

Economic Development Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
October 25, 2023

**Meeting was called to order at 8:13 am**

**Present: Terri Packard, Natoma Vargason, Ron Humbel, Tyler Hornbecker, Marie Oyster, Dianna Crisci-Palmer, Ray Hanson, Bryan Wachtel, Mayor Howard Long, Town Planner Drew Bowen and Town Manager Jared Schumacher.**

**Secretary's Report: Minutes were reviewed and motion to approve received from Ron Humbel, seconded by Natoma Vargason; motion carried.**

**Treasurer's Report: Terri Packard presented and reviewed the Treasurer's Report. Motion from Ron Humbel to approve the treasurer's report, second by Marie Oyster; motion carried.**

**Council Liaison Report: Ray Hanson reported that Ace Hardware is now open and owner, Pete Anderson wants to do a Ribbon Cutting on December 8<sup>th</sup>, Grand Opening 12/08, 12/09 and 12/10/2023. The Post Office update is that the parking lot is being paved and they would like an end of October opening. Dunkin Donuts is waiting on paving to be completed. High's – tried to reach out to them to see if they will move forward.**

**Drew Bowen, Town Planner shared some additional updates. There is lots of movement on Chase Six property, road alignment being reviewed. TT&K, Flook Properties are to submit one development plan for 200-home community. This could be the beginning of the bypass that connects Rt. 68 to Warrior Boulevard. Town will be updating their Comprehensive Plan. EDC should think about goals, where should growth be and where we want to see commercial areas. What do we want Boonsboro to look like?**

**Public Comments: Guest Speaker, Staci Knisley from VerStandig Media, their motto, "We Live Here, We Give Here." She discussed what her company can offer us with Radio & Digital Advertising, Website Development and Monitoring. She did provide us with a handout with all the information. This is a locally owned and operated company with 100% local focus on our community. Staci does live in Boonsboro too. She can meet with us to do a Needs Analysis and Digital proposal.**

**Jared Schumacher, Town Manager, shared that the Town Attorney advised in their legal opinion not to do anything in writing regarding the tips/suggestions on handling disturbances. EDC could spread the facts verbally. Business owners should do their best to not give him attention.**

**Old Business:**

- a. **Grant Updates: RFP Cultural Trail Feasibility Study – Jared Schumacher reported that he had finished this RFP and is ready to move forward. There is now a template created for the town for future grants. The Façade Grant is capped at \$10,000 per applicant now; 2023 money is all spent and we have applied for 2024 funding. The website will be Discover Boonsboro. National Road Museum bathrooms, waiting on engineering.**

- b. **Downtown Beautification Project:** Jared reached out to FSA to tell them what we wanted for plant material, and changes, and has not heard back from them. He will reach back out today. Terri will run the list by Park Board. They are interested in low maintenance, native plants.
- c. **Networking Event Series:** Our next event will be on November 14<sup>th</sup> (later changed to 21<sup>st</sup>) from 5 pm to 8 pm at the American Legion for a Holiday Happy Hour with a cash bar. Natoma will confirm this next event date and time. We will invite Commission Members to attend and let them share updates as part of the program. Drew Bowen can share about the comprehensive plan for Boonsboro. The idea is to combine the Commission Mixer with this Networking Happy Hour. Tiffany Ahalt shared that Fahrney Keedy will host our January event. They need to give us the date and whether it will be a morning or evening event. Tyler Hornbecker suggested we get sponsors for meals at the networking events, i.e. \$250 to sponsor food. The sponsors name would be mentioned a few times, and they could set up a vendor table. Tyler will organize this effort.
- d. **Business Ribbon Cuttings & Recognition:** Ribbon Cutting for Upper Cervical Chiropractic will be held on November 10<sup>th</sup> at 10 am, Open House, Refreshments and Tour. Dr. Blanford has lots of space and is excited to be here in Boonsboro. Pathfinder had a Soft Opening during BooneFest and wants a Ribbon Cutting the first weekend of December. Ace Hardware wants a Ribbon Cutting on Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. Branded Chophouse is open. Building owner Richard DiPietro said they will not have a Ribbon Cutting at this time. He wants to wait until the other areas are developed – Vanish, If Forno, coffee shop, sports betting – and plan a huge grand opening with the Governor. New Restaurant coming soon (previously Dan’s Taphouse), The Admiral. Owner is Steve Kemmet – maybe December opening – transferring liquor license from Dan’s Restaurant and needs to get health inspection.
- e. **Quarterly Rack Cards – 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter complete,** pick some up to deliver to businesses.

**Committee Reports:**

- a. **Food Truck Festival:** Ron Humbel reported that the FTF went well, weather was HOT, Beer Garden made a \$2000 profit. Ron will send a letter to BABI to request half of the profit be donated to BTA. The juggler was not exciting, maybe a Stage Act instead next year? We need an MC at the FTF to announce sponsor, events, etc. Vendors handled ordering and lines much better and used our suggestions. Need to solidify Fire Marshall Plan for 2024. Natoma Vargason shared some exciting news for Whistle Punk – they are opening a Storefront in Brunswick, MD. Natoma is to send out letter to invite FT Vendors back; there are a few that will not be invited back. Dianna Crisci-Palmer shared that the profit for the Tractor Pulls was up from last year, \$300. Tyler Hornbecker shared details regarding the parking. He said the Scouts did great and brought in \$3000 in donations. The Scouts want to return next year and are interested in future events.
- b. **Boonsboro Town Alliance –** Ron is frustrated with paperwork for Non-Profit status. It must go through STATE and then FEDERAL, eta is 2 weeks. He has a concern about the appropriations for money and how they will have funds to hold the first events in 2024.
- c. **Commission Mixer 2023:** This will be combined with November 21<sup>st</sup> Networking Event.
- d. **EDC Marketing Committee:** update tabled.
- e. **BooneFest October 21<sup>st</sup>:** Natoma shared that this event was nice, lightly attended and there was discussion about discontinuing this event?
- f. **Spring Jubilee –** Ron will contact State Highway Assoc. about closing the road for next year. Suggested we make a donation to Fire Police for help with 5K Run and traffic. Tyler suggested

a big giveaway – possibly Warehouse Cinema. Need to confirm date after checking with other towns about their planned events.

- g. Appalachian Trail Community – Natoma stated that they need to submit a plan with 2024 goals and desires. Appalachian Trail Days will be the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in June. Tiffany is submitting a bid on behalf of Visit Hagerstown, Visit Frederick and Jefferson County, WV Tourism to host the 2025 A.T. Vista which is a 4-day, 3-night conference showcasing Appalachian Trail Communities and the region. Boonsboro will have the opportunity to host one of the evening functions to showcase the town.
- h. Main Street Maryland – update from Terri Packard; we had a nice meeting with Christine McPhearson and a walking tour around town. Main Street Affiliate Program – application to complete. Terri would like help with this and get done before she leaves the country on November 12<sup>th</sup>. Terri needs 12 pictures by 10/31/2023 to send with this application. Dianna, Natoma and Terri will meet on November 7<sup>th</sup> to work through the application and finalize photos.

**New Business:**

Ross from the Fairfield Hotel on Dual Hwy wants to partner with Boonsboro to promote his hotel and things to do in Boonsboro.

Fox Gap property is not currently for sale.

Visitor Hagerstown CVB Visitor's Guide – motion by Natoma Vargason to place an ad in Visitor Guide up to a \$700 cost, need new pictures. This motion was seconded by Ron Humbel; motion carried. (Later amended motion to be \$1800 for half page ad. Contract and payment due November 13<sup>th</sup>.)

**NEXT MEETING:** We will postpone the December meeting (scheduled for Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>) to January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Adjournment:** Motion by Ron Humbel to adjourn, second by Marie Oyster; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:15 am

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Oyster, Secretary