



**Leesburg Economic Development Commission
RESCHEDULED MONTHLY MEETING**

Town Hall – Lower-Level Conference Room 2

7:00pm

September 4, 2024

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Adoption of the Agenda**
- 4. Approval of Minutes**
 - a. August 7, 2024
 - b. June 5, 2024 (Revised) – To approve remote participation of Linda McCray due to illness
- 5. Petitioners (10 minutes each)**
- 6. Liaison Comments (5 minutes)**
- 7. Liaisons to Other Commissions and Committees**
- 8. Staff Report**
- 9. Old Business**
 - a. Technology and Tourism Zones
 - b. Downtown Improvement - Update
- 10. New Business**
- 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.

Please note that the Town of Leesburg uses Laserfiche, a third-party application, as its online agenda packet repository. Access to the documents in Laserfiche requires the use of a modern web browser such as Chrome, Firefox, or Edge.



**Leesburg Economic Development Commission
MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
Town Hall – Lower-Level Conference Room 2
August 7, 2024**

Commission Members Present: Robert Cunningham, Robert Cusack, Jason Miller, Angel Miranda, Monica Pindell, Tony Tallent

Commission Members Absent: None

Commission Members Remote: Linda McCray

Staff Liaisons Present: None

Staff Present: Russell Seymour, Director, Economic Development
Melanie Scoggins, Assistant Director, Economic Development
Elaine Turney, Administrative Associate

1. **Call to Order**
The meeting was called to order at 7:00p.m. by Chair Cunningham.
2. **Roll Call**
Director Seymour conducted the Calling of the Roll and stated that a quorum was present.
3. **Adoption of Remote Participation in the Meeting of Chair McCray**
On a motion by Commissioner Tallent, seconded by Commissioner Cusack, all were in favor of remote participation in the meeting of Vice Chair McCray.
4. **Adoption of the Agenda**
On a motion by Commissioner Cusack, seconded by Commissioner Miranda, the agenda was adopted.
5. **Approval of Minutes**
On a motion by Commissioner Tallent, seconded by Commissioner Cusack, the minutes of July 2, 2024, were adopted.
6. **Petitioners**
None.
7. **Liaison Comments**
None.
8. **Liaisons to Other Commissions and Committees**
Nothing to report.
9. **Staff Report**
Leesburg Visitor’s Guide
Director Seymour presented the new Leesburg Visitor’s Guide. This guide has been provided to and will be featured in visitor centers along major Interstate routes going into and out of Virginia. DED staff is also looking into the opportunity to set up a Leesburg display area welcoming centers.

Harry Potter: A Forbidden Forest Experience

Director Seymour noted that the Harry Potter Experience will be returning to Morven Park this October. Tickets for the event are presently on sale and promotions will consist of ads and radio. Morven Park has assured staff that there will be more opportunities to work with WB this year. We will be focusing on highlighting the Town as a destination for both before and after your visit to the park.

10. Old Business

Expedited Review Process

Chair Cunningham expressed his frustration at the length of time it takes for approvals to be obtained and seeks recommendations that could advance the expedited review process. He discussed the idea of putting together a panel among Town and outside experts (a third-party review) and mentioned how Anne Arundel County cut the application time in half. Chair Cunningham believes it must be a thoughtful, careful, and deliberate process with some discipline.

Potential Incentive Zones - Presentation by Director Seymour

Discussions ensued regarding Director Seymour's presentation on Tourism and Technology Zones in various areas of Virginia, the Tourism Development Financing Program and projects that may benefit from these programs. Staff presented the appropriate sections of the Code of Virginia to better explain how these programs work. The EDC remains focused on the ability for the Town to provide for an expedited review process for businesses. Staff is of the opinion that this could be incorporated into one or both of these incentive zones. Staff will be providing a more detailed presentation in September.

Chair Cunningham mentioned that all municipalities suffer from ideas such as "we've never done that before, we need more people, it won't fly." Chair Cunningham seeks a pathway to showcase the Town of Leesburg and indicated his intent is not to disenfranchise the EDC from Town employees but wishes the commission to think more about what it can do.

Vice Chair McCray expressed her disappointment of the Town's recent decision to turn down the running race and suggested a joint commission meeting with Parks & Recreation with the intent to compose a resolution to Council on how we can do some of these events vs. how we cannot.

Director Seymour indicated he would speak with the Parks & Recreation staff liaison and inquire how best to make this happen.

11. New Business

Downtown Improvement Area

- Concern expressed over the appearance of downtown Leesburg starting to look "shabby."
- Director Seymour has been asked by Town Manager Kaj Dentler to look into this.
- Team will consist of staff from the offices of the Town Finance, Public Works, Historical Preservation and DED.
- Opposition expressed to a special tax district.
- Director Seymour will meet with staff from Public Works, BAR, and Finance to discuss trash pick-up rules to timely remove bins from sidewalks.
- Vacant buildings in Town (some redeveloped projects have remained on the books for many years with little to no work).
- Concerns were expressed regarding the Town's focus on BAR's enforcement of regulations.
- Discussions regarding beautification of the Town.

12. Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Miller inquired as to how Council is made aware of what goes on at a commission meeting. He is in favor of making real recommendations to Council in the future. Commissioner Miller inquired as to the commercial revenue numbers (meals tax) presented at last month's meeting. Director Seymour will follow-up with the Finance Department and provide that information to the EDC.

Commissioner Miranda mentioned that the meeting provided fine examples of things that can be recommended to Council. He was pleased at the amount of information presented and looks forward to hearing more next month.

Commissioner Tallent is interested in what the EDC can do to help business owners, as only they are aware of their business needs. Commissioner Tallent liked seeing what the various municipalities are doing, how it is working for them, and how the information may be put together in a package.

Commissioner Cusack expressed his appreciation of the information presented by Director Seymour. He looks forward to a conversation on tourism and technology zones, and mentioned the need to advertise how much the Town helps businesses. Commissioner Cusack referenced a recent trash issue at his place of business and how Director Seymour successfully handled the problem.

13. Chairman's Comments

Chair Cunningham mentioned the upcoming Leesburg Taste Festival and added that the Leesburg Visitor's Guide is great. Chair Cunningham will coordinate with Vice Chair McCray and the Chair of the Parks & Recreation Commission to schedule a conversation with staff. Chair Cunningham indicated that Director Seymour's presentation on tourism and technical zones was outstanding and mentioned his excitement at the downtown improvement area (gem of Leesburg). He expressed his thanks to the Economic Development team for their great work.

14. Adjournment

On a motion by Commissioner Miranda, seconded by Commissioner Cusack, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45p.m.



**Leesburg Economic Development Commission
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
Town Hall – Council Chamber
June 5, 2024 (Revised)**

Commission Members Present: Robert Cunningham, Jason Miller, Angel Miranda, Monica Pindell

Commission Member – Remote: Linda McCray

Commission Members Absent: Rubert Cusack, Tony Tallant

Staff Liaisons Present: None

Staff Present: Allison Wood, Small Business Development & Tourism Specialist
Elaine Turney, Administrative Associate

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03p.m. by Allison Wood.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Wood conducted the Calling of the Roll and stated that a quorum was present.

On a motion by Commissioner Miranda, seconded by Commissioner Pindell, approval was given for Vice Chair McCray to attend the meeting remotely due to illness.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

On a motion by Commissioner Miller, seconded by Commissioner Pindell, the agenda was adopted.

4. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Commissioner Miranda, seconded by Commissioner Pindell, the minutes of May 9, 2024 were adopted.

5. Petitioners

None.

6. Liaison Comments

7. Liaisons to Other Commissions and Committees

Chair Cunningham mentioned that the next Board of Zoning Appeals meeting is scheduled for June 18th; no agenda items have been indicated.

8. Staff Report

Discussions ensued regarding:

- Business Assistance Team (a collaborative project among multiple Town departments); Melanie Scoggins is the team leader
- Brochure launching the Business Assistance Team
- Wayfinding Task Group working on Wayfinding assessments

- New standards on the Wayfinding signs
- May need to go to Council to discuss increasing the scope
- Where's Waldo Program – Birch Tree Bookstore
 - Program encourages tourism and residents to get out and hunt for Waldo
 - Bingo Cards featuring participating businesses will be provided
- 4th of July Parade – Birch Tree and other businesses will be included and dressed up as Waldo

9. **Old Business**

Crossroads Music Festival

EDC members discussed and agreed that the \$1,200 contribution would be a donation, not a sponsorship. Motion by Chair Cunningham that the EDC make a \$1,200 donation to the Crossroads Music Festival, seconded by Commissioner Miranda.

10. **New Business**

Chair Cunningham referenced the May 20, 2024 letter from Council Member Todd Cimino-Johnson encouraging community investment in downtown Leesburg. Also referenced was Council Member Cimino-Johnson's May 19, 2024 Community View article in Loudoun Now.

Expedited Review

Chair Cunningham expressed the importance of being responsive to the needs of the Leesburg business community. Chair Cunningham mentioned that anything the EDC can do to make it attractive for businesses to expand their operation and ease the burden for businesses to grow and thrive. Chair Cunningham is in favor of establishing a task force to research and ask questions. Commissioner Miller mentioned being very careful to avoid conflict, however, sometimes conflict is the fastest way to solve a problem.

- Ms. Wood referenced Council Member Cimino-Johnson's article
- Establishment of a tourism zone and a technology zone
- There is no downside in establishing a tourism zone
- Ways to collect data regarding number of zoning applications and how many are approved

11. **Commissioner's Comments**

Commissioner Pindell mentioned it was great that the EDC can find ways to work better for the community; and it was great about the Wayfinding signs.

Commissioner Miranda is in favor of the donation to the Crossroads Music Festival. He referenced the City of Frederick, Maryland and its "One Stop Shop" program for same day permitting which expedites the smallest requests. Commissioner Miranda would like to continue discussions on holding a community event. He thanked Ms. Wood for her great job.

Commissioner Miller mentioned it would be huge to help Town businesses with the permitting process; and believes there would be massive opportunities there. Commissioner Miller has heard that it is hard to do business in Leesburg and stressed the importance of a "bring your business here....we will help you" attitude.

Vice Chair McCray indicated the discussions were great and very important.

12. **Chairman's Comments**

Chair Cunningham mentioned he and Vice Chair McCray will provide feedback regarding the Boards and Commissions Network Event. Chair Cunningham mentioned the AAA Credit Rating of the Town, and the Town is fiscally prudent and financially sound. He mentioned interest in an October 13th race which is currently being evaluated by the Town. Chair Cunningham expressed his thanks to staff.

13. **Adjournment**

On a motion by Commissioner Pindell, seconded by Commissioner Miranda, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50p.m.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Remaining Meetings in 2024

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday, 09/04/2024 7-9pm

Lower Level Conference Room 2

OCTOBER

Wednesday, 10/02/2024 7-9pm

Council Chamber

NOVEMBER

Wednesday, 11/06/2024 7-9pm

Council Chamber

DECEMBER

Wednesday, 12/04/2024 7-9pm

Council Chamber



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

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