



CITY OF FAIRFAX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, June 2nd, 2021 6:00 PM
Via Electronic Participation

Virtual Meeting via Zoom, Fairfax City, VA 22030

Commissioners Present:

Chair Jeff Hermann
Commissioner Soledad Portilla
Commissioner Tom Ross
Commissioner Kathleen Paley
Commissioner Beth Young
Commissioner Fred Cornett
Commissioner Paula Sorrell

Others Present:

Christopher Bruno, Director for Fairfax City's Office of Economic Development
Danette Nguyen, Assistant Director of Economic Development/Programs Manager, Fairfax City
Patricia Lopez, Communications Fellow, Fairfax City
Matthew Easley, Operations Manager, Fairfax City
David Hodgkins, Chief Financial Officer, Fairfax City
Patti Innocenti, Procurement Manager, Fairfax City
Gisele Stolz, Business Incubator Director, Mason Enterprise Center - Fairfax
Andrew Wilson, Project Manager
Christine Johnson, Director of Real Estate Assessment

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm by Chair Hermann.

2. Approval of May Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Paley made a motion to approve the minutes from the May meeting. Commissioner Ross seconded the motion. A roll call vote was then initiated. Those who said aye were Commissioner Cornett, Commissioner Ross, Commissioner Young, Commissioner Sorrell, Commissioner Portilla, Commissioner Paley and Chair Hermann.

3. Financial Report

Commissioner Cornett provides financial report. Process of searching for a consultant to get finances in order is still ongoing but hopes that next week will end their search with a consultant hired. Patti Innocenti speaks briefly regarding recent RFP. Discussions were conducted with highest offeror of RFP to acquire clarification and understand scale of operation parallel to their proposal. Response is due next Friday.

4. MEC Report/Update

Gisele Stolz provides updates on the MEC. For 2021 webinars and workshops, report shown is as follows:

- Total Q1 Registrants: 562
- Total Q1 Attendees: 326
- Total Q2 Registrants: 385
- Total Q2 Attendees: 208

More workshops/lectures planned in the future for the MEC. Stolz requests the EDA to recommend speakers who can present at the MEC to add a depth of insightful conversation outside of business building skills.

Commissioner Cornett asks if there are particular topics/ideas that the MEC are looking for when choosing speakers. Stolz responds that there is no particular topic; but, names of speakers from companies that may be

larger or recognizable are preferable. Additionally, topics must be business-centric (i.e. tips for business growth).

As of May 2021, there is 71% occupancy with 127 clients (63 distinct residential clients; 60 virtual clients). Gross profit for MEC-Fairfax from July 2020 to May 2021 is \$754,849.54 while net operating income is (-) \$135,436.97. Stolz states that in this current fiscal year (FY21), the MEC-Fairfax will be experiencing a profit loss. FY21 YTD MEC-Fairfax Income Sources includes MEC Revenue, City of Fairfax Contributions (including Marketing) and GMU Contributions.

Commissioner Paley asks if future MEC financial updates can include a detailed report on any additional contributions from the City of Fairfax made to the MEC to support its growth or contribution towards its “greater venture.” Nguyen seconds Commissioner Paley’s request given that the contributions (grants funded by the CARES program) made by the City to tenants in the MEC was *under the condition* that they stayed at the MEC; therefore, the EDA requests that these numbers also be provided in the next MEC update, if possible.

5. MEC Relocation Update (Public)

Commissioner Paley provides a brief overview on the relocation of the MEC. Committee is currently reviewing proposals for a new location and will soon select a top candidate soon.

6. Draper’s Construction Update

Project Manager Wilson presents updates on the new Draper’s restaurant and its construction process. Currently, Draper’s construction has all walls and most windows installed with roof being weather-stable. Main dining room has a cloud ceiling visible with plumbing currently being installed. Kitchen area is being built with hood being installed. Finally, side that faces Draper’s house is being considered for City mural. General contractors have had some personnel changes with a new site Superintendent and Project Manager. Delivery of brick is delayed; expected to be in May but still has not arrived by the time of the EDA meeting. New construction schedule shows opening date to be in August 2021 and Verizon easement issue is currently being investigated.

Bruno asks Wilson, on behalf of City Council, if there is a ballpark estimate or proposed opening date for the Draper’s restaurant. Wilson replies that in his experience, the construction appears to be about 50% done, will most likely be done by Labor Day. An update will be given to Bruno for City Council soon with exact dates, if needed.

7. EDO Office Update

MOA and MEC relocation is taking substantial amount of effort from EDO. EDO is in process of getting two (2) employee positions posted. Currently working with finance team regarding City’s potential allocation of American Recovery Fund. Potential programs and funding updates/details will be given later as they become available.

The Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance, NoVA EDA, will be partnering with the EDO on a number of projects; beneficial partnership, given that the NoVA EDA receives a lot of press coverage.

EDA will be returning to in-person meetings starting July 2021, more information will be made available.

a. Programs

Fairfax City Restaurant Week had been extended from May 24 through 31 to June 1 through June 6, 2021. Office Evolution Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will take place on Thursday, June 10, 2021 at 4 PM and will be livestreamed on Instagram and Facebook for the public audience. Sunday Sessions, an event in partnership with the Fairfax City Parks and Recreation Department, is an outdoor concert at Old Town Plaza that will be held on the third Sunday from June through October. This event encourages traffic to Old Town Plaza as well as supporting local businesses. Old Town Fairfax City Crawl will be held on June 26, 2021 from 11:30 AM – 5:30pm. This year’s crawl includes retail and service businesses to support them after having been affected by the pandemic. Finally, in partnership with the City of Fairfax Schools, a Katherine Johnson Middle School StoryWalk will take place. During the month of August (8/1-8/31), students will be able to walk through Fairfax City and interact

with the business community by reading pages from the book displayed in business store front windows. Students will learn more about Katherine Johnson and a chance to win a gift card from participating Fairfax City businesses.

b. Media

A video for the Fairfax City ReConnected Grant program will soon be finalized in the upcoming weeks and will feature the Gallant Media Account who used their CARES funds for the Tree for Life campaign. Patriots in the City video that welcomes students back to George Mason University/Fairfax City and will highlight fun activities for them to do in the City when they're not on campus.

This Friday, Fox 5 DC will be featuring the City, including one that showcases Director Bruno at Old Town Plaza. Three restaurants: Capital Ale House, High Side and Smash'd Creamery will be featured live at the Sherwood Plaza along with other Fairfax City businesses.

Commissioner Young asks if the EDA has any responsibilities at the 4th of July events. To which, Nguyen replies that, the EDO will be reaching out with more details on how the EDA can participate at the booth to speak about the EDA's responsibilities.

8. Election of Officers

The nominating committee nominates the following individuals for EDA officers:

- Chair: Kathleen Paley
- Vice-Chair: Jeff Hermann
- Treasurer: Fred Cornett
- Secretary: Beth Young

Commissioner Ross made a motion to adopt the slate. Commissioner Young seconded the motion. A roll call vote was then initiated. Those who said aye were Commissioner Cornett, Commissioner Sorrell, Commissioner Ross, Commissioner Young, Commissioner Portilla, Commissioner Paley and Chair Hermann.

9. Public Comments

Jennifer Rose of the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce (CFCC) comments that EDA and EDO is invited to pre-4th of July parade breakfast.

10. Closed Session Meeting of the EDA

11. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Next regular meeting of the EDA is scheduled for the 7, of July 2021.