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**BRIGHTER
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**MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS JOINT MEETING
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF HALIFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA
MAY 17, 2022**

RE: MEETING: The Board of Directors of the Industrial Development Authority of Halifax County, Virginia (IDA) held a joint IDA Board meeting with the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, at 4:00 P.M. in the Board of Supervisors Meeting Room at 1030 Mary Bethune Street Halifax Virginia.

RE: MEMBERS PRESENT: Those in attendance at the time the meeting was called to order include Mr. Rick Harrell, Dr. Nettie Simon-Owens, Mrs. Nancy Pool, Mr. Ryland Clark, Mr. Jeremy Catron, and Mr. Robert Bates.

RE: MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Jeremy Satterfield

RE: OTHERS PRESENT: Mrs. Kristy Johnson – IDA Executive Director, Ms. Blair Jeffress – IDA Operations Manager, Mrs. Beth Doughty, Mrs. Liz Povar, Mr. Neal Barber – Strategic Planning Team, Chairman Calvin ‘Ricky’ Short, Vice Chairman Garland Ricketts, Supervisor Larry D. Roller, Supervisor Hubert Pannell, Supervisor Dean Throckmorton, Tie Breaker Wayne Smith, Ms. Olivia Epps – Halifax County, Mrs. Charlene Hendricks – Halifax County, and Mr. Scott Simpson – County Administrator.

RE: MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Chairman Calvin ‘Ricky’ Short called the meeting to order for the Board of Supervisors at 4:00 p.m. and Mr. Rick Harrell called the meeting to order at 4:47 p.m. for the IDA Board. It was determined that a quorum was present for the Board of Supervisors at 4:00 p.m. and for the IDA Board at 4:47 p.m.

RE: APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mrs. Nancy Pool made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Dr. Nettie Simon-Owens, and duly carried by the IDA Board. Supervisor Hubert Pannell made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Supervisor Dean Throckmorton and duly carried by the Board of Supervisors.

RE: FACILITATED DISCUSSION WITH STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM

Mrs. Beth Doughty reiterated that we were still in the discovery phase of the strategic planning process. She thanked Mr. Scott Simpson for recognizing that the last meeting was productive and shared appreciation for pushing to schedule this meeting to continue the conversation. She expressed that the more input received the better the results.

Mrs. Doughty asked the room to share what has been on their mind since the last meeting.

Supervisor Dean Throckmorton asked was there a reduction in small or large businesses in the area. Mrs. Doughty stated that there had been an increase in businesses. She explained that the VEDP pipeline is frantic with activity, and that the projects are larger than they had seen in a long time. She expressed that these businesses are focusing more on their long-term goals rather than the present position of the stock market.





Mr. Ryland Clark asked about finding ways to evaluate prospect businesses regarding success and growth to help decide to bring these businesses to the county. Mrs. Doughty stated that this question will be recorded to discuss during the steering committee meeting next week.

Mrs. Doughty asked the Boards to state the information that stood out to them during Mr. Barber's presentation on project activities and trends. Mr. Rick Harrell stated that he felt the individuals who want to work have a job. Mr. Catron stated that there was a great deal of disparity in the information presented in terms of the surrounding areas.

Mr. Harrell stated that he felt that a comparison of Halifax County to Danville and Pittsylvania County is unfair due to the size difference. Mrs. Doughty stated that Danville and Pittsylvania County have a synergy that will be difficult for Halifax County alone to achieve. Mrs. Nancy Pool expressed that we could capitalize on this synergy. Mr. Catron asked about the plan going forward and will we take advantage of the partnerships or create our own strategy.

Mrs. Doughty stated that in her work it was not often that individuals from Danville and Pittsylvania County were aware of what was going on in Halifax County. She asked the Boards to share their reasons why they feel Halifax is not well known by other surrounding localities.

Mrs. Pool expressed that Halifax County is wrapped up in themselves and it has always been the way. She stated that we are just beginning to see collaboration and GO Virginia and the Southern Virginia Regional Alliance played a big part in this.

Mr. Clark stated that areas larger than Halifax aren't aware of our growth because of the current quality of life. He explained that citizens are willing to travel to different areas for food places or attractions because they are bigger cities. He mentioned that he doesn't know much about areas that are smaller than Halifax.

Chairman Short stated that we haven't had any joint meetings with other entities in Danville, but we partnered more with other entities in other parts of the state. He agrees with Mr. Clark in that we know a lot more about Danville than they know about us.

Mrs. Doughty asked the Boards to state the opportunities to collaborate with the neighbors to the east. Mr. Scott Simpson stated that we have an existing collaboration with Mecklenburg and Charlotte County with the regional landfill. He stated that he believes there will be more opportunities in the future for collaboration. Mr. Harrell stated that we have a relationship through Mecklenburg through Microsoft.

Mrs. Doughty asked the Boards to elaborate on the meeting efforts between Halifax County elected officials and Pittsylvania County. Mr. Scott Simpson stated that we were in a different planning district than Pittsylvania County. Mrs. Kristy Johnson stated that we were in a different workforce region.

Mr. Hubbert Pannell stated that it is important for us to get a seat at the table when Danville and other areas are hosting big events. He mentioned that this will help Halifax become well known by other individuals in other areas such as Pittsylvania County. He expressed his interest in being invited to events in the Danville and Pittsylvania area to become more involved to build relationships.



Mr. Harrell explained that Danville and Pittsylvania County have a built-in region in which they can work together and build partnerships. He expressed that our community has been increasing contact with this region through the arm's length of the VEDP and Linda Green.

Mr. Pannell conveyed that it is important to build relationships with people that have a seat at the table so you can express that you would like to get invited as well.

Mrs. Doughty stated that we must all agree that this is the direction we want to go and work towards building relationships with individuals outside of the community.

Dr. Simon-Owens stated that we must become aware of the location of our elected officials. She explained that even though our community is represented they are not here. She expressed that a key take away from the presentation is that we must invest in land and building acquisition to do more in the community. Dr. Simon-Owens also mentioned the structure of other IDAs and EDAs and how they receive funding.

Mr. Simpson stated that to be successful we must invest in sites and buildings. He stated that this investment will mainly come from the Board of Supervisors, and they need to be comfortable with this investment. He explained that the Halifax IDA plays a role in economic prosperity in the County and without its business model this prosperity would be hard to obtain. Mr. Simpson stated that the IDA's business model allows the Board of Supervisors to invest in incentives for businesses without worrying about investing in the operations of the IDA. He stated that the IDA is more than industrial development, but it also includes commercial development. He expressed that economic development is measured based on success rather than effort.

Mrs. Doughty stated that process metrics are just as important as outcome metrics in economic development.

Mr. Harrell expressed the importance of having real estate to market to potential businesses. Mrs. Doughty explained that real estate is the foundation of success in economic development. She expressed that this pertains to attracting new businesses and existing business's expansion needs.

Mrs. Doughty asked the Boards to share what they believe are important items to include on the to do list after the discussion of the strategic plan. She started the list off by expressing we need more sites.

Mr. Harrell discussed the importance of being able to meet the employers needs regarding workforce. He stated that he has learned through discussions with plant managers that employers need workers. Mrs. Doughty stated that this has been a discussion for over 30 years. She stated that this will take bold action to resolve this issue. Mr. Catron stated his concerns of bringing more businesses to the County and being able to provide the workforce.

Mrs. Doughty asked the IDA Board to state their appetite for risk on a scale of 1 to 10.

Mr. Harrell stated that he believes the risk appetite should be 8.

Mr. Harrell explained that to move forward and increase the economic wealth of the County you must invest and take risks.



Dr. Simon-Owens agreed with Mr. Harrell and stated that once we have most of the information about a project to make an informed decision, we must take the risk, or we will remain stagnant.

Mr. Bates stated that we can't be afraid to be the first one even if no one around us is doing it. He stated that instead of following suit we need to lead the part.

Chairman Short stated that if everything lines up then he would not mind taking a risk in economic development.

Supervisor Dean Throckmorton stated that if there is a good plan in place there is not a lot of risk associated with the decision to move forward with decision making.

Mr. Simpson stated that risk taking differs for both Boards. He explained that the taxpayer's concerns have an effect on the decision making for the Board of Supervisors. He expressed that there must be an understanding between the Board of Supervisors, IDA Board, and the citizens in order for the County to grow.

Mrs. Doughty asked Mr. Simpson to identify the last time the County raised taxes. Mr. Simpson stated that taxes were raised three years ago and before that it hadn't been raised in a while.

Mrs. Doughty asked the Boards to give examples of how the County is better today than it was five years ago.

Mr. Pannell stated that we have a better working relationship with the IDA Board.

Dr. Simon-Owens stated that there has been growth in both the town of Halifax and South Boston.

Mr. Harrell agreed with Mr. Pannell and stated that the relationship and cooperation with both Boards has improved.

Mr. Clark expressed that it is important that we start to educate the community and walk together to accomplish a bigger goal which is to evolve as a community.

Mrs. Pool stated that there are groups in the GO Virginia Region 3 Growth and Diversification plan that will meet regularly including economic developers, school superintendents, CEOs, and Mayors.

Mrs. Pool stated that she feels the IDA is more stable. She expressed that IDA has excellent leadership and the Board is more collaborative and engaged.

Mr. Bates stated that we are working towards the same goal and walking in the same direction.

Mrs. Doughty asked the Board to state what they think the IDA Board and the Board of Supervisors should have done differently over the past five years in economic development.

Mrs. Kristy Johnson stated that she wishes the IDA had invested in larger industrial sites five years ago.

Vice Chairman Ricketts stated he wishes both Boards pushed to form a regional foundation with the change of ownership of the hospital, instead of merging with a non-profit hospital system. He believes this would have made a difference in the community.

Mr. Catron stated that he would have preferred stronger investments.

Mr. Harrell explained that there was a lack of confidence in the IDA from the Board Supervisors. He stated that if we were working together, we could have been prepared for more investment opportunities.

Mr. Clark expressed that we could have done more in relation to workforce development.

Mrs. Doughty asked the Board to share how they envision the IDA five years from now.

Chairman Short expressed that he would be proud to see one new industrial site in the County a year.

Mrs. Pool expressed that she would like to see growth in our community.

Mr. Catron stated that he would like to see the population decline cease.

Dr. Simon-Owens stated she would like to sustain the number of existing businesses. She expressed that five years from now we will be reaping the benefits of investments.

Mr. Clark stated that he would like to see a more established footprint with our neighbors to develop relationships.

Vice Chairman Ricketts stated that he would like to see both Boards work together to evaluate solar projects in the community and potential solar supply chain projects.

Mrs. Doughty asked the Boards to state other issues they wanted to discuss.

Mr. Harrell stated the importance of change and what used to work doesn't work anymore.

Dr. Simon-Owens mentioned the IDA Board should identify the micro sectors we may be able to take advantage of.

Mr. Simpson stated that it is important to identify the appetite for risk between both Boards. He expressed that if there is no appetite for risk, we will not see change or growth.

Mrs. Doughty stated that this has been great feedback and she thanked the Boards for their cooperation.

RE: NEXT MEETING DATE:

The IDA will hold the next scheduled meeting on May 20, 2022, at 8:30 A.M. in the Halifax IDA Conference Room.

The Board of Supervisors will hold the next meeting on May 17, 2022, at 6:30 P.M. at Mary Bethune.

RE: ADJOURNMENT:



Motion to recess was made by Supervisor Brandon seconded by Supervisor Duffey and then duly carried by the Board of Supervisors. Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Satterfield seconded by Dr. Simon-Owens and then duly carried by the IDA Board.

Respectfully Submitted:

Mrs. Kristy Johnson, Executive Director

Acknowledged:

Mr. Rick Harrell, Chair