

ALBEMARLE COUNTY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MINUTES  
March 16, 2021  
4:00 P.M.  
Electronic Meeting

**Directors Present:** Kat Imhoff, Don Long, Stephen McNaughton, Stuart Munson, George Ray, David Shreve

**Staff Present:** Jim Bowling, EDA Counsel; Doug Walker, Deputy County Executive; Roger Johnson, Economic Development Director; J.T. Newberry, Economic Development Coordinator; Jennifer Schmack, Economic Development Project Manager; Richard DeLoria, Senior Assistant County Attorney; Diantha McKeel, Board of Supervisors Liaison to the EDA, Jack Jouett District

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

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

Notwithstanding any provision in the EDA Bylaws to the contrary, as permitted under Albemarle County's Continuity of Government Ordinance; Chapter 1283 of the 2020 Acts of the General Assembly; and the Resolution of this body adopted on April 21, 2020, we are holding this meeting by real time electronic means with no Authority member physically present at a single, central location. All Authority members are participating electronically. This meeting is being held in accordance with Section 6 of the County's Continuity of Government Ordinance. 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. The public is also invited to send questions, comments, and suggestions to the Authority through the County's Economic Development Office at any time.

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

2. **Matters from the Public**

Ms. Schmack confirmed no speakers signed up or raised their hand to speak.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes for February 16, 2021 were reviewed. Ms. Imhoff motioned to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Shreve.

**MOTION:** The motion passed unanimously (6-0)

4. **Financial Report**

Mr. Shreve presented the financial report for period ending February 28, 2021. Mr. Ray motioned to approve the financial report which was seconded by Ms. Imhoff.

5. **New Business**

- a. Central Virginia Small Business Development Center – Mr. Johnson introduced Rebecca Haydock, Director of the Central Virginia Small Business Development Center (CV SBDC). Ms. Haydock thanked the Authority and Economic Development Staff for their support. The CV SBDC provides hands-on advising that is free of charge, by bringing resources and talent to entrepreneurs to empower them so they can achieve their goals. The goals are to create jobs, strengthen businesses and make our communities a special place to live.

In 2019, the CV SBDC office provided under 100 hours in direct consulting time. In 2020, the number increased to 3,246 hours providing service to 423 clients. Albemarle County makes up a large portion of it: 187, (44%) clients and 1,865, (57%) counseling hours. The City of Charlottesville is second with 72, (17%) clients and 515, (16%) counseling hours. The County and City combined represent 61% of their clients and 73% counseling hours.

The CV SBDC territory is comprised of 10 municipalities (The City of Charlottesville, and the Counties of: Albemarle, Nelson, Fluvanna, Louisa, Orange, Greene, Madison, Culpeper, and Rappahannock)

Ms. Haydock shared that currently, the Director is the only full-time staff member. She is in the process of hiring a full-time Assistant Director, who will serve as a business counselor. There are three additional part-time staff members, and seven contractors. At the state level SBDC office, there are staff members who have specialized talents ranging from: International Trade, Craft Beverage Specialists, Innovation Commercialization Assistance, Retail and Restaurant Consultant, and Cyber Security. Ms. Haydock noted that the Community Investment Collaborative took over as host for the CV SBDC last year.

Last year, the CV SBDC provided almost 60 trainings, several them were specific to the CARES Act, other training topics were: Managing a WordPress Website, UVA Propel, Online Marketing and Communications, and PASSPORT to Global Markets. A Food and Beverage Cohort was recently created. Three of the five businesses selected to participate were from Albemarle County: L'toile, Pachamama, and Nona's Italian Cuchina.

The CV SBDC has formed new partnerships with the Charlottesville Angel Network, UVA Procurement & Career Services, GenEdge, Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce, CBIC, Cville BioHub, and UVA's LVG, Seed Fund and CAV Angels Groups.

Ms. Haydock highlighted the characteristics that make the CV SBDC unique. Some research tools exclusive to SBDC include: SBDC net, IBISWorld, and Profitcents. The International Trade and Innovation Commercialization Assistance Programs (ICAP) are offered free of charge to businesses.

Ms. Haydock shared some success stories from Albemarle County businesses. Valente Pasta was founded in the City of Charlottesville in 1982. Since they have quadrupled in size, the business received site location assistance from the Economic Development team and are preparing to move into Albemarle County. Delany Products has been in business since 1900. They were referred to the

CV SBDC by the County, as a result of a Business Retention and Expansion visit. The business has received assistance with marketing, government contracting and International Trade. Khadija's Kitchen, a small caterer that opened in 2019. This business was used by the CV SBDC as a case study for the Website Jump Start Program.

As a result of continued expansion of the services provided, Ms. Haydock noted that in March 2022, the CV SBDC will experience a \$130,000 funding cliff due to the loss of CARES Act and Go Virginia funding.

Ms. Haydock provided an overview of the Website Jump Start program. Through this program, the CV SBDC will create simple three to five-page websites for selected businesses using the WordPress platform. These websites cost the CV SBDC approximately \$800 to make. Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville both contributed funding to support this program.

Mr. Long thanked Ms. Haydock for her presentation and noted that a website program was one of the surprising things that came out of the business survey that was done by the Economic Development Office.

Ms. Imhoff asked how does the CV SBDC get the word out into the community about the different programs and services?

Ms. Haydock shared the CV SBDC created a website, which has seen increased traffic. The Economic Development Office also helps amplify messaging through their various channels. A lot of CV SBDC's community partners: The Chamber, UVA, CBIC, and CIC feature information in their newsletters.

Mr. Shreve shared that he was impressed by the array of services and partnerships and was glad to know that the CV SBDC and CIC are working hand in hand, it seems like a great relationship. He inquired about operations going forward with the Go Virginia Grant and the use of funds for the Assistant Director position.

Ms. Haydock stated that Go Virginia realized the CV SBDC was having capacity issues and is continuing to grow.

Mr. Shreve asked if the CV SBDC can go back to Go Virginia for additional funding, or if they just have a couple of years to find additional funding?

Ms. Haydock stated that the capacity building grant was just for a year and expects the WordPress developer position for the digital portion of the grant will go away. It will be on CV SBDC to find the additional funding to carry the position forward or scale back on some of the counselors and business assistance.

Mr. Shreve asked what the demand is for the Website Jump Start program?

Ms. Haydock replied that the initial funding from Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville provides for 24 websites, and CV SBDC currently has over 30 in the pipeline.

- b. Director's Report – Mr. Johnson thanked the Authority for supporting Project Knight Rider and the AVNU project for autonomous vehicles. Perrone Robotics recently received a \$10 million investment. The Economic Development Office is working with Perrone to find a new location in Albemarle County to build a new headquarters and test track.

Mr. Johnson shared the recent announcement from the Federal Office of Management and Budget. The Statisticians who review the census data have recommended that those Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) that have a core city with a population less than 100,000 be downgraded from an MSA to a Micropolitan Statistical Area. While they have purported that this does not impact federal funding, the data that they pull together is often utilized by site selectors, investors, retailers and commercial entities who use the data to begin the process of finding locations for investment opportunities. If we move from a Metropolitan Statistical Areas to a Micropolitan Statistical Area, while it might not hurt our eligibility for grants for roads or community development but there will be an ancillary or tertiary impact where people look at the data first and not necessarily look far enough to find out about our particular community. Mr. Johnson requested the Authority's feedback.

Ms. Imhoff asked if the County has any control over it? Can we say because we have a large urban area, we meet the definition of the MSA.

Mr. Johnson noted that we meet the definition of the MSA, but Charlottesville does not have 100,000 in population in its core. The Office of Management and Budget has created a website where the County can provide feedback between now and March 19<sup>th</sup>. Secondly, the County can write a letter to the federally elected officials in our community.

Mr. McNaughton believed the Authority should provide feedback, he'd not sure it will move the needle, but it can't hurt. Mr. Long agreed.

Mr. Shreve stated that the County should qualify if they were considered as a standard designation where the Counties and Cities are combined. On the other hand, if they are strict about city size and population, our mission is more in line with helping existing businesses and would not alter our action. It would however, come into play with the recruitment of new businesses.

Mr. Johnson vowed to work with the County Executive's Office to draft a response to bring to the Board of Supervisor's for consideration and will update the Authority as it progresses.

- c. Closed Session – Mr. Long a 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 5 to discuss and consider: Prospective businesses or industries and the expansion of an existing business where no previous announcement has been made of the businesses' or industries' interest in locating or expanding their facilities in the community; to wit, the location and development of Project Leppard in Albemarle County.

Subsection 6 to discuss and consider: the investment of public funds where bargaining is involved related to proposed amendments to an existing performance agreement where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the Authority and County would be adversely affected; to wit, the performance agreement and VJIP match grant agreement with WillowTree.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Munson.

**MOTION:** The motion passed unanimously (6-0)

Closed Meeting Certification – Mr. Long read the following Closed Meeting Certification:  
I move that the EDA certify by recorded vote that to the best of each Director’s knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the Closed Meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the Closed Meeting.

**MOTION:** The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote (5-0)

6. **Unfinished Business**

Ms. Imhoff stated that soon, the Board of Supervisors will be reviewing the County’s Comprehensive Plan Update and wondered if the Authority will get a chance to comment on the Economic Development section.

7. **Other Matters**

No other matters were reported.

8. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Mr. Long adjourned the meeting.

Teste: \_\_\_\_\_  
Donald Long, Chairman

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
David Shreve, Secretary-Treasurer