



**Leesburg Economic Development Commission  
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES  
Town Hall – Council Chamber  
April 6, 2022  
7:00pm.**

**Commission Members Present:** Eric Byrd, Marantha Edwards, Jason Miller, Britta Neel, Brittany Youkers

**Commission Members Absent:** James Choi

**Staff Liaison Present:** None

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

**Petitioners Present:** None

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**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.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 Miller. Motion carried.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Vice Chair Youkers to adopt the meeting minutes of March 2, 2022; seconded by Commissioner Miller. Motion carried.

**5. Petitioners**

None.

**6. Liaison Comments**

None.

**7. Staff Report**

**Leesburg Small Business Awards**

Director Seymour mentioned the awards ceremony which will be held at ChefScape on May 4, 2022. 28 nominations have been received and will be voted upon by members of the EDC.

**Liberty Parking Lot**

Director Seymour mentioned:

- Information on what Town is looking for regarding an RFP
- Press release issued April 5, 2022; RFP will end on May 31<sup>st</sup>

- Council to make decision
- DEQ report of 2003; will be applying for grants with DEQ and VEDP
- Now that the RFP is in place, we will move forward with that application

Commissioner Edwards inquired as to whether we are seeking parking just for the project or public access parking. Director Seymour believes any project that goes there must have parking on site and added it is not to replace the current spaces.

#### **Main Street Program**

Director Seymour indicated the application is due April 28, 2022 (\$7,000 grant).

#### **Boundary Line Adjustment on April 13, 2022**

Director Seymour mentioned the Board of Supervisors will be presented the BLA for Compass Creek (At Home, Walmart, and additional parcel owned by the Peterson Company). He has heard nothing negative from the County.

#### **ACTION ITEM**

Chair Byrd requested a report of the number of new businesses which have started this year. He asked whether it is possible to obtain a report by the number of business licenses being filed. Director Seymour will provide that information along with industry breakdown information. Vice Chair Youkers asked whether missed opportunities (either left town or could not find space for their industry) may be included. Director Seymour indicated that it is a popular area for hotels.

#### **Private Property Mural**

Director Seymour mentioned the official call for walls; with the theme being music. Task order is (1) location; and (2) call for an artist. All is moving forward very well and is expected to be finalized by April 27<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Economic Development New Staff Position**

Director Seymour indicated the new staff position has received budget approval and a job description has been provided to the Human Resources Department. The starting date for this position will be as close to July 1, 2022 as possible.

#### **Ribbon Cuttings**

Director Seymour mentioned ribbon cutting events:

- April 1st Catty Corner Café
- April 2nd Wiggle Butt and Whiskers
- April 5th My Wellness Physicians
- April 13<sup>th</sup> SR Coffee Co.
- April 29<sup>th</sup> Club Pilates

### **8. Liaisons to Other Commissions and Committees**

- **COPA** – Commissioner Edwards mentioned that the new murals look beautiful. She was unable to make the COPA meeting last night; update will be provided at the next meeting.
- **Murals on Private Buildings** – Commissioner Miller mentioned this was a great project.
- **Diversity Commission**
  - Positive feedback continues to be received from businesses
  - Businesses have an interest in participating in 1<sup>st</sup> Fridays
  - Conversations need to be held with businesses/development owners regarding the ability to develop their own event
  - Commissioner Neel would appreciate a follow-up on this subject
  - Commissioner Edwards is in favor of conversations with businesses (re: different day)
  - When businesses come together collaboratively and creatively, good ideas come out of that
  - Commissioner Neel will inquire as to whether metrics may be obtained from the Diversity Commission
  - Town finance department tracks all businesses by business license information
  - Possible Town question -- Is there a way to change the process to capture metrics that would be valuable to better understand the demographic of Town businesses

- The Locally Leesburg program is an on-line request which is reserved accordingly on the EDC website; requests are set up quickly
- **Planning Commission – Vice Chair Youkers**
  - Updates on meeting of 3/3<sup>rd</sup>; discussed zoning ordinance to make outdoor dining permanent
  - Also discussed VA Village lessons learned (architect, ordinance, commercial phasing, site staging; ties into other initiative working on in terms of process/templates
  - June 2<sup>nd</sup> food truck hearing (revisiting zoning for food trucks)
  - June 16<sup>th</sup> outdoor dining public hearing to discuss the May survey, and to allow the public to express their comments
  - Director Seymour will provide a report to the EDC about the subject of dining, and an additional update in August after the Planning Commission hearing
  - Vice Chair Youkers suggested to seek a more detailed timeline from the Planning Commission from which the EDC can work
  - Commissioner Edwards mentioned several restaurants are not in favor of food trucks; relevant for the EDC on which to take a position
- **Airport Development Working Group – Chair Byrd**
  - Working group is a joint group led by Airport Commission and supported by the EDC and DED Director Also had two members from the Airport Commission and Airport Manager; Tony Howard CEO Chamber
  - Keen interest in doing this well/right (one chance); All background material will be presented to Council
  - Overall purpose of group to look at possible future development of undeveloped land. Specifically, three areas asked to look at (40-acre parcel; 11-acre parcel; 1 acre parcel)
  - Looked at airport as a whole and give overall thought and process
  - Solicited input from companies at airport now and those who want to be on the airport
  - Developers and public; overall goal to make recommendation/best approach
  - Looked at existing structure leases that might come up
  - Look at potential FAA restrictions; evaluate impacts to the Town
  - Tasked with meeting with companies; compiling data solicited from the public
  - Considerations looked at: wanted to look at what resources required by the Town; Town has a limit on the capital that it can utilize to do large development projects, i.e., developing 40 acres is a very large development project/put strain on ability of town to utilize its capital
  - Looked at technology changes/market conditions (drones, take/off and landing vehicles)
  - Important to look at whole airport/what is going on
  - Identified there were two decisions to be made - First was town to do it all itself or get help in looking at doing structure/leasing and the whole process (or get consultant); second was to look at doing a traditional land lease (or lease out portion) and the developer does what the developer does
  - After talking to people/multiple developers and met with multiple airports; met with consultants; business on and not on airport/public info sessions developed essentially four options
    - 1. Town develops and builds itself (as built, town leases them out)
    - 2. Town does certain level of development; infrastructure and then leases to developer who builds
    - 3. Town leases the land for development
    - 4. Town partners with master developer to plan, develop and lease out projects
  - In looking at the four options, considerations included: capital requirements to the Town; timeline how quickly could things get started; what are level of risks that Town would incur; what kind of control would town have as to what happens on the way in? Does the town seek control of those limits? Responding to future technology/future market needs as they change (locked into it)? Flexibility important; level of revenue – maximize revenue while minimizing risk to the town
  - Master developer scored highest

**Takeaway:**

Recommendation 1 engage an aviation development consultant at front end

Recommendation 2 create master development agreement as public/private partnership

Master developer would speed up the process and get things moving

Get consultant/do some vetting/help create an RFP

Commissioner Edwards asked if uses still tied to FAA? Chair Byrd replied correct – anything that any developer does still subject to zoning restrictions and any FAA use restrictions. (Must be for aeronautical use and requires access to the runway.)

Director Seymour mentioned one of things spurring this on is that 40-acre tract had been landlocked; now with access going to Walmart/Microsoft access will be available to the site without having to cross the runway.

**ACTION ITEM:**

Chair Byrd moved that the EDC support the working group’s recommendation that the Town investigate a partnership to develop the property at the Leesburg Executive Airport under a Master Development Agreement; seconded by Commissioner Neel. Motion carried.

**9. Old Business**

None.

**10. New Business**

**Board and Commission Liaisons** Discussion regarding how best to approach effectively. There are more commissions and boards than EDC members; however, ED is part of lots of things going on at these boards/commissions at different times. Want to make certain EDC remains connected to other areas.

Discussion regarding opportunity for Commissioners to speak one on one or two on two with liaisons from other boards/commissions. Biggest concerns have when any committee members use personal email and reaching out to other members, they see that as building consensus out of the public eye.

**ACTION ITEM:**

Chair Byrd mentioned that he could contact board and commission chairs to advise them of what the EDC wishes to do. He suggested that the EDC look at the list of boards and commissions and designate one with which each commissioner wishes to liaise. Chair Byrd indicated that liaisons will be assigned at next month’s meeting.

**Reporting for Projects, Task Forces, and Sub-Committees**

Chair Byrd introduced for discussion the assigning of projects, task forces, sub-committees at retreats. Commissioner Edwards would appreciate a brief, monthly update on what the commissioners are doing. Vice Chair Youkers suggested the submission of a couple of sentences before the meeting so that questions may be raised.

Chair Byrd mentioned that meeting packet updates be emailed to Director Seymour on the Wednesday before the meeting. If a topic requires a presentation, please advise Chair Byrd and he will add it to the agenda.

**Small Business Awards Event of May 4, 2022**

Due to a conflict of date with the Leesburg Small Business Awards event, motion by Chair Byrd that the May 4, 2022, EDC Meeting be rescheduled to May 11, 2022; seconded by Commissioner Edwards. Motion carried.

Director Seymour confirmed that votes for the Small Business Awards be submitted to Melanie Scoggins via email by Friday, April 8, 2022.

**11. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Edwards mentioned an interesting presentation by Karl Gustafson and an architectural group out of Charleston and its relevancy to the Main Street Program conversations.

Commissioner Neel expressed her excitement in the redevelopment of the airport and mentioned that the EDC is working on a lot of positive issues.

Commissioner Miller mentioned an underlying sentiment of the Town not wishing to continue outdoor dining and believes that this program is a huge economic development driver. He expressed a desire to keep an eye on this for the restaurateurs of the Town.

12. **Chairman's Comments**

Chair Byrd encourages downtown businesses to talk to the EDC, and that word should be passed along among restaurateurs. He appreciated the good conversations of the meeting.

13. **Adjournment**

Motion by Chair Byrd to adjourn the meeting at 9:25p.m.; seconded by Commissioner Neel. Motion carried.