

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF
ROCKINGHAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA (“EDA”)**

Held: Wednesday, December 9, 2020, at 8:30 a.m., in the Board of Supervisors Meeting Room located in the County Administration Building, at 20 East Gay Street, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Directors Present: At the commencement of the meeting, seven Authority Directors were present, as follows: Mr. Douglas Driver, Mr. Paul Wiseman, Mr. Neil Hayslett, Mr. Nathan Miller, Mr. Timothy Hulings, Mr. Gary Burner and Mr. Kevin Flint.

Also Present at the Meeting: Stephen G. King, Rockingham County Administrator; Thomas H. Miller, Rockingham County Attorney; Patricia D. Davidson, Rockingham County Finance Director; and Jessica G. Kilby, Rockingham County Deputy Clerk.

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m., by the Chairman of the Authority, Mr. Driver.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the Authority’s meeting on October 1, 2020, were reviewed and unanimously approved as presented.

2. Technology Zone Economic Development Grant Status 2020

Finance Director Davidson presented the economic development grant payout information for tax year 2020. She provided payout information for three qualifying grant recipients: Merck, MillerCoors and Whitewave and pointed out that the Commissioner of the Revenue and the Treasurer certified that all qualifying criteria had been met for each. Mrs. Davidson indicated staff is awaiting certification from the Treasurer for a grant recipient located within the Digital Print Technology Zone. She suggested the EDA approve the grant payments as presented for all four businesses, with the Digital Print Technology Zone recipient’s payout be contingent upon the Treasurer certifying all requirements are met.

In response to a question from Director Hulings, Finance Director Davidson explained that the current grant payments are based on the previous incentive program, which was in place prior to the recently adopted revised Economic Development Policy effective July 1, 2020. Mrs. Davidson said once the current term expires in 2021, all businesses will be required to apply according to the new process.

Discussion ensued concerning how advantageous the Economic Development Policy is to the County and whether the incentives offered actually promote expansion or attract new industry. Director Miller indicated the grant payments are significant and suggested an analysis of the Policy may provide useful information to staff moving forward. Chairman Driver agreed that further analysis may be beneficial and stated that in his experience as a previous business owner, expansion occurred when the demand

required it, not because of tax incentives, low interest rates, or Federal programs offered. He said he suspects the Policy does not encourage new investment but would be “icing on the cake” for those companies who have already decided to expand. Chair Driver also remarked that expansion of tools and machinery/automated production often eliminates the number employees.

Administrator King explained the County has one of the highest machinery and tools tax rates in the State. He said the Policy provides a form of leverage when attracting/competing for new businesses.

ACTION: On motion by Director Hulings, seconded by Director Miller, the Directors’ unanimously authorized Finance Director Davidson to issue December 2020 grant payouts as follows:

Digital Print *contingent upon certification from the Treasurer	\$22,250.00
South Fork	\$127,557.00
South Fork	\$807,356.00
Mount Crawford	\$304,668.00

3. Other Business.

Upon due motion, the Authority unanimously approved the EDA Directors’ statutory \$200 per diem fees for attendance at the meeting.

4. Adjournment

Upon determining no other business for consideration by the Authority, Chairman Driver duly adjourned the meeting at 8:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary/Treasurer