

**ALBEMARLE COUNTY**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MINUTES**  
**March 15, 2022**  
**4:00 PM**  
**Electronic Meeting**

**Directors Present:** Don Long, Katherine Imhoff, John Mottola, Stuart Munson, George Ray, David Shreve

**Staff Present:** Doug Walker, Deputy County Executive; Nelsie Birch, Chief Financial Officer, Roger Johnson, Economic Development Director; J.T. Newberry, Economic Development Principal Business Development Manager; Ashley Perry Hernandorena, Economic Development Management Analyst; Richard DeLoira, Senior Assistant County Attorney; Diantha McKeel, Board of Supervisors Liaison to the EDA, Jack Jouett District

**Guests Present:** Connor Childress, Scott Kroner, PLC; Sarah Gran and Malou Stark, Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center

1. **Establish Quorum and Call to Order**

Chair Long convened the meeting at 4:00 p.m. and read the following statement:

*Notwithstanding any provision in the EDA Bylaws to the contrary, as permitted under Virginia Code §2.2-3708.2(A)(3), Albemarle County's Continuity of Government Ordinance and declaration of a local state of emergency, and the EDA Resolution of April 21, 2020, we are holding this meeting by real time electronic means with no Authority member physically present at a single, central location. This is because the pandemic's catastrophic nature makes it impracticable or unsafe to assemble in a single location. All Authority members are participating electronically. All Authority members will identify themselves and state their general physical location by electronic means during the roll call which we will hold next.*

*This meeting is being recorded and will be uploaded to the County's website.*

*The public has real time audio-visual access to this meeting over Zoom and real time audio access over telephone, both as provided in the lawfully posted meeting notice. The public is also invited to offer live comment during the meeting's Public Comment period. Comments are limited to three minutes and must be germane to matters on today's agenda.*

Mr. DeLoria provided the roll call and confirmed a quorum.

2. **Matters from the Public**

Mr. Newberry confirmed no speakers signed up or raised their hand to speak.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from February 15, 2022 were reviewed. Ms. Imhoff motioned to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Munson.

**MOTION:** The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Financial Report**

Mr. Shreve presented the Financial Report for the period ending February 28, 2022.

5. **New Business**

**a. Loan Payoff by Southwood Charlottesville, LLC, and Execution of Deed of Release and Lease Termination Agreement by Economic Development Authority of Albemarle County**

Mr. DeLoria explained that in 2007, Habitat for Humanity purchased parcels from the Minor family for \$6 million under the entity "Southwood Charlottesville, LLC." Arrangements were made for the Authority to assume the note and the \$6 million obligation was then secured by an unrecorded deed presented to the EDA. The Authority

Economic Development Authority  
of Albemarle County, Virginia  
March 15, 2022  
Page 3

In addition, the County adopted the "Community" as a core value, which focusing on equity and inclusion. That action provided an opportunity to re-examine the project through an equity lens and develop a second round of recommendations. The Board of Supervisors will receive the final study as a consent agenda item at their meeting tomorrow.

New additional recommendations include:

- Connectivity to all outside communities, including the City
- Targeted programming and the use of public space to serve the broader neighborhoods
- Consider strategies to mitigate gentrification, land ownership, and subsidies
- Conduct proactive community engagement to ensure representation from all surrounding communities
- Free public transportation for all

Ms. Imhoff thanked staff and offered support of the project's contribution to the community. She added the Rivanna Pedestrian Bike Bridge offered different options that could benefit this project as well.

Supervisor McKeel asked Mr. Johnson for follow up on groups of entrepreneurs struggling to afford space in the area. He said findings indicate there is no successful way to control market conditions and that free market dictates rental rates. Mr. Johnson added the only strategies found to prevent gentrification involve the Authority or the Board of Supervisors owning or controlling property and providing subsidies to offset rent. He reiterated that staff is not recommending that as a strategy but recommending it be considered and the Board of Supervisors make the final decision on whether that strategy is adopted.

Supervisor McKeel offered her appreciation of the expanded discussion because the Board is concerned about small businesses on the corridor that are affected by the lack of lower cost industrial space and the rising cost of doing business.

Mr. Shreve offered his support of the strategies and asked what percentage of businesses lease vs own. Mr. Johnson confirmed that most businesses lease rather than own. Mr. Shreve and Mr. Johnson discussed investigating strategies to assist business owners in acquiring property by increasing their access to capital through partnerships with an organization like the Community Investment Collaborative.

Mr. Munson shared that Scottsville is considering a development of about 36 homes and looking to support affordable housing and is interested in further discussion.

Next, Mr. Johnson discussed **Designated Outdoor Refreshment Areas (DORAs)**.

- New legislation passed allowing designated outdoor refreshment areas. DORAs are a geographic area licensed by the ABC that allows consumption of alcoholic beverages within public spaces or inside of participating business without an ABC license.

Mr. Johnson provided graphics of a DORA event in Scottsville, that according to town administrator Matt Lawless, was very successful and increased business sales and revenues. He went on to explain the process of establishing a DORA and offered visual examples. Mr. Johnson continued with samples of unrequired additional signage that would be helpful, if a business located inside of a DORA didn't want alcohol in their establishment.

Economic Development Authority  
of Albemarle County, Virginia  
March 15, 2022  
Page 5

Chair Long added that he is supportive of affordable housing and tax incentive financing but there needs to be clarification of the EDA's role. He and Mr. Shreve noted that supporting financing through bond issuance or other different formats and influencing housing policy are two different issues.

Mr. Ray concluded suggesting Synthetic TIFs would be a good tool for the Broadway Corridor.

#### **d. Lewis and Clark Exploratory Center Update**

Chair Long welcomed Malou Stark and Sarah Gran from the Lewis and Clark Exploratory Center (LCEC) Board.

Ms. Stark updated the Authority of the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Center's operations. She explained in Fall 2021, LCEC resumed activity with very private small group tours and a decision in January to hold a full schedule of summer camps in 2022. She said tours have consisted mainly of a few private groups, but not the public schools; five to six counties they normally serve are leery to field trips due to the pandemic. Additionally, LCEC has continued renting out their building in addition to successfully securing grant support during the pandemic.

She explained LCEC has dealt with unforeseen costly experiences; including a leak in their green roof that caused damage, vandalism, drug use, and trespassing issues that resulted in a need to close the Keel Boat exhibit and install a gate at the entrance of the facility for security.

Ms. Stark said that prior to the pandemic, they would have around 3,000 visitors monthly a weekend to Darden Towe Park and that number of visitors has increased to about 8,000 visitors per weekend.

Ms. Stark concluded that LCEC is open and steadily increasing visitation and visibility by offering new educational and environmental and exploratory programs, including an amphitheater for visitors. She offered to answer any questions before handing over the floor to Ms. Gran prior to closed session.

Chair Long thanked Ms. Stark and added that he, Director Shreve, and EDO staff met with Ms. Stark, Ms. Gran, and LCEC's Executive Director, Alexandria Searls, prior to this meeting, where they discussed the outstanding loan.

Ms. Gran thanked the Authority for their time and staff for assistance with technology training for the meeting and voiced her appreciation for their and the Directors' cooperation in preparation for this meeting. She reinforced that they took away the thoughts and ideas that were addressed in the prior week's meeting and that LCEC takes repayment of this loan seriously. With the goal of moving forward, Ms. Gran clarified her understanding that the Authority sought a clear plan of repayment and better communication and confirmed her desire to accommodate and go into more financial details in closed session.

She added that LCEC had a board meeting specifically to address this loan repayment and that it is taken seriously by herself and the board. Ms. Gran referred to financial documents shared with the Authority to be reviewed in closed session along with a realistic repayment plan.

With no further questions or comments, Chair Long thanked the guests and moved to Closed Session.

#### **e. Closed Session**

Chair Long read the following **CLOSED MEETING MOTION**:

*I move that the Albemarle County Economic Development Authority go into a closed meeting as authorized by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, section 2.2-3711(A) of the Code of Virginia under:*

*- Subsection 6 to discuss and consider:*

Economic Development Authority  
of Albemarle County, Virginia  
March 15, 2022  
Page 7

Room 241 in the County Office Building to allow for hybrid meetings and that the Authority could expect to use Conference Room 241 for that purpose.

7. Other Matters

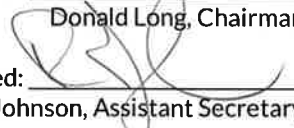
Chair Long asked for other matters and there were none.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business Chair Long moved to adjourn with no objection.

**The next meeting will be held April 19, 2022.**

DocuSigned by:  
*Donald D. Long*  
Teste: 00BFC74F492F4B4...  
Donald Long, Chairman

Approved:   
Roger D. Johnson, Assistant Secretary