was a spinoff business in Wythe County that was developing “plugless power”, which was for a passive charging system for electric vehicles. Mr. Manley said the company closed their site in Wythe County, pulled their executive office to Raleigh, NC, and accordingly did not meet their benchmarks for employment and investment per the performance agreement. He added Wythe County was able to collect the local incentive funds due to it in 2017, but that the Commonwealth had not collected the repaid funds due to it. The Commonwealth’s economic development authority, VEDP, has asked Wythe County and the Joint IDA to assign the collection rights over to the state as they were all parties to the original agreement. The collection would be undertaken by the Office of the Attorney General. Ms. Case made the motion for the Joint Industrial Development Authority of Wythe County to assign and transfer the collection rights the Joint IDA may have against Evatran LLC, to the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership Authority, and to authorize the Joint IDA Chairman or Executive Director to sign the necessary documents, which was seconded by Mr. Clark.

Roll Call Vote:

Yea – Michael Cole, Chairman
Sherri Case, Treasurer
Matt Clarke
Dennis Manuel
Vicki Parks
Aaron Robinson

Nay – None

Absent during vote: Jeff Lucas, Vice Chairman

APPOINTMENT TO MOUNT ROGERS REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Mr. Manley reported that the Joint IDA board’s appointment of him to the Mt. Rogers Regional Partnership board was unacceptable to the board’s leadership, even though it was allowed under the by-laws. Mr. Clarke made the motion to appoint Chairman Cole to the Mount Rogers Regional Partnership Board, which was seconded by Ms. Case. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

OTHER

None

Closed Session as permitted by Code of Virginia sections: §2.2-3711 (A)(5) [Project Artemis].

Ms. Case moved that the Board of Directors of the Joint IDA of Wythe County enter closed session pursuant to CODE OF VIRGINIA sections: §2.2-3711 (A)(5) [Discussion of Prospective Industry - Project Artemis, Project Champion, unnamed project].

The motion was seconded by Mr. Clarke.

Roll Call Vote:

Yea – Michael Cole, Chairman
Sherri Case, Treasurer
Matt Clarke
Dennis Manuel
Vicki Parks
Aaron Robinson

Nay – None

Absent during vote: Jeff Lucas, Vice Chairman

The board entered a closed session discussion at 4:12.

At 4:23 PM, Ms. Case then moved that the Board of Directors of the Joint IDA of Wythe County re-enter open session pursuant to the previously announced expectations of Virginia’s open meeting law and further will certify that only named matters were discussed in closed session.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Clarke.

Roll Call Vote:

Yea – Michael Cole, Chairman
Sherri Case, Treasurer
Matt Clarke
Dennis Manuel
Vicki Parks
Aaron Robinson

Nay – None

Absent during vote: Jeff Lucas, Vice Chairman

Mr. Manley said he has now served as Executive Director of the Joint IDA for 10 years and would like to thank the board for keeping him on to serve the people of Wythe County. He added his tenure has been rewarding and he truly enjoys the work. Chairman Cole thanked Mr. Manley for his work.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Chairman Cole adjourned the meeting 4:24 PM.

Michael Cole, Chairman

Attest:

Jessica E. DeHart, Secretary