

Economic Development Authority of Patrick County

Meeting of May 21, 2009

Present: Glenn Roycroft, Chairman; Gail Harding, Vice Chairperson; Terry Dalton, Secretary; Dale Puckett, Felecia Shelor, Twyla Neil and Ron Haley

Also Present: Tom Rose, Economic Development Director; Wilma Pendleton, Administrative Assistant and Nancy Lindsey, Enterprise

Absent: Leslie Shelor and Town of Stuart Representative

A meeting of the Economic Development Authority of Patrick County was held on Thursday, May 21, 2009, at 7:00 PM in the Second Floor conference room of the Patrick County Veteran's Memorial Building.

Mr. Roycroft called the meeting to order. The agenda was presented for approval. On motion by Mr. Dalton, seconded by Ms. Harding and carried the board approved the agenda.

Voting Aye: Glenn Roycroft, Gail Harding, Dale Puckett, Ron Haley, Terry Dalton, Felecia Shelor and Twyla Neil.

Voting Nay: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

The minutes of April 16, 2009 meeting were presented for approval. On motion by Ms. Harding, seconded by Ms. Felecia Shelor and carried, the board approved the minutes.

Voting Aye: Glenn Roycroft, Gail Harding, Ron Haley, Dale Puckett, Terry Dalton, Felecia Shelor and Twyla Neil

Voting Nay: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

FINANCE REPORT (BILLS):

Mr. Rose presented the EDA finance reports for monthly billings. (Finance report is available). On motion by Ms. Neil seconded by Mr. Puckett and carried the board approved to pay the bills.

Voting Aye: Glenn Roycroft, Gail Harding, Dale Puckett, Ron Haley, Terry Dalton, Felecia Shelor and Twyla Neil.

Voting Nay: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Discussion was made by the board concerning the possibility of getting a lower interest rate on the notes and if there would be any savings in the long term. Mr. Rose will check into the situation on the first two notes to find out if it would be feasible at this time.

Reimbursement from the jail note plus interest will be paid back to the EDA on the third note.

OFFICE UPDATES:

WIB (Workforce Investment Board)

Mr. Rose introduced Ms. Wanda Whitlow, Manager of the Workforce Career Center of Patrick County. Mr. Rose informed that board that Ms. Whitlow was very much involved in getting the jobs for VA Transformer, Primland, Results hiring, computer training, partnering with Patrick Henry Community College to provide training and working with Pioneer for hospital training and job recruitment.

Ms. Whitlow informed that board the there was money to invest in placing employees who lack skills with potential employers in order to gain employable skills. She discussed the incumbent worker and the youth program that has been provided through stimulus money.

With the youth program they would be able to work 360 hours, minimum wage with limitations/barriers because of age related factors. It is a win-win situation because the youth gain employable skills and the employers do not have to pay the wages because they are paid through the stimulus money. They are paid on a 1099 so there is no FICA or taxes to be taken out by the employer. They are allowed to go out of the county if needed by the employer if they are over age 16.

The incumbent worker program is also set up with money to pay for the wages for a certain period of time allowing the employer to decide at the end of the time period if it would be beneficial for them to hire the potential employee on a full time basis. Money is also available for incumbent worker training, for example, training was paid for the Primland jobs.

Ms. Whitlow also discussed the Share Network where community sites would have computers set up for people to take advantage of checking their unemployment claims, working on their GED classes, etc. The computers would be paid for, but volunteers would be needed to staff the lab for a certain number of hours per week. Places are needed in the rural areas of the county such as churches where these labs could be set up.

Ms. Whitlow informed the board that there was stimulus money out there and if it was not spent it would go to other counties. She informed them that there was already a pool of people registered which included people who had been laid off from their former jobs. The employer can filter and interview them. They are under no obligation to hire them after the limited number of paid work hours is completed.

Several of the board members were interested in at least two or more workers. Ms. Whitlow handed out a brochure with information concerning the business services which connects employers to employees. She gave each member a business card so those who are interested could get in touch with her and set up a time to work with the potential employees.

Ms. Harding informed Ms. Whitlow that The Enterprise would give space for this information to be in the local newspaper. It was also suggested that a job fair or seminar be held to allow for potential employers and employees to meet.

The board thanked Ms. Whitlow for her time and commitment and Ms. Whitlow thanked the board for allowing her to come and present the information to them.

HVAC for Results

Mr. Rose informed the board that the HVAC unit at Results has been repaired, and that parts had to be sent back to the company because they were under warranty; however, the cost of the shipping was not included in the warranty.

Stimulus Money

Mr. Rose informed the board that he had spoken with Laura Lee from Congressman Boucher's office and with Jim Ingram and that the grant applications had not been posted for the broadband stimulus money.

American Recovery Grant Workshop

Mr. Rose informed the board that he and Ms. Pendleton had attended the VRA workshop in Danville. There were several agencies there including TROF, RUS, USDA, VRA and others who gave presentations concerning loans and grant funds.

Discussion was made concerning grants and how many projects the county could complete with grant funding. Grant opportunities are being posted almost weekly from different agencies on grants.gov and there is no way that any one person can keep up with them or even apply for them because the staff is already doing short grants and keeping up with the grants that the county already has been awarded.

Comment was made that we could check into either retaining a grant writer or paying one on commission so that we do not lose this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity with this stimulus money that will only last for a very short period of time. Different people were mentioned concerning the writing of grants including Candace Korzenko, who has written grants for the county, Richard Rogers, who has also been awarded several grants that he has written and Cian Robinson who not only writes grants but also teaches grant writing classes. Two of his students were Candace Korzenko and Ruth Russell, Assistant to the Financial Officer. Mr. Rose and Ms. Pendleton have also written grants for the county; however, the stimulus grants are time sensitive and neither of these parties has the time to watch for and write these grants.

Mr. Karl Weiss who sits on the WPPD Board mentioned that millions of dollars in grants had been awarded for Henry and Pittsylvania counties while very little had been dedicated for Patrick County. There are 600 acres at the Woolwine Park and help is needed to develop it.

Ms. Nancy Lindsey, from The Enterprise commented concerning the millions of dollars that the Town of Stuart has been awarded because of their paid grant writer.

Grant writers know the resources and have the time to put into researching, finding and writing these grants. It would help reduce the tax levy in the future if we could take advantage of the grants that are being offered with this stimulus money right now. This grant money once awarded has to be spent within approximately one year's time with one-third of the grants awarded in June 2009. It would be a great benefit to the county especially with such expensive projects as the jail and the schools. It was suggested at the workshop for more regional projects to take place.

On motion by Ms. Harding seconded by Mr. Dalton and carried the board approved for Mr. Rose to approach the Board of Supervisors with the proposal or resolution for putting out a contract or bid towards grant writing for the stimulus opportunities that are being posted through grants.gov., on a commission basis.

Mr. Rose will also ask Mr. Cian Robinson to make a presentation before the BOS concerning the importance of grant writing.

Voting Aye: Glenn Roycroft, Gail Harding, Dale Puckett, Ron Haley, Terry Dalton, Felecia Shelor and Twyla Neil.

Voting Nay: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

GIS Workshop

Mr. Rose informed the board that he had attended the GIS (Geographical Information Systems, a satellite system for land maps) workshop taught by John McGee of Virginia Tech. The software was allowed to be used for 360 days with option to purchase. It is not cheap, but hopefully could be grant funded. It is a great system and would be very useful to have on the county website.

TDF Foundation

Mr. Rose informed that board that he, Roger Hayden, Congreman Boucher's office and Ms. Pendleton had been working with Linda Nickell from Washington D.C. with the TDF Foundation for the possibility of getting five computers with software and the ability to block certain internet sites with T-1 lines and paid broadband access for 12 months along with a paid staff position for \$10 an hour, four days a week, four hours a day in Claudville at the Red Bank Ruritan building. There will be a conference call on June 5 to find out if the possibility will become a reality.

E-Zone

Mr. Rose informed the board that Ms. Bethany Miller, Program Administrator from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development would be visiting our area on June 3 at which time he will introduce her to the staff at Ten Oaks, Walter Miller, CPA, Aerial and Primland all of which are in local enterprise zones within the county.

OTHER BUSINESS:

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no one present for the public comment period.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

On motion by Mr. Dalton and seconded by Ms. Neil and carried unanimously; the meeting was called into Executive Session under the appropriate codes of Virginia to discuss legal matters [Section 2.2-3711(A)(7), 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended]; prospective business matters [Section 2.2-3711(A)(5), 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended]; real estate [Section 2.2-3711(A)(3), 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended]; and personnel matters [Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended].

On motion by Ms. Harding and seconded by Mr. Dalton and carried unanimously; the meeting was reconvened by the appropriate codes. A roll call vote was taken with unanimous vote that only the items listed above were discussed during Executive Session.

After the board reconvened from executive session they discussed and voted on issues of finance.

On motion by Mr. Haley seconded by Ms. Shelor and carried the board approved to pay \$1,000 from the EDA to help prepare the Red Bank Ruritan building to house the computer lab that will be established through the TDF Foundation .

Voting Aye: Glenn Roycroft, Gail Harding, Dale Puckett, Ron Haley, Terry Dalton, Felecia Shelor and Twyla Neil.

Voting Nay: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

On motion by Ms. Neil seconded by Mr. Puckett and carried the board approved to pay \$8,000.00 that was still owed to Trificient for the Broadband study which Mr. Jim Ingram completed for Patrick County. The cost of the study was \$40,000 and \$32,000 has already been paid through a grant that was awarded to the county a couple years ago.

Voting Aye: Glenn Roycroft, Gail Harding, Dale Puckett, Ron Haley, Terry Dalton, Felecia Shelor and Twyla Neil.

Voting Nay: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Being no further business to discuss, on motion by Mr. Dalton seconded by Mr. Puckett and carried; the meeting was adjourned.

Voting Aye: Glenn Roycroft, Gail Harding, Dale Puckett, Ron Haley, Terry Dalton, Felecia Shelor and Twyla Neil.

Voting Nay: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Chairperson

Date

NEXT MEETING: June 18, 2009