



CITY OF FAIRFAX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
March 6, 2024 6:00 pm
In Person at Economic Development Facility

10300 Eaton Place, Conference Room B, Fairfax VA 22030

Commissioners Present:

Chair Beth Young
Vice Chair Kathleen Paley
Treasurer Dawn McGruder
Secretary Tom Ross
Commissioner Patrick Soleymani

Others Present:

Chris Bruno, President and CEO, Economic Development Office
Nicole Toulouse, Senior Assistant Director, Economic Development Office
Matthew Easley, Assistant Director, Economic Development Office
Tara Borwey, Programs Manager, Economic Development Office
Brittany Jones, Public Relations and Marketing Manager
Andrew Wilson, Special Projects Manager, Economic Development Office

Commissioners

1. Call to Order
 - a. Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Adoption of Meeting Agenda Commissioners
 - a. Treasurer McGruder motions.
 - b. Vice Chair Paley seconds.
 - c. Passes unanimously.

3. Mason Enterprise Center – Fairfax (15 Mins w/ Q&A)
 - a. 2023 calendar update
 - b. US Traders AI
 - i. New AI company started by a GMU Faculty Member intended to produce more internships for GMU students.
 - c. Briefly discusses new business prospects for March- April timeframe
 - d. Valentine’s Day Lunch Recap
 - i. Highlights success and high community turnout of event.
 1. Where did the 250 people come from? Were they clients?
 - a. Some were clients, others were from campus.
 - e. Discusses new position in EDA that would strengthen ties with George Mason University
 - i. Just one point of clarification there the scope of work and job description is not greater, we need to sort of go through a process of reviewing that person.
 - f. Discusses current office occupancy and ideal occupancy. A plan will be made ensure success.
 - i. When will we see this plan?
 1. A plan will be shared within the month of April.

- g. Shares cost- effective plans to repurpose office space into a podcast studio for the office and community
 - i. Will this podcast generate revenue?
 - 1. It's for the member and the community, but there are online venues where we could promote.
 - h. Can you take them off the rent toll so we can see the implications of that on the potential rent revenue coming?
 - i. Yes, they were taken off for this one.
 - i. Is this only offered to members?
 - i. No, this will be available to the community.
 - ii. Who is helping you find new tenants? Who is responsibility is that and is someone working with you?
 - a. It's myself. It's Jim Dalton, a marketing person but it's we're all trying to market this across the region. We're promoting Fairfax and the opportunity to come to Fairfax and if you're in Fauquier County, to use your future Hoteling hours we're trying to use that term net rather than cash. You can use that time Come and meet with somebody in Fairfax, meet someone from the campus and the Fairfax office, come and work over here come and host a meeting over here.
 - j. When can exposure at some of these pitch contests are happening on campus?
 - a. Patriot Pitch, we were there last year and will be this year.
 - k. Highlights importance of exposure and urges for an on-campus connection.
 - l. Discusses fiscal year 2024 report to gather insights on budget.
4. Business Investment Update Nicole Toulouse
- a. Italian Trade Agency
 - a. Presented proposed 6-8-week program to be a soft-landing place for Italian Companies. There will be 10 companies to participate and partner with other service providers.
 - b. Highlights new focus on bio tech and communication with Dominion Energy Innovation Center and the Northern Virginia Tech Council.
 - b. Council of Governments Ag Committee
 - a. Collaboration with Fairfax County soil and water conservation district to expand agricultural availability.
 - b. Discusses upcoming meeting with the Agricultural committee to discuss ideal zoning code and current zoning issue.
 - c. Business Attraction Events
 - a. Discusses upcoming business trip to South by Southwester.
 - b. Target Industries are milli tech and biotech cyber IT
4. NOVA EDA
- a. Explains use of resources that have been used for business development trips to pitch the region as a place to do business.
 - a) What is the main pitch?
 - i. Offering services and advancements based on their needs.
 - b. RFQ for lead generation firms
 - c. Mentions numerous BrE trips and how it benefits different companies.

5. Operations Update

Matthew Easley

- a. Hiring
 - i. Expanded public relations and marketing wing to include a communications intern. Additionally, there is a new business investment intern and economic development associate.
 - a. Email Migration
 - i. Domain email addresses are changing. All history and data will be migrated to the new email.
 - a. Proposed Budget Update
 - i. Fiscal 2025 budget- under 1.9 million requested for EDA budget
 - a. Treasurers Report
 - i. Overview of budget and current spending on a monthly basis. Monthly treasury reports will start next month.
6. Programs Update Tara Borwey
- a. Restaurant Week
 - i. Overall, there were 27 businesses that participated. 19 businesses extended, which is our largest extension.
 - ii. 775 diner survey responses, which are 99% positive. 675k in publicity value and an audience of over 17 million was reached.
 - iii. Bill Hamrock and John Rhodes expressed that this their best restaurant week.
 - b. Women Owned Business Luncheon
 - i. A vendor for marketing and branding has been chosen. An official date will be sent out and advertised.
 - ii. Women's economic empowerment luncheon will be 9/25/24 at the Sherwood Center.
7. GMU Partnerships Update Toulouse/Borwey
- a. Northfax Site Analysis
 - I. Ongoing communication between Public Works, Community Development Planning, and related departments to provide options for the current owners and ideas for potential buyers.
 - II. Shares phase 2 of building project behind the townhouses that are currently in development.
 - b. Retail Study
 - i. Purpose is to show viability of retail in our commercial sectors. Every mixed-use development has 100% occupancy right now.
 - a. Retail Marketing
 - i. Engaged in a marketing 303 course led by Nikki Lasara, the head of the center for retail transformation. They are moving into the segmentation, targeting and positioning part of the deliverable.
 - ii. Highlights specific retail partners in and their progress with professor Nikki.
8. Public Relations and Marketing Update Brittany Jones
- a. Update on Marketing Strategic Plan
 - i. Provides information on current marketing programs.
 - b. Website / Branding
 - i. New URL is gocity.fairfax.com launching in April.
 - c. Partnership with Marketing and Comms
 - i. Plans to create a video and photography agreement and furthering partnership with Marcom marketing communications team.
 - ii. Agreement will be presented to Marcom once finalized.

- d. Press/ Media Mentions
 - i. Highlights numerous media platforms that our programs and events have been featured in such as the Washingtonian, Northern Virginia Magazine, and Fairfax Now.
 - ii. Winter Restaurant Week: Michael O’Connell interested in highlighting restaurants every week or as many as he could until restaurant week. At least 9 media articles from him alone
 - iii. Presented Segment from Fairfax Now

- 9. Tourism Toulouse on Behalf of Smith
 - a. FIIG
 - i. Overview of funds and commitment status for the fig program.
 - ii. \$300,000 was allocated to the program.
 - iii. \$230,000 has been approved at this point which facilitated over \$650,000 in private investment and improvements in our commercial buildings.
 - b. City Management
 - i. City Manager has been chosen- Laszlo Palco will join us April 29th.

- 10. New Business
 - a. Interactions with Novo Labs- Commissioner Ross
 - i. Discussed upcoming meeting with board in hopes to strengthen relationship.
 - b. Wander In
 - i. Emphasizes the importance of wander in.

- 11. Public Comment (5 mins)
 - a. Discusses current development plan after rejection of the latest sunrise proposal.
 - b. Chamber Updates
 - i. Discusses advertisement support from members

- 12. Adoption of February Meeting Minutes [VOTE] Commissioners
 - a. Motioned by Commissioner Soleymani
 - b. Seconded by Commissioner Hermann.
 - c. Passes unanimously.

- 13. Adjourn
 - a. Motioned by Commissioner Soleymani
 - b. Seconded by Commissioner Hermann.
 - c. Meeting adjourned at 8:02

*****Next Meeting: Wednesday April 3, 2024*****

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

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