



**Leesburg Economic Development Commission
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
25 West Market Street
Lower Level Conference Room 2
December 8, 2021
7:00p.m.**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Adoption of the Agenda**
- 4. Approval of Minutes**
 - a. November 3, 2021
- 5. Petitioners (5 minutes each)**
- 6. Liaison Comments (5 minutes)**
- 7. Staff Report**
- 8. Liaisons to Other Commissions and Committees**
- 9. Old Business**
 1. Virginia Village – update
 2. MEC/SBDC - update
- 10. New Business**
 1. Small Business Focus
- 11. Commissioner Comments (5 minutes)**
- 12. Chairman’s Comments (5 minutes)**
- 13. Adjournment**

If you require any type of reasonable accommodation, as a result of a physical, sensory or mental disability, to attend and/or participate in this meeting, please contact Russell Seymour at 703-771-6530. Three days advanced notice is requested.



Leesburg Economic Development Commission
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
November 3, 2021
7:00pm.

Commission Members Present: Eric Byrd, James Choi, Marantha Edwards, Jason Miller, Brittany Youkers

Commission Members Absent: Curtis Allred, Britta Neel

Staff Liaison Present: None

Staff Present: Economic Development Director Russell Seymour
Business Development and Retention Manager Melanie Scoggins

Petitioners Present: None

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:06p.m. by Chair Byrd.

2. Roll Call

Chair Byrd asked for the Calling of the Roll by Director Seymour; Director Seymour stated that a quorum was present.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Edwards to adopt the Agenda; seconded by Commissioner Choi. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Edwards to adopt the EDC Meeting Minutes of October 6, 2021; seconded by Vice Chair Youkers. Motion carried.

5. Petitioners

None.

6. Liaison Comments

None.

7. Staff Report

Main Street Program

Director Seymour indicated that the Tier 2 application has proceeded forward and a response should be received shortly. He stated that as soon as the official designation is received, a series of town hall style meetings will be planned to speak with businesses and interested parties regarding the program.

ABC News – Weather Camera

Director Seymour mentioned that ABC News will begin weather reports from a camera positioned on the Town Hall garage.

VML Conference

Director Seymour mentioned a series of mobile workshops relating to downtown Leesburg and historic preservation where included as a part of this conference. Director Seymour referenced the walking tour which took place during the conference, and added that people were extremely impressed with downtown Leesburg and the new redevelopment which is occurring.

Virginia Tourism American Rescue Program

Director Seymour indicated the program, which was released on October 28th, was a fairly extensive three-year process with money available for tourism-focused businesses. Director Seymour indicated that Loudoun County (fourth largest locality) will receive \$1.5 million, and that first applications are due at the end of this calendar year.

Small Business Holidays

Director Seymour indicated that staff will develop advertising opportunities for promoting small business holidays after Thanksgiving. He added that advertisements will be geared towards local/regional areas with focus on Small Business Saturday, with approximately \$2,700 worth of advertising (\$1,700 out of the Economic Development budget). Director Seymour requested the EDC to consider covering \$1,000 of that advertising amount for this purpose. Manager Scoggins mentioned that print ads will be taken out in Loudoun Now, the Loudoun Times Mirror, digital marketing with The Burn, electronic ads, Op-Eds from small businesses, and promotions through Facebook, media pages, and on the Town website.

Action Item:

Motion by Chair Byrd to request staff to transfer \$1,000 from the EDC 2021 budget to pay for advertising; seconded by Vice Chair Youkers. Motion carried.

8. Liaisons to Other Commissions and Committees

COPA

Commissioner Edwards indicated that COPA is presently down three commissioners, and added that FOPA is working with several businesses regarding art and business. Commissioner Edwards recommends that the businesses check in with Manager Scoggins regarding art on display and major art shows. Commissioner Edwards indicated that discussions during the December meeting will be about ways to keep the momentum of the arts and cultural district going forward, and encouraging new ideas for 2022 to keep the momentum going.

Murals on Private Buildings

Commissioner Miller referenced a recent meeting, and indicated that more progress is being made than he had anticipated. He added that something fairly concrete in the form of a draft to mark-up will be available after the next meeting. Commissioner Miller stated that the timeframe would be to present to Council before the end of the year.

Planning & Zoning Commission

Vice Chair Youkers indicated that the Planning Commission has reviewed the Town Plan and made adjustments. Vice Chair Youkers would like to discuss the next steps for the EDC to look at regarding the Plan before it goes to Council. She mentioned that the next item, Virginia Village, will be in December or January.

Airport Commission

Chair Byrd indicated that meetings are continuing with businesses to provide input and ideas. Recently, representatives from the Manassas Airport visited and met with staff and plans are in place to meet with representatives from other airports. Chair Byrd mentioned that since funding is provided by the FAA, it has a say on everything that happens at the airport. Discussions ensued regarding a recommendation to Council on how next to proceed.

Diversity Commission

Chair Byrd initiated discussions regarding a recent conversation with Linda McCray, who echoed Commissioner Neel's enthusiasm for business visits. Chair Byrd added that responses from businesses have been fantastic, and that business owners are pleasantly surprised that representatives are checking in with them.

Discussions ensued regarding First Friday, as several businesses have indicated an interest in participating. Commissioner Edwards mentioned that momentum is building and believes that all businesses should be able to participate. Chair Byrd believes that because of consistency of First Friday in historic downtown, people will be interested in participating (downtown to become the driver for things that happen all over Town).

Boards and Commissions Networking Event

Chair Byrd referenced the event in which commissions took the opportunity to share work they are doing. Chair Byrd indicated that most of the work being done in these commissions touches Economic Development in some form.

9. Old Business

a. Legacy Leesburg Town Plan

Director Seymour indicated that the plan is scheduled to go to Council in December. Chair Byrd plans to speak about a potential EDC retreat as it is recommended to provide information to the Planning Department the first week of December. Commissioner Edwards indicated that the business community would like to hear from folks regarding the plan, and added that the EDC will want to reach out to businesses, landowners, and the developing community.

b. Proposed EDC Retreat – November 29, 2021

Director Seymour indicated that limited directives for retreat broadcasting have been given, however, regular meetings *must* be broadcasted. Chair Byrd recommended a retreat be planned with focus on the Legacy Leesburg Town Plan, and added that it is critical Council is made aware of the EDC's opinion.

Action Items:

- Director Seymour will provide the EDC with their initial comments to the Planning Commission on the Legacy Leesburg Town Plan.
- An EDC Retreat will be planned for Monday, November 29, 2021 commencing at 8:00a.m. (logistics to follow).

Liberty Lot

Director Seymour referenced the recent survey for possible uses for the Liberty Street Lot. Director Seymour inquired whether the EDC wished to make additional comments for presentation to Council. Director Seymour reviewed with the EDC category responses from the survey:

- Remain a parking lot and add a parking garage (47%)
- Performing arts center, gallery or conference space (35%)
- Greenspace/park (5%)
- Residential/age-restricted housing (3%)
- Hotel (3%)
- Remain as business use
- Outdoor swimming pool (2%)
- Farmer's Market
- Interesting comment: "Need something to draw people into the area."
- Do not want to lose the murals

Chair Byrd indicated questions for the EDC to consider such as options for an RFP, opening it up for proposals to consider potential use, and next steps. Chair Byrd mentioned that the EDC need not add anything to its recommendations of May 2021. Commissioner Edwards inquired as to whether the DED is taking the lead on this project. Director Seymour anticipates that the DED will remain involved throughout the process. In response to Commissioner Edwards' inquiry as to whether a motion to that effect should be considered, Chair Byrd encouraged each commissioner to call their Council member and express the EDC's desire to remain involved, however, does not believe a motion should be necessary.

Director Seymour indicated that Council has expressed interest in an RFP. He added Council may choose to move forward and not do anything, or move forward in selecting a committee to review the proposals. Director Seymour believes if Council decides to pursue an RFP, it will put together a group to review such proposals.

Commissioner Edwards wishes to ensure that Economic Development remains involved. Director Seymour indicated that at the present time DED and the Town Attorney have been jointly involved and remains confident that the DED will continue to have a role in the process.

c. Events - Sidewalk Dining Program

Director Seymour provided an update on the Sidewalk Dining Program, and the Town Manager’s decision to end Sunday street closings. Director Seymour added that the program will remain in effect for Friday and Saturday. Discussions ensued regarding ideas for events, event guidelines, parameters from the Fire Marshall, and the availability of simplistic guideline templates based on previously held events such as the Flower and Garden Show.

10. New Business

None.

11. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Choi expressed his pleasure at being back at the EDC meetings. He mentioned the upcoming 30th anniversary of USTMA Taekwondo, his family-owned business, and its numerous fundraisers held over the years. Director Seymour offered to speak with Commissioner Choi and his father to begin planning a first-class anniversary event for USTMA’s monumental accomplishment.

Commissioner Edwards thanked the EDC, and mentioned the unfortunate environmental issue of newspapers being tossed and ending up in the water streams.

Commissioner Miller mentioned the Main Street Program. Director Seymour mentioned that Council gave the DED six months to make a recommendation whether or not to advance the program. Director Seymour added that he will strive to circulate as much information as possible in order to enable the business community to voice its opinion.

Vice Chair Youkers was pleased that the EDC agreed to redirect some of its funds towards advertising. She was pleased that Commissioner Choi shared the upcoming 30th Anniversary of USTMA Taekwondo, and that the event will showcase to other businesses that this is something the Town does. Vice Chair Youkers would like to be involved in the RFP process for the Liberty Lot, as it is in need of change management for both residents and businesses. She also mentioned that the Main Street Program will help the EDC figure out how to host events, and is in favor of holding a Leesburg Holiday event for local artists.

12. Chairman’s Comments

Chair Byrd thanked the EDC for its continued work and mentioned that he looks forward to the November 29th EDC Retreat. Chair Byrd indicated that discussions will be held at the December EDC meeting to schedule a January 2022 Retreat to discuss goals for next year.

13. Adjournment

Motion by Vice Chair Youkers to adjourn the meeting at 9:00p.m.; seconded by Commissioner Choi. Motion carried.