



CITY OF FAIRFAX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, August 2nd, 2023 6:00 pm
In Person at Economic Development Facility

10300 Eaton Place, Small Conference Room, VA 22030

Commissioners Present:

Chair Beth Young
Vice Chair Kathleen Paley
Treasurer Dawn McGruder
Secretary Tom Ross
Commissioner Fred Cornett
Commissioner Mitchell Cho
Commissioner Jeffery Hermann

Others Present:

Christopher Bruno, Director, Economic Development Office
Nicole Toulouse, Senior Assistant Director, Economic Development Office
Matthew Easley, Assistant Director for Finance and Operations, Economic Development Office
Tara Borwey, Programs Manager, Economic Development Office
Andrew Wilson, Project Manager, Economic Development Office

1. Call to Order Chair Young
2. Adoption of August Meeting Agenda [**VOTE**] Commissioners
 - a. Chair Young motions the adoption of August meeting agenda.
 - i. Chair Young recommends item 9b be moved to 6c.
 - b. Passes Unanimously.
3. Residence Inn Fairfax City presentation (10 Mins w/ Q&A) General Manager Kristin Feenstra
 - a. General Manager (GM) Feenstra introduces Lily Carter- Sales Executive to the EDA.
 - b. Kristin Feenstra provides a general overview of the Marriot brand and gives thanks Fairfax City for its extensive programs.
 - c. GM Feenstra recommends a Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB) be developed for Fairfax City.
 - i. Secretary Ross asks how the development of a CVB is done in other areas. GM Feenstra answers that it can be done in various different ways, however that other places will focus on “grass roots” efforts.
 - d. GM Feenstra provides feedback on how the Fairfax City website can digitally improve it’s fostering of the tourism industry.
 - i. Director Bruno states that the website is currently in the process of being demolished and rebuilt.
 - e. Secretary Ross asks a question regarding Marriott property renovation schedules.
4. Mason Enterprise Center – Fairfax (15 Mins w/ Q&A) Center Director Hill

- i. Center Director Hill provides an updated client list which includes 4 new virtual members and new soft landings clients. The current MEC occupancy rate is at 62%.
 - ii. A new MEC website will be released in the Fall.
 - b. MEC-Fairfax Handbook
 - i. Center Director Hill states that a clause was added to address smoking.
 - ii. Secretary Ross suggested that a clause regarding the restriction of firearms be added.
 - 1. Director Bruno adds that leases owned by the EDA and the City can include a clause restricting firearms.
 - c. Budget Update
 - i. Center Director Hill introduces Alexander Priest Assistant Director of Finance at MEC who will assist in providing budgetary updates.
 - ii. Treasurer McGruder briefly walks through new format that presents a more accurate depiction of financials which was developed in collaboration with Alexander Priest.
 - iii. Secretary Ross asks what the rent revenue projections are for FY24. Center Director Hill responds with \$620,000.
 - 1. Vice Chair Paley asks a follow up question regarding the projected occupancy for this to happen. Center Director Hill responds with 82%.
 - a. Chair Young asks for clarification if this number is “break even”. Center Director Hill confirms.
 - iv. Discussion occurs between commissioners praising the new format for being helpful.
5. Grant updates (10 Mins w/ Q&A)
 - a. Neighborhood Connected Grant Program (NCGP) Update Assistant Director Easley
 - i. Assistant Director Easley informs Commissioners of the remaining \$36,000 of the NCGP from FY23.
 - 1. Assistant Director Easley introduces a grant for non-profits organizations in the amount of \$12,000 to three grantees who engage in meaningful non-profit work in Fairfax City and foster economic development.
 - a. If successful, the grant will be launched again in FY24.
 - b. Facade & Interior Improvement Grant (FIIG) Update Senior Assistant Director Toulouse
 - i. Senior Assistant Director Toulouse updates commissioners by stating there have been 4 applicants.
 - 1. The funding for this grant totaling \$300,000 is expected to go quickly.
 - ii. Director Bruno states that there will be a check presentation for this and that all commissioners will be aware of when this is executed.

6. Business Investment Updates (10 Mins w/ Q&A)

Senior Assistant Director Toulouse

- a. Collision '23 Update
 - i. Director Bruno and Senior Assistant Director Toulouse attended Collision 2023 which is a technology company conference in Toronto, Canada. They were accompanied by a coalition of partners from the NoVA Economic Development Authority.
 1. They developed two new pieces of collateral:
 - a. One page was developed by Serrita Farnsworth of the EDO which highlights the Fairfax City Region including helpful resources for relevant businesses.
 - b. One page is dedicated to the properties associated with the LIFFT which explains lease incentive per-SQFT and expected rent per-SQFT.
 - ii. The coalition gathered information from a prospective soft-landing international business that will be forwarded to Center Director Eddie.
 - ii. US Department of Commerce's Virginia Minority Business Development Agency Business Center, operated by the Capital Region Minority Supplier Development Council
 - i. Senior Assistant Director Toulouse emphasizes her excitement for this new tenant and brings the ribbon cutting ceremony to the commissioner's attention.
 - ii. Commissioner Hermann asks if Fairfax City has any businesses that the Virginia Minority Business Development Agency Business Center has helped.
 1. Senior Assistant Director Toulouse answers by saying they have helped businesses throughout the entire state of Virginia, but will ask if there are any local ones to attend the ribbon cutting.
- b. Certification support with NVCC
 - i. Senior Assistant Director Toulouse states that the EDA recently learned that every Virginia municipality is required to give annual funding to the local community college system based on population.
 1. These funds are no longer required of Fairfax City to be based on capital expenditures. As a result, there is work being done to reallocate these funds to Fast-Forward certifications to make them free for students.
 - ii. Director Bruno states that these are city funds separate from EDA funds, but it will be done to promote Fairfax City.
 - iii. Vice Chair Paley expresses her approval of the program.

7. Marketing (10 Mins w/ Q&A)

- a. KME digital Ad buy for LIFFT Senior Assistant Director Toulouse
 - i. KME is assisting the EDA in promoting the LIFFT program. There has been an uptick in traffic since this has occurred.
- b. Civic Brand website update
 - i. A skeleton for this has been developed with Civic Brand and in the coming weeks will begin copy editing.
 - ii. A phase 2 rollout will commence in the next 2-3 months where new information will be populated.
 - iii. Director Bruno explains that the EDA is working on a solution for the “Visit Fairfax” webpage to list hotels.
- c. ~~Town gown/ ARPA funding~~

8. Program Updates (10 Mins w/ Q&A)

Programs Manager Borwey

- a. Flex Card – Proposal
 - i. Programs Manager provides a brief overview of the flex card proposal and explains any additions to it.
 - ii. Secretary Ross asks if there are metrics associated with KPI’s.
 - 1. Programs Manager Borwey answers that finding metrics to accurately measure KPI’s are a work-in-progress.
- b. Summer Restaurant Week – Status
 - i. Programs Manager Borwey states that the Restaurant Week roundtable was a success.
 - ii. Director Bruno thanks the chamber of commerce for being a sponsor of Restaurant Week.
- c. Summer Crawl – Recap and Fall Crawl Update
 - i. Programs Manager Borwey provides a brief overview of the challenges and goals associated with the 2023 Summer Crawl.
 - ii. Program Manager Borwey expresses desire to grow the crawl moving into next year as well as increasing the number of participating restaurants.
 - iii. The Fall Crawl has been scheduled for October 21st.

9. Director’s Report (5 mins)

Director Bruno

- a. George Mason Partnerships
 - i. Director Bruno provides an overview of the partnerships between the EDA and the GMU School of Business and the staff that will take over each center partnership.
 - ii. There will be an announcement date in early October.
- b. Certification support with NVCC (Moved to 6c)
- c. Ox Hill – City Center West Approval

- i. Director Bruno states that this has been approved and is the largest development in the city's history.
 - d. Director Bruno adds that there is communication assistance needed between Commissioners and Fairfax City Council & Mayor for all the functions the Fairfax City EDA executes.
- 10. Adoption of June Meeting Minutes [**VOTE**]
 - a. Secretary Ross motions to adopt the June meeting minutes.
 - b. Commissioner Hermann seconds.
 - c. Passes unanimously.
- 11. Adoption of July Special Meeting Minutes [**VOTE**]
 - a. Treasurer McGruder motions to adopt the July special meeting minutes.
 - b. Secretary Ross seconds.
 - c. Passes unanimously.
- 12. Public Comment (5 Mins) Public
 - a. A group is looking forward to the Ox Hill City Center and asks if there is a program welcoming new students back. Director Bruno redirects the question to be answered outside of the EDA meeting. The group ends their public comment by stating the work the EDA is doing is being noticed and appreciated.
 - b. The Chamber of Commerce:
 - i. Starting their own Valor Awards honoring local police and first responders starting in October and thanks the EDO for sponsoring this.
 - ii. The Interservice Club Council is recognizing various different members and groups of the community.
 - iii. States that the reputation regarding business in the city are changing in a positive way.
 - c. Commissioner Cornett would like to shine a spotlight on KME Digital for its success as a graduate of the MEC from over 10 years ago.
- 13. Adjourn at 7:33pm.

*****Next Meeting: Wednesday September 6, 2023*****

6pm, 10300 Eaton Place Small Conference Room Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Subject to Change. Please Check fairfaxcityconnected.com for more information.