

**Economic Development Authority
Of
Lancaster County, Virginia**

**Chesapeake Bank
Minutes – July 17, 2014**

Members Attending: Chairman Szyperski, Mr. Pennell, Mr. Pittman, Mr. Kyzer, Mr. Fleet and Mr. Curry. Mr. Barrack was absent.

Others Present: Mr. Frank Pleva, Executive Director, Susan Cockrell, Assistant Kilmarnock Town Manager, Joni Carter, Visions Economic Development Council and Crystal Whay.

Mr. Szyperski called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Minutes

Mr. Pennell moved to approve the January 16, 2014 minutes. Mr. Szyperski seconded the motion. **VOTE: 6-0.**

Financial Report

Mr. Pleva referred to the latest bank statement and stated that the balance was \$121,856.97. He stated that all members had also received the EDA's Quicken report for the last two years, which shows expenditures and deposits. He stated that he wanted to check on the Mariner's Museum Monitor Center's administrative fees because he did not see them on the report.

Mr. Szyperski asked how they could budget for anticipated revenues.

Mr. Pleva replied that he could talk to the County's bond counsel about it.

Mr. Pennell stated that he thought Dan Siegel could put something together.

Mr. Pleva stated that he would speak to the auditor about doing an audit report on the EDA possibly.

Mr. Szyperski stated that his concern is that the EDA is receiving all of the monies due.

Mr. Pennell stated that annual letters are sent out as reminders.

Mr. Pennell made a motion to adopt the financial report pending the annual audit. Mr. Szyperski seconded the motion. **VOTE: 6-0.**

Mr. Szyperki asked Mr. Pleva to have a list of the EDA's outstanding issuances for the next meeting.

Mr. Curry asked if penalties were imposed for non-payment.

Mr. Szyperki replied that he would have to check the by-laws.

There was some discussion of better ways to use the money in the bank and how that could be achieved.

Report of Staff

Mr. Pleva stated that the Lancaster County Board of Supervisors have authorized Dan Siegel of Sands Anderson and Ted Cole of Davenport and Company to seek bank proposals for up to \$7 million dollars of lease revenue bonds to finance capital projects. He stated that the EDA may see this issue in the future.

Mr. Pennell stated that he had attended the meeting in which the Supervisors had made that motion. He stated that he was pleased that the new Superintendent and the School Board have reprioritized the school's capital improvement items and placed the library building purchase as a higher priority. He stated that the Board has authorized an appraisal on the library.

Mr. Szyperki asked about any pending requests for funds this year.

Mr. Pleva replied that there were none at the present time.

New Business

Mr. Szyperki introduced Susan Cockrell, the Assistant Kilmarnock Town Manager. He stated that she would be making a presentation about the Rappahannock River Community Branding.

Ms. Cockrell stated that the Kilmarnock EDA gave \$35,000 to the Chamber of Commerce in 2011 and with some of those funds, they expanded the Travel Lancaster County website. She stated that some of the funds were also spent on print advertising to entice people to visit the area. She stated that the Town of Kilmarnock gave \$35,000 in 2014 for the regional branding project.

Ms. Cockrell stated that tourism deals with "the experience" that a tourist gets when they visit a destination. She stated that the goal is to make sure that tourists stay and spend. She stated that a "brand" is an emotional feeling that someone gets when they are at a destination or the customer's perception. She stated that there has been a lot of discussion of what the area's "brand" should be. She stated that logos and products fit in when trying to establish a brand.

Ms. Cockrell stated that the big brand for Virginia is Virginia is for Lovers and then, in our region, the brand is the Northern Neck. She stated that they are working on the Rappahannock River Communities Project. She stated that within that regional brand are things such as the wine trail and the oyster trail.

Ms. Cockrell stated that they are partnering with the Virginia Tourism Council and some localities to continue with the area branding. She stated that they have hired a firm that is helping with the process and their target completion date of the first phase is September 2014.

Ms. Cockrell stated that the branding concept is all about getting people to this end of the river to enjoy the amenities, stay longer and spend money.

Mr. Szyperki introduced Joni Carter the Executive Director with the Visions Economic Development Council.

Ms. Carter stated that Visions' job is to reduce poverty through job creation and education. She stated that Visions helped bring Rappahannock Community College to Kilmarnock, they help with the Lead Northern Neck Leadership Program and they help with the YouthWorks Program. She stated that they have a forum each month. She stated that the monthly meeting is a "think-tank" of business and government leaders and they showcase economic development ideas for the counties of Lancaster and Northumberland.

Ms. Carter stated that one of their speakers, Dudley Patteson, had the idea of developing a wine and oyster trail. She stated that there has been much discussion on the idea and using the area's natural resources for job creation. She stated that she made a presentation in Richmond to claim the oyster for Virginia like Maryland has claimed the blue crab and Maine has claimed the lobster. She stated that the objective is to establish an oyster trail in the rural coastal communities. She stated that the oyster story ties in to Virginia history.

Ms. Carter stated that the oyster industry, particularly aquaculture, has had extreme growth in the last ten years. She stated that no other industry in the area has grown like that and it has resulted in new jobs and businesses. She stated that the oyster is also attracting tourism as people come to the area to eat and learn about oysters. She stated that oysters are also cleaning the Chesapeake Bay. She stated that oysters are becoming a big part of a global market and the oyster business could also create "living wage" jobs in the area and bring young people back to the community.

Ms. Carter stated that she wanted Virginia's oysters to be known as the best oysters in the world. She showed an example of an oyster trail for the area.

Ms. Carter stated that she received an enthusiastic reception about the oyster idea in Richmond. She stated that many organizations such as Virginia Tourism, Oyster Growers Association, Housing and Community Development and the Seafood Council are all on

board for branding the oyster as Virginia's. She stated that the Governor will hold a press conference on August 19th to brand the oyster for Virginia and to create a regional oyster trail.

Mr. Pennell stated that Ms. Carter had put a lot of time and effort into the oyster branding initiative.

Adjournment

Mr. Fleet moved and Mr. Curry seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

VOTE: 6-0.

Attest: _____

Frank A. Pleva,
Executive Director