



**Leesburg Economic Development Commission**  
**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING**  
**Town Hall – Council Chamber**  
**February 7, 2024 – 7:00p.m.**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Adoption of the Agenda**
- 4. Approval of Minutes**
  - a. January 3, 2024
  - b. January 25, 2024 Work Session
- 5. Petitioners (10 minutes each)**
- 6. Liaison Comments (5 minutes)**
- 7. Liaisons to Other Commissions and Committees**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Airport Commission</li><li>b. Board of Architectural Review</li><li>c. Board of Zoning Appeals</li><li>d. Diversity Commission</li><li>e. Environmental Advisory Commission</li><li>f. Parks and Recreation Commission</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>g. Planning Commission</li><li>h. Public Art Commission</li><li>i. Residential Traffic Commission</li><li>j. Technology and Communications Commission</li><li>k. Thomas Balch Library</li><li>l. Tree Commission</li></ol>
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- 8. Staff Report**
- 9. Old Business**
- 10. New Business**
  - a. Reschedule May 1, 2024 Meeting – conflict with the Leesburg Small Business Awards
  - b. Reschedule July 3, 2024 Meeting - conflict with 4<sup>th</sup> of July Holiday
  - c. FY2024 EDC Budget Discussions
- 11. Commissioner Comments (5 minutes)**
- 12. Chairman’s Comments (5 minutes)**
- 13. Adjournment**

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

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**Leesburg Economic Development Commission  
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES  
Town Hall – Lower Level Conference Room 2  
January 3, 2024**

**Commission Members Present:** Robert Cunningham, Robert Cusack, Linda McCray, Angel Miranda, Monica Pindell, Tony Tallent

**Commission Members Absent:** Jason Miller

**Staff Liaisons Present:** None

**Staff Present:** Russell Seymour, Director, Economic Development  
Melanie Scoggins, Assistant Director, Economic Development  
Allison Wood, Small Business Development & Tourism Specialist  
Elaine Turney, Administrative Associate

1. **Call to Order**  
The meeting was called to order at 7:04p.m. by Director Seymour.
2. **Roll Call**  
Director Seymour conducted the Calling of the Roll; and stated that a quorum was present.
3. **Adoption of the Agenda**  
On a motion by Commissioner Tallent seconded by Commissioner Pindell, the agenda was adopted.  
On a motion by Commissioner McCray seconded by Commissioner Tallent, the election of officers will move to Item 4.
4. **Election of 2024 EDC Officers**
  - By unanimous vote, Robert Cunningham was elected to the position of Chair
  - By unanimous vote, Linda McCray was elected to the position of Vice Chair
5. **Approval of Minutes**  
On a motion by Commissioner Cusack seconded by Commissioner Pindell, the minutes of December 6, 2023, were adopted.
6. **Petitioners**  
None.
7. **Liaison Comments**  
None.
8. **Liaisons to Other Commissions and Committees**  
Nothing to report.
9. **Staff Report**  
Parking Statistics - Director Seymour provided the EDC with additional information regarding Saturday parking statistics for First Friday Weekends.

Director Seymour mentioned working with the Leesburg Technology and Communications Commission on how to expedite and create a more business-friendly environment for those going through the process of opening a business.

Topics of discussion included:

- Expansion of online resources
- A Town group of department staff working through planning, zoning, economic development (Business Assistance Team)
- Documents will be coordinated on how to start a business
- Staff is working on a section of the DED website to provide additional information/assistance
- The goal is to make information more available, and to answer as many questions as possible

Commissioner Pindell referenced and commended Assistant Director Scoggins at the excellent assistance provided to her while opening Mocatinas in 2018. Commissioner Cusack mentioned the importance of a mentor-type program to provide guidance to those who have not previously gone through the process.

Chair Cunningham mentioned “business in a bag” being of high priority. Commissioner Pindell suggested a webpage be made available for those seeking to open a business, the need for individualization, and emphasized the importance of basic resources being available regarding fees, property taxes, and due dates. Chair Cunningham mentioned the value of building friendships and alliances.

Director Seymour initiated a discussion regarding bringing in adjunct professors to speak about subjects such as basic bookkeeping to local small businesses. Chair Cunningham mentioned the formation of a roundtable of business leaders to provide unsolicited advice. Reference was made to the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) as a resource. Commissioner Cusack mentioned that businesses are invited to quarterly HUBZone meetings to find ways to work together. Director Seymour added possible opportunity to include the Leesburg Movement.

Commissioner Tallent mentioned that downtown will be a vibrant, strong area if businesses do well. He added that instead of looking at it as helping to foster their business, we help them by being supportive. Commissioner Pindell mentioned her desire to move away from the “fend for yourself mentality.”

Director Seymour introduced discussions regarding the upcoming Planning Commission work session and asked that the EDC remain in tune with what is going on. Director Seymour was asked to speak regarding data centers, specifically one being considered at the Village at Leesburg. Discussions ensued.

#### 10. **Old Business**

Director Seymour confirmed that a request will be made for the Zoning Administrator to attend a future EDC meeting.

#### 11. **New Business**

##### **Adoption of 2024 EDC Meeting Schedule**

On a motion by Commissioner Cusack, seconded by Vice Chair McCray, the commission approved the 2024 EDC Meeting Schedule.

##### **FY2024 EDC Budget Discussions**

2024 Budget Discussions will be added to the agenda for the February 7, 2024 EDC meeting.

##### **Review of Opportunities to Expand the Leesburg Flower & Garden Show**

Director Seymour opened the floor to comments and/or suggestions. Discussions ensued.

- Ideas take time and should slowly grow
- A Flower & Garden parade (Rose parade) possibly a week before, or as a finishing touch
- “Show your floral spirit”
- A kick-off to a four-day event
- Possibility of EDC budget funds be spent in advertising or purchasing
- Tap into people that organize the Christmas/Halloween parade
- Schools in the area may show off their best flower spirit
- Reference was made to the Academy of Sciences horticulture program (Christmas plants, yearly sales)
- Think “community” and the benefit of kids participating in downtown events

- 5K run to start it up
- Beginning or ending with music
- A spelling bee
- Kids behind that with their music
- Logistics of a 5K run work
- A concert
- Closing/Opening streets parade (could have an entrance fee)
- Celebration of kids/academia
- Tie in an evening concert at ION

Director Seymour commented on the importance of using resources to bring more people to Leesburg and the benefits to the local business community.

Staff has begun having discussions with Parks and Rec staff regarding the Flower and Garden event. Ms. Wood commented that staff believes that, if done correctly, outside events would be a benefit to the festival overall. She added the importance of sharing ideas with Council so it is understood what direction they would like the Flower & Garden Show to go, however, its execution must be slow and deliberate. Parks and Recreation staff used the word “deliberate” to describe how the Flower and Garden Festival should be expanded.

Ms. Wood mentioned the Town is rightfully protective of the branding and quality of the event. Tourism-driven grants have been applied for and conversations about expansion are already being discussed within the events team. If we could be successful in adding one concert/event that would be a huge win, as the EDC needs to proceed with baby steps. Just suggesting this idea of including something as part of the Flower & Garden Show lineup is a big deal, and she suggests treading lightly and getting one win under our belt and then suggesting additional ideas to Council.

Director Seymour indicated it is part of the Economic Development Strategic Plan, and that the positive conversation of today was very good. He brought up that some of these items may end up working better for Taste rather than the Flower & Garden Show.

Ms. Wood mentioned that Linda Fountain and Kate Trask recently presented the event process to the EDC. The events team is now in the homestretch of their planning for Flower and Garden. Ms. Wood is of the opinion that they are already interested in how to expand upon the existing event, and that funneling ideas to them will be helpful in the name of collaboration.

Vice Chair McCray indicated that she has heard the comments of Ms. Wood and believes that there is an opportunity at the very end of these events to capitalize that moment, i.e., kids marching down the street capturing that wrapping-up moment. Ms. Wood mentioned that these additional ideas were just now discussed, so only the concert and 5k run were communicated to Parks and Recreation during the meeting. She added that having a small parade of kids with vendors in the street may not be met positively particularly because of the Fire Marshall. Commissioner Pindell stressed “baby steps” be taken. Vice Chair McCray believes that at the beginning or the end of an event there could be opportunities, it is dynamic, and there is room for something.

Commissioner Cusack mentioned the importance to document these ideas during a work session. Director Seymour believes we can get there, just not in three months. Chair Cunningham does not want to mess too much with success but to look through a kaleidoscope and see different views. Ms. Wood mentioned the importance of relationship building and added that we are all here to make Leesburg better.

Chair Cunningham suggested treading deliberately, but slowly and respectfully with Parks & Recreation. He is of the belief that we can do all of that but seek change; it is ok to honor the past but embrace the dynamic future as well. His wish is not to do anything to degrade the Flower & Garden Show. Commissioner Pindell mentioned “Leesburg Live” and that perhaps we come up with something of our own. Commissioner Cusack mentioned the need to keep relationships in mind. He added it is important to list ideas and establish a plan. Commissioner Pindell mentioned it does not prevent us from doing other things in other times of the year (do not tag onto existing events). Vice Chair suggested the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and holding a concert or a running race.

On a motion by Commissioner Cusack, seconded by Commissioner Pindell, an EDC Work Session has been scheduled for Thursday, January 25, 2024 at 5:00p.m.

12. **Commissioner's Comments**

Commissioner Tallent favors moving forward, branching out, and not being boxed in to one event. He expressed interest in a potential 5K running event.

Vice Chair McCray mentioned that the EDC is a group of well-rounded individuals who wish to make things great for the Town. Vice Chair McCray indicated that the Town needs to turn the page to modernize itself and overall take it to the next level.

Commissioner Pindell is happy to be a part of the EDC and believes that it is moving in the right direction, is getting things accomplished, and that it will be a good year for the group.

Commissioner Miranda was pleased about the discussions with Parks & Recreation, is happy that time is not being wasted, and that things are proceeding on the right track.

Commissioner Cusack indicated that the EDC is a great group, and he looks forward to working with everybody going forward. He mentioned that the 2024 HUBZone conference will be held in Chantilly, VA.

13. **Chairman's Comments**

Chair Cunningham thanked Commissioner Cusack for all of his work as EDC Chair in 2023 and expressed his thanks to the Staff for their well thought out and carefully crafted discussions. Chair Cunningham specifically referenced Assistant Director Scoggins for her great interaction in the Locally Leesburg videos. He expressed his appreciation to Director Seymour on his insightful comments and for speaking in reality. Chair Cunningham mentioned that the Economic Development Strategic Plan is astonishing and contains lots of riches. He seeks to concentrate efforts on things such as a town square, a hotel within walking distance to town, a town crier, and various music artists playing in the town square. Guitarist Michael Fath was referenced as an example of a potential artist to be considered.

14. **Adjournment**

On a motion by Vice Chair McCray, seconded by Commissioner Pindell, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48p.m.



**Leesburg Economic Development Commission  
WORK SESSION  
Economic Development Department Offices  
15 North King Street, Leesburg, VA 20176  
January 25, 2024**

**Commission Members Present:** Robert Cunningham, Linda McCray, Jason Miller, Angel Miranda, Monica Pindell, Tony Tallent

**Electronic Participation:** Robert Cusack

**Commission Members Absent:** None

**Staff Liaisons Present:** None

**Staff Present:** Russell Seymour, Director, Economic Development  
Elaine Turney, Administrative Associate

1. **Call to Order**  
The meeting was called to order at 5:07p.m. by Director Seymour.
2. **Roll Call**  
Director Seymour conducted the Calling of the Roll; and stated that a quorum was present.
3. **Adoption of the Agenda**  
On a motion by Vice Chair McCray, seconded by Commissioner Pindell, the agenda was adopted.
4. **Petitioners**  
None.
5. **Review of Opportunities to Expand Upon Leesburg Special Events**  
Chair Cunningham would like to see an “ah ha” signature event which would not interfere with Parks and Recreation - an event that is something different and unique as a community to get Leesburg’s name on the map. He suggested the EDC use the time over several meetings to build upon different ideas.

**TASK HEADLINE:** Envision an unforgettable signature event, happening or a combination of both, that celebrates the people, cultures, arts, tastes, commerce, proximity to Washington, DC, and the historical significance that is the Leesburg Experience.

Ideas were presented and discussions ensued:

**Chair Cunningham**

Signature Events – “I Wish” (i.e., pie-eating contest)

- Annual Title Holder Contest
- Two-word Title for Event
- Celebrity Endorsement

- Center around 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Labor Day, or Memorial Day

#### **Commissioner Tallent**

- Embrace what is already there, digital passport
- Saturday morning 5K – followed by a Beer Crawl
- Saturday afternoon – “Shop Leesburg” – ensure access to stores
- Saturday evening Concerts
- Tally Ho – Rock 80’s
- ION – Country
- Get Out of Town – Wine Tour
- Opening and Closing Event

#### **Commissioner Pindell**

- Shuttle Bus Tours – pick-up and drop-off Downtown (return downtown to shop)
- Leesburg Olympics – Family Focus
- Chess Contest
- Commissioner Pindell believes Labor Day would be a huge opportunity
- Seek to find Leesburg’s niche and to be the best it can be

#### **Vice Chair McCray**

- Optimize on the great things going on in Leesburg with focus on how much is happening
- Make it a grand campaign
- Promote, publicize, and make it a big deal
- Create an intoxicating hook
- “Leesburg X”
- “Our Leesburg Academics”
- Leesburg Olympics – Family Focus

#### **Commissioner Miranda**

- Do all events contain beer, wine, and alcohol?
- Reference was made to “Taste Leesburg” events

#### **Commissioner Miller**

- Food and Wine Festival that celebrates food and drink in our area
- A marathon or triathlon and ideas off of that
- A Great Gatsby style gala at Morven Park
- Two-day downtown music festival
- Something specific; off the beaten path
- Find Leesburg’s niche then be the best

#### **Commissioner Cusack**

- Identify - an event with young families and kids
- Family-oriented/generational
- Incorporating it into what we’re doing – directed towards the goal
- Leesburg being 25 miles from Washington, DC – the idea of “got to go to Leesburg”
- An event we can handle (not too big)
- Obtaining focus groups

#### **Chair Cunningham**

- A celebrity endorsement - a singer arriving day before as an MC and to promote their event
- Opening and closing ceremony events
- Centering around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July with the town square as ground zero
- How to involve other age demographics
- Draw from the huge tourism base of Washington, DC

- Span over a period of days; culinary and arts; a theme - call it something
- Victorian throwback/New Orleans
- A symbol that ties it all together

Director Seymour mentioned the successful Leesburg Crossroads Music Festival. Discussions ensued regarding marketing and what Leesburg is known for. Since Leesburg is centrally located between Washington, DC, Baltimore, rolling hills, skiing, and wineries, focus may be placed on how to attract visitors to stay in Leesburg.

6. **Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Pindell mentioned that the EDC is headed in the right direction with great ideas. She indicated that a little of each should be taken to get one solid event and drive it consistently.

Commissioner Miller suggested that the event should have mass appeal (music) and be specific to Leesburg; he is in favor of a downtown music festival.

Commissioner Cusack indicated that there were good ideas, and that the Town could become the thing – the “Leesburg Festival.”

Commissioner Miranda liked all the ideas, especially the events. He suggested ranking the ideas, focusing on the top ones and back-pocket others for weighing in the future.

Vice Chair McCray indicated she is big on leveraging on existing systems; be creative/inclusive of everyone. She added that Leesburg is historic, and its landscape is what it is known for.

7. **Chairman’s Comments**

Chair Cunningham believes that the ranking process is going to be important. He realizes that all cannot be done, but of need is a “Mother Ship” (incorporate many different initiatives, but do not overblow it). He mentioned the importance to identify what Leesburg is, or the community may not be supportive. Chair Cunningham wishes to remain respectful of the past and history and be engaging and dynamic. He recommends being cohesive, organized, and selective on what is recommended to Council.

8. **Adjournment**

On a motion by Vice Chair McCray, seconded by Commissioner Pindell, the meeting was adjourned at 6:32p.m.





## Leesburg Economic Development Commission

### 2024 REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING SCHEDULE

<u>Date/Time</u>		
Wednesday, 01/03/2024	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	
Wednesday, 02/07/2024	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	
Wednesday, 03/06/2024	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	
Wednesday, 04/03/2024	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	
Wednesday, 05/01/2024	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	*Reschedule due to Business Awards
Wednesday, 06/05/2024	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	
Wednesday, 07/03/2024	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	*Reschedule due to Holiday
Wednesday, 08/07/2024	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	
Wednesday, 09/04/2024	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	
Wednesday, 10/02/2024	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	
Wednesday, 11/06/2024	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	
Wednesday, 12/04/2024	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	



Leesburg Economic Development Commission  
2024 EDC Liaisons to Other  
Commissions and Committees

<b>Commission</b>	
Airport Commission	Linda McCray
Board of Architectural Review	Monica Pindell
Board of Zoning Appeals	Robert Cunningham
Diversity Commission	Linda McCray
Environmental Advisory Commission	<b><i>Vacant</i></b>
Parks & Recreation Commission	Jason Miller
Planning Commission	<b><i>Vacant</i></b>
Public Art Commission	Monica Pindell
Residential Traffic Commission	<b><i>Vacant</i></b>
Technology & Communications	Robert Cusack
Thomas Balch Library	Robert Cusack
Tree Commission	<b><i>Vacant</i></b>