



**Minutes**  
**JOINT WORK SESSION**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**Bedford Area Welcome Center**  
**October 10, 2017**

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- 5:00 p.m.**                    **Welcome & Introductions**
- Board Chairman – Mr. Curry Martin
  - EDA Chairman – Mr. Wyatt Walton
- 5:05 – 5:15 p.m.**           **Economic Development Priorities of County/Town**
- Traci Blido, Economic Development Director
- 5:15 – 5:30 p.m.**           **Economic Development Priorities of Region**
- Jamie Glass, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance (LRBA)
- 5:30 – 5:45 p.m.**           **Economic Development Priorities of Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP)**
- Faith McClintic, Facilitator
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- 5:45 p.m.**                    **Break for dinner**
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- 6:00 – 7 p.m.**                **Strategic Planning exercise – how does Bedford County fit in?**
- How do we fit into the state, the regional picture, and with GO Virginia? What are our strengths? Ms. McClintic will facilitate a discussion that will provide a foundation for our strategic priorities moving forward.
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- 7:00 p.m.**                    **Adjourn Joint Meeting**

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**5:00 P.M.**

**Board of Supervisors:** Curry Martin, Chairman, District 2; Steve Wilkerson, District 3; John Sharp, District 4; Tommy Scott, District 5; Andy Dooley, District 6; and Kevin Willis, District 7

**Absent:** Bill Thomasson, Vice-Chairman, District 1

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**Economic Development Authority:** Wyatt H. Walton, III, Chairman, District 3; Mickey Johnson, District 2; Dennis V. Novitzke, District 1; Matthew J. Braud, District 4; Jim Lusk, District 5; Kelly Harmony, District 6; and James T. Messier, District 7

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**Staff:** County Administrator Carl Boggess, Deputy County Administrator Reid Wodicka, County Attorney Patrick Skelley, Economic Development Director Traci Blido, Intern Thomas Messier, and Executive Assistant Brigitte Luckett

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**Guests:** Ann Blair Miller, GoVirginia; Faith McClintic, VEDP; and Jamie Glass, LRBA

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Economic Development Director Traci Blido welcomed everyone and stated that during the meeting she would review County and Town priorities; Jamie Glass from the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance would review regional priorities, and Faith McClintic from VEDP would cover state priorities. Mrs. Blido then turned the meeting over to EDA Chairman Wyatt Walton for opening comments.

Chairman Walton welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked the EDA members and the Board of Supervisors for their work over the past year. He said there is tremendous economic development potential in Bedford, and asked that the Board of Supervisors let the EDA know if the Supervisors have any input on the direction the EDA should take.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Curry Martin thanked the EDA for their efforts over the past year, noting that it's difficult to attract new business. He said you can't bring in new business if you don't have adequate housing, schools, and infrastructure, so the whole picture needs to be looked at if we are to succeed in bringing new business to Bedford.

Mrs. Blido then reviewed a few statistics with the Board, noting that Bedford has experienced a 4% growth rate since the 2010 census. Our unemployment rate is in line with the state average, but lower than surrounding localities; educational attainment (graduating high school, achieving higher education, etc.) is at 88.7%; we've had a 20% increase in tax revenue for machinery and tools; and we have the highest rate in our region for company start-ups, with 119 reported last year. Mrs. Blido also stated that we have seen increases in sales tax, occupancy tax and meals tax. Regionally, wages and per capita

income are also slightly higher than surrounding areas. She stated that the four primary goals of the EDA's mission are supporting the retention and expansion of existing business; attracting new economic opportunities; cultivating a skilled workforce; and increasing awareness among target groups about economic development assets. She also noted the businesses that have benefitted from FY2017 incentives, resulting in 140 new jobs. Mrs. Blido stated that the Southern Virginia Innovation Center (SOVA), which provides television whitespace/broadband technology, is now operating a pilot program out of Bedford.

Mrs. Blido then briefly touched on some of the challenges her department is working on, which included TEVA Pharmaceuticals (closing in 2020), Valley Processing (which is closed); having more sites and buildings prospect ready; and the Liberty University acquisition of CAER in New London. She briefly touched on the tours of local businesses she has planned with the Bedford One Program. *(The entirety of Mrs. Blido's presentation will be kept on file in the County Administration office for public review.)*

Jamie Glass, Deputy Director of Economic Development from the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance (LRBA), addressed the Board. Ms. Glass gave a brief update of some of the Bedford projects they are working on, which included their efforts in finding a new owner for TEVA. She also touched on some of their national marketing activities such as the craft brewer conference, the Select USA summit, consultant and site selector trips, the Pack Expo in Chicago, trade and industry advertisements, and website links. Ms. Glass noted that they track leads so they know which trips have been successful bringing businesses to the area. She stated that they are also doing a supply chain study, which will help in developing plans to create pad ready sites and in identifying grant opportunities. Throughout her presentation, Ms. Glass and Mrs. Blido answered brief clarifying questions from the group. *(The entirety of Ms. Glass' presentation will be kept on file in the County Administration office for public review.)*

Mrs. Faith McClintic with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) then addressed the Board with a presentation, beginning with a brief review of her work history. She then reviewed VEDP's 5-year strategic plan and annual operating plan, which will be completed by December 1<sup>st</sup>. She outlined the process they have been following to develop these plans, the strengths and weaknesses/challenges which have been identified, and the impact sequestration has had on economic development in this state. Mrs. McClintic stated the National Tax Foundation has done significant studies across the county and done an analysis showing that, in businesses that are capital intensive, it will cost businesses more in machinery and tools taxes in Virginia than it may in other state in the country. She then reviewed a number of statistics regarding job growth, which has slowed since the recession, and briefly touched on VEDP's drafted aspiration goals. She noted that restoring Virginia to its previous position as a leading employer in the county (as it was years ago) will be a challenge, as it involves adding approximately 75,000 jobs per year.

Mrs. McClintic then reviewed the collaboration between VEDP and Go Virginia, noting that Go Virginia has significantly more funding (than VEDP) for site and product development. She stated that Go Virginia and VEDP analysis align fairly well, with a focus on workforce development and infrastructure. She stated that “middle-market” companies, such as software, distribution, food, automotive, chemicals, shared services, etc., do well in our region, and noted that the Region 2 initiatives were aligned with VEDP’s core strategies. Mrs. McClintic also touched on Region 2 strengths, opportunities and challenges in categories related to workforce, infrastructure, transportation, business environment, livability, and natural resources. Workforce and under-employment were topics that were repeatedly visited in Mrs. McClintic’s presentation.

The group briefly broke for dinner, then divided up into groups to discuss, based on the competitive analysis, how the County might consider prioritizing skills development, cluster development, real estate investment, and financial incentives. The groups then discussed how they had ranked each item, with skills development being seen as the top priority for our county. The need to diversify the economy, provide vocational training and apprenticeships, improve the livability of the area to attract and retain a younger workforce, expand the broadband infrastructure, and work on partnering more with the town on mutually beneficial economic development projects.

There followed a brief question and answer session between the presenters, staff, the Board of Supervisors and the EDA.

Chairman Martin adjourned the joint meeting at 7:24 pm; the Economic Development Authority continued with their regular meeting.