



CITY OF FAIRFAX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday November 3, 2021 6:00 PM
Virtual Via Zoom

10455 Armstrong St, Fairfax City, VA 22030

Commissioners Present:

Chair Kathleen Paley
Vice-Chair Jeff Hermann
Commissioner Tom Ross
Commissioner Beth Young
Commissioner Fred Cornett
Commissioner Soledad Portilla
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
Matthew Easley, Operations and Program Manager, Fairfax City
Trinh Scott, Assistant Program Manager, Fairfax City
Andrew Wilson, Project Manager, Fairfax City
Gisele Stolz, MEC- Fairfax Director, George Mason University

1. Call to Order

- a. The meeting was called to order by Chair Kathleen Paley.

2. Adoption of October Meeting Minutes

- a. All Commissioners voted in favor to adopt the October Meeting Minutes

3. Mason Enterprise Center

- a. MEC-Fairfax Program Director Stolz provides update on financials and programs:
 - i. States she just received financials and that the center is losing money on the operations.
 1. Occupancy went from 70%-73%
 - ii. Discussion on abatement if basic needs are not met in the new MEC-Fairfax
 1. Director Bruno highlights a process to address these issues
 - a. Stolz discusses issues currently being had in the MEC-Fairfax which results in the loss of tenants.
 - iii. Stolz discusses the "seemingly solid core" of tenants that are interested and feeling positive about the move.
 1. There are also tenants that find it advantageous to "jump ship" currently, says Stolz.
 - iv. 11 workshops coming up, says Stolz
 - v. Discussion on attracting, keeping and supporting exiting companies ensues with Commissioner Sorrell, Stolz and Commissioner Ross.
- b. Relocation Update provided by Project Manager Andrew Wilson
 - i. Received a copy of most recent set of plans today
 1. Another meeting scheduled for Tuesday, which initiates a ten-day period to review and make final changes.
 - a. Post ten-day period, architects will request a signature on all plans and move forward with electrical/mechanical and telecoms detailing.
- c. Sorrell thanks the EDA for supporting the investor event and drawing outside and angel investing.
 - i. Planning for next year insinuated larger participation.

4. Draper's Construction Update

- a. PM Wilson states that the two artists for mural and selfie were both on site to visualize area.
 - i. Commissioner Cornett and Ross attended as well and saw the inside of the building.
- b. Reports that Sugar Mill sent a report today stating that project completion is December 29th.
 - i. Washington gas must install service line + meter, which is taking longer than expected.
 - I. Anticipated update tomorrow.
 - ii. Dominion completed their underground work.
 - iii. PM Wilson to meet with COX to establish broadband.
- c. Shared pictures of progress of inside and outside of building.
 - i. States that the interior is progressing nicely.
- d. Commissioner Cornett follows up with update on purchasing of QuickBooks.
- e. Director Bruno reminds commissioners that lease modifications might have to be made given the opening timeline.
- f. Mural update by Bruno: It will begin next week.

5. EDA Budget Update

- a. Chair Paley asks about a citizen post online requesting information on the distribution of ARPA funds.
 - i. Bruno discusses two businesses that are not open due to lack of employees.
 1. States that guidance has not been received on how these funds can be used.
 - a. He describes a proposal he sent to The City about a month ago totaling in ~\$925k regarding ARPA funding.
 - i. States that more conversations will be happening to clarify how these distributions will be directed.
 - b. Commissioner Sorrell suggests using GMU students in the City for part-time employment.
 - i. Proposes the use of handshake to attract college student attention to City employment needs

6. EDO Office Update

- a. Director Bruno highlights the EDO office move to the WillowWood Complex
 - i. Slated for 1/1; discussed supply chain issues and the functionality of the space for future meetings.
- b. Programs Update by Assistant Director Nguyen
 - i. Old Town Fairfax Fall Crawl – 120 check ins was a record turnout for this event.
 - ii. Small Business Saturday – EDO is a neighborhood champion.
 1. Activities include a City-Wide Elf Hunt, giveaways, Santa writing station, gift wrap station, snacks, and Santa himself.
 - a. Asks for volunteers to assist.
 - iii. Kickoff Meeting for RW
 1. Program in March and in August.
 2. Reaching out beginning next week for business enrollment
 3. Discusses facets of the program.

7. NOVA Labs Update

- a. Chair Paley reports that she and Co-Chair Hermann attended NOVA Labs 10 year celebration.
 - i. Spoke of enthusiasm and general positivity during event.

8. Public Comment

- a. None

9. Adjourn

Next regular meeting of the EDA is scheduled for the December 1st, 2021.