

JOINT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Minutes of Meeting
September 22, 2026
and reconvened on September 30, 2026

The Joint Industrial Development Authority of Wythe County, Wytheville, and Rural Retreat held its regular meeting on Tuesday, September 22, 2026, at 3:00 PM, in the Council Room of the Wytheville Municipal Building at 150 East Monroe Street, Wytheville, Virginia.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jeff Lucas, Chairman
Sherri Case, Vice Chairman
Mark Bloomfield, Treasurer
Aaron Robinson
Dennis Manuel
Bobby Angles

MEMBERS ABSENT

Michael Cole

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT

Stephen Bear, County Administrator, Wythe County
Chris Slep, Interim Town Manager, Town of Wytheville

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT

Jason Childers, Town Manager, Town of Rural Retreat

JOINT IDA STAFF PRESENT

Jessica DeHart, Administrative Assistant

JOINT IDA STAFF ABSENT

None.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

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

CITIZENS' TIME

Chairman Lucas welcomed Stephen Bear, County Administrator, Wythe County and Chris Slemph, Interim Town Manager, Town of Wytheville. No citizens spoke at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Lucas asked the board to review the minutes from the August 27, 2026, meeting reconvened on September 14, 2026. With no discussion, Mr. Angles made the motion to approve the minutes as presented, which was seconded by Mr. Manuel. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS AND APPROVAL OF INVOICES

Chairman Lucas asked if there were any questions about the financial statements from August 28, 2026, to September 22, 2026. Mr. Bloomfield commented that \$10,000 was transferred out of the operating money market account to the operating general fund just to be certain there was enough in the account to cover the invoices this month. He added that second quarter appropriations invoices will be sent to the localities at the beginning of October. There were no additional comments or concerns. Mr. Robinson made the motion to accept the financial statements and approval of invoices as presented, which was seconded by Mr. Manuel.

**Joint IDA of Wythe County
Check Register
August 28, 2026 – September 22, 2026**

Type	Date	Payee	Amount
EFT	09/22/2026	Verizon	\$88.01
EFT	09/22/2026	New Peoples Bank-Wytheville	\$1,253.13
EFT	09/22/2026	First Bank-MasterCard	\$713.82
EFT	09/22/2026	Town of Wytheville	\$48.34
EFT	09/22/2026	Xerox Corporation	\$44.74
EFT	09/22/2026	Appalachian Power Company	\$135.67
EFT	09/22/2026	Brightspeed	\$153.33
EFT	09/22/2026	Brightspeed	\$155.99
8401	09/22/2026	Robinson Farmer Cox Associates, PLLC	\$3,950.00
8402	09/22/2026	Town of Wytheville	\$105,806.25
8403	09/22/2026	David W. Denny, LLC	\$5,400.00

8404	09/22/2026	Joshua Neal-Brook Hill Lawncare	\$125.00
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Total			\$117,874.28
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STAFF REPORT

Ms. DeHart stated that she has continued to manage the day-to-day administrative responsibilities of the Joint IDA while also working to maintain continuity of activities and inquiries previously handled by the executive director and deputy director during this transition period. These activities include responding to business and property inquiries, coordinating communications with partners and consultants, assisting ongoing projects and grants, maintaining financial and administrative records, and addressing the routine needs of the organization. She mentioned she has also spent time organizing the files and cleaning the office in preparation for a new staff member in the future.

She noted she has been working closely with Mr. Bloomfield for financial and project related guidance and has appreciated David Denny's support with economic development matters, project coordination, and communications with VEDP, GO Virginia, and other partners. Mr. Denny was the consultant that was hired for bridge management services and has over twenty-two years of economic development experience in Virginia.

Ms. DeHart thanked Mr. Bear and Chairman Lucas for being available when questions or issues have arisen and for their willingness to provide guidance and input as needed.

Ms. DeHart reported that the website went down last week, and she has been working with Scott Hicks with Forcefield Web Development to get it back to working order. Mr. Hicks has been working diligently to update the site and get it back up and running. Forcefield Web Development hosts the Joint IDA website. She mentioned she does not have administrative and editing access to the site at this time.

Ms. DeHart said the Joint IDA board and staff undertook FOIA training on September 14, 2026, provided by Joint IDA counsel, Jim Cowan with Cowan Perry PC. She added that the training was extremely informative as it was catered to the organization. Ms. DeHart mentioned Mr. Bloomfield and Mr. Angles were not in attendance during the training and will need to conduct the training online through FOIA Council. Once certification is completed, Ms. DeHart mentioned a screenshot of the certification will need to be sent to the Town of Wytheville clerk, Brandi Jones.

Ms. DeHart mentioned she provided the board the 'areas of focus for the Joint IDA' handout as well as the VEDA handout highlighting the significance and economic impact of supporting business retention and expansion efforts provided by Stephen Bear during the joint meeting with the Wythe County Board of Supervisors for the board members that were unable to attend that meeting. She added that no additional joint meeting was scheduled at this time with the intention to schedule one in early 2027 once an executive director has been hired.

Ms. DeHart reported that the Business Success Symposium was today at the Wytheville Meeting Center, which is an event to connect local, regional, and state resources with businesses of all sizes. The event covered a variety of topics aimed at improving workforce and facility operations. The Joint IDA was a sponsor and provided administrative support editing the website for that event. Mr. Bloomfield attended and commented that he

thought it was very well done, and the audience seemed to relate very well to the topics being addressed. He commented that he felt that the Joint IDA should continue to be a sponsor and participant in that event.

Ms. DeHart included the Executive Order passed by the Governor Spanberger on September 18, 2026, concerning data center development for informational purposes and awareness.

Ms. DeHart commented that the executive director search is still underway with the position being posted on the Town of Wytheville employment opportunities page, the Virginia Workforce Connection System, Indeed, Virginia Association of Counties, Virginia Municipal League, Virginia Economic Development Association and the Southern Economic Development Council career pages, as well as the Joint IDA's social media channels and website. She said there were fourteen applications at this time and that she is maintaining an organization application tracking process and acknowledging applicants as they are received. The goal of the personnel committee is to have the position filled by January 2027.

Aaron Sizemore and James Moss with Mount Rogers Planning District Commission entered the meeting.

PROJECT UPDATE

PROGRESS PARK SITE DEVELOPMENT-LOT 10

Ms. DeHart informed the board that the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program Phase II performance agreement with Virginia Economic Development Partnership concerning the site development of Progress Park's Lot 10 are being circulated for signature. VEDP approved the revised scope of work and timeline provided by Dewberry Engineers. She added that once that document has been formally executed, Dewberry will be able to publish the bid package to begin the construction phase of the site development project. She added that Mr. Bear had expressed some concerns about the costs associated with construction since fuel prices are going up. Mr. Bear commented that the estimate was the same from Dewberry as previously provided, but that factor will be known once the sealed bids come in.

Ms. DeHart reported that the Joint IDA understands an MOU between the county and the IDA will need to be developed and agreed upon to establish the process for covering eligible construction expenses while the project awaits reimbursement from VEDP.

Ms. DeHart said the Joint IDA has submitted an extension request for the GO Virginia grant associated with the Lot 10 site development project, which is administered by UVA Wise. She stated that the grant representative requested more information to support the request but anticipates no problems with DHCD approving it. The extension request now aligns with the newly revised timeline provided by Dewberry.

140 S 1ST STREET

Ms. DeHart introduced Aaron Sizemore, Executive Director of the Mount Rogers PDC and James Moss, Director of Housing Development, at the PDC and asked if they would like to address the board about the 140 South First Street project.

Mr. Sizemore indicated they received the files and have been looking over the grants associated with the project. They mentioned it was difficult to decide on how to proceed regarding assistance with the development project. It was mentioned that many of the grants do not have administrative funds worked into the grant as they were meant to be managed in-house by Joint IDA staff. Mr. Sizemore stated that a more in-depth conversation needs to be conducted regarding the project and the budget. Mr. Moss said that without knowing the project very well his advice would be to put the project out for bid as a design build project. He said that because without a solidified design and scope of work, bids were too varied in size. Mr. Moss mentioned he didn't mind assisting with construction management and grant reporting if he has access to the grant systems. He commented that the grant funders are very excited about the project. Mr. Moss indicated that extensions may be necessary as the project requires a temporary pause to revisit some base work while also ensuring the project remains aligned with grant requirements and obligations. Mr. Moss stated that the PDC can assist the Joint IDA in maintaining compliance with funding requirements while the project scope is further defined. Once the projects parameters are more clearly established, the Joint IDA will be better positioned to evaluate the project's path forward.

Mr. Bloomfield stated that the next step would be to refine the project budget. Mr. Moss agreed, noting that a defined budget and scope of work would be necessary to move forward. Mr. Moss offered to assist in drafting the scope of work based on the existing study, noting that the primary revisions would involve incorporating the two lower apartments, for which \$50,000 per unit had grant funding attached. He recommended restructuring the study and proceeding with a design-build approach that clearly outlines the project requirements and expectations. Mr. Bloomfield asked whether assistance would be available with the bidding process, and Mr. Moss agreed to handle that process.

Mr. Bear asked about the proposed plan for leasing the apartments and commercial space. Ms. DeHart explained that the initial plan was to engage a property management company to manage the residential portion. Mr. Bear raised a question regarding the Joint IDA's authority under the Industrial Revenue Bond Act to own and operate single or multi-use housing. Ms. DeHart stated that she would seek clarification from the Joint IDA's legal counsel, Cowan Perry, regarding the statute and the Joint IDA's authority on the matter.

Ms. DeHart added that Mr. Matthews had structured the grant to provide flexibility and multiple options. The grants were designed to support the renovation and redevelopment of the building for housing purposes without requiring long-term ownership or operational outcomes.

Mr. Moss recommended that the Joint IDA consider alternative approaches, including attracting a private developer to assume responsibility for the final stages of redevelopment. A discussion ensued about how to move the project forward. Mr. Bloomfield, Ms. DeHart, and Mr. Moss indicated they would correspond over the next few days about a plan.

Ms. DeHart stated she is still waiting to hear back from VEDP concerning the Brownfields grant over the asbestos abatement, but that all necessary documents supporting the reimbursement request have been submitted.

BLUE STAR

Ms. DeHart reported that she had reached out to Jim Cowan at Cowan Perry about the Blue Star performance agreement and had not heard back from him at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

OTHER

Mr. Bear asked to address the board. He informed the board that Wythe County has purchased the 55-acre, former Fort Chiswell Outlet Mall property. A conversation ensued about the utilities available at the site and the infrastructure surrounding the property.

CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Case moved that the Joint IDA Board of Directors enter closed session as permitted by Code of Virginia sections:

- §2.2-3711(A)(1): Personnel-Executive Director Search

The motion was seconded by Mr. Bloomfield.

Roll Call Vote:

Yea – Dennis Manuel
Aaron Robinson
Mark Bloomfield
Sherri Case
Jeff Lucas
Bobby Angles

Nay – None

Absent during vote: Michael Cole

The board entered a closed session discussion at 3:50 PM.

Present during closed session: Jeff Lucas, Chairman
Sherri Case, Vice Chairman
Mark Bloomfield, Treasurer
Dennis Manuel
Aaron Robinson
Bobby Angles
Stephen Bear
Chris Slemph

At 4:27 PM, Ms. Case then moved the Board of Directors of the Joint IDA of Wythe County return to open session pursuant to the previously announced exceptions of Virginia's open meeting law and further would certify that only identified matters were discussed in closed session.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Bloomfield.

Roll Call Vote:

Yea – Dennis Manuel
Aaron Robinson
Mark Bloomfield
Sherri Case
Jeff Lucas
Bobby Angles

Nay – None

Absent during vote: Michael Cole

RECESS TO RECONVENE

At 4:27 PM, Chairman Lucas recessed the meeting until the combined Joint IDA Board and Wythe County Board of Supervisors meeting on Monday, September 14, 2026, located at 360 South Sixth Street, Wytheville, VA, 24382 at 5:00 PM.

Reconvened Meeting: September 30, 2026

The Joint Industrial Development Authority of Wythe County, Wytheville, and Rural Retreat reconvened its recessed September 22, 2026, meeting on Wednesday, September 30, 2026, at 4:00 PM, at the Joint Industrial Development Authority of Wythe County office conference room at 190 South First Street, Wytheville, VA 24382.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jeff Lucas, Chairman
Sherri Case, Vice Chairman
Mark Bloomfield, Treasurer
Dennis Manuel
Aaron Robinson
Bobby Angles

MEMBERS ABSENT

Michael Cole

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT

Stephen Bear, County Administrator, Wythe County

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT

Chris Slem, Interim Town Manager, Town of Wytheville
Jason Childers, Town Manager, Town of Rural Retreat

JOINT IDA STAFF PRESENT

Jessica DeHart, Administrative Assistant

JOINT IDA STAFF ABSENT

None.

CALL TO ORDER OF RECONVENED MEETING AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Lucas called the Joint IDA meeting to order and determined a quorum to be present with six board members present.

CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Case moved that the Joint IDA Board of Directors enter closed session as permitted by Code of Virginia sections:

- §2.2-3711(A)(1): Personnel-Executive Director Search

The motion was seconded by Mr. Bloomfield.

Roll Call Vote:

Yea – Dennis Manuel
Aaron Robinson
Mark Bloomfield
Sherri Case
Jeff Lucas
Bobby Angles

Nay – None

Absent during vote: Michael Cole

The board entered a closed session discussion at 4:01 PM.

Present for closed session: Jeff Lucas, Chairman
 Sherri Case, Vice Chairman
 Mark Bloomfield, Treasurer
 Dennis Manuel
 Aaron Robinson
 Bobby Angles
 Jessica DeHart
 Stephen Bear
 Laura Heldreth

Mr. Angles left the meeting during closed session.

At 4:57 PM, Ms. Case then moved the Board of Directors of the Joint IDA of Wythe County return to open session pursuant to the previously announced exceptions of Virginia's open meeting law and further would certify that only identified matters were discussed in closed session.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Manuel.

Roll Call Vote:

Yea – Dennis Manuel
 Aaron Robinson
 Mark Bloomfield
 Sherri Case
 Jeff Lucas

Nay – None

Absent during vote: Michael Cole
 Bobby Angles

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Lucas adjourned the meeting at 4:48 PM.

Jeff Lucas, Chairman

Attest:

Jessica E. DeHart, Secretary