

Economic Development Commission
Meeting Minutes
August 23, 2023

Meeting was called to order at 8:05 am

Present: Terri Packard, Natoma Vargason, Ron Humbel, Tyler Hornbecker, Dana Healy, Marie Oyster, Dianna Crisci-Palmer, Tiffany Ahalt, Ray Hanson, Bryan Wachtel, Mayor Howard Long, and Boonsboro resident, Nathan.

Secretary's Report: Tiffany moved to approve the minutes from the June meeting. Ron seconded the motion; motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Terri Packard presented and reviewed the Treasurer's Report. We did purchase safety vests for parking, new flowers and website update. Motion from Ron Humbel to approve the treasurer's report, second by Natoma Vargason; motion carried.

Public Comments: Group of business owners attended meeting and were showing discontent with protests from Shawn Porter. They want to be heard and cared about by the town. It is hard to attract business now. Image is making it less desirable to live in Boonsboro. Tiffany Ahalt moved to print out a statement with guidelines and rights as a business owner. This will include tips "We Care about You." This could be handed out in person and put on our website. Tiffany will reach out to Main Street USA for suggestions, draft to Mayor Howard Long by Monday for review. The motion was seconded by Dana Healy; motion carried.

Council Liaison Report: Ray Hanson reported that interviews are going on to hire a new Town Planner. There was discussion about recent protests; Shawn Porter does want to come back during Food Truck Festival, and has notified police department of his intent. The Staff Liaison salary is coming out of the EDC funds. We do not currently have this in our budget, will need to be added FY2025.

Old Business:

- a. **Grant Opportunities:** Tiffany Ahalt reported on the Rural MD Econ Dev Grant – still need an updated RFP for the Cultural Trail Feasibility Study. The website contract was awarded to Revize. They are reviewing details, completing a questionnaire, there are high resolution images, and we will sell tickets through this. National Road Museum – great meeting with the Mayor and Jared regarding the bathrooms. Things are moving in the right direction; although, there are challenges with the utilities and getting billed twice. Visitor Center/Welcome Center is applying for a mini-grant of up to \$5000 – need chairs and brochure racks. Question, will the EDC be able to match the grant? Motion by Natoma Vargason for 50% of awarded amount of grant (HCWHA Mini Grant Round is open) up to and not to exceed \$3000; second by Ron Humbel, motion carried.
- b. **Downtown Beautification Project:** We want to accept the draft from VanFleet with the following changes: Tree Wells in the sidewalks replaced with benches, remove 3 historical markers, the "Welcome to Boonsboro" sign needs to be angled for better viewing. We will contact groups to sponsor benches, start with the roundabout. Have \$18,000 grant that can be applied toward this.

- c. **Networking Breakfast Series: July 13th Networking Event at Crystal Grottoes was well received and attended. Next Networking will be a breakfast meeting on 09/21/2023 at Rural Heritage Museum. November meeting will be a holiday happy hour at the Boonsboro Legion on November 14th starting at 5pm. Fahrney Keedy is interested in hosting the January meeting.**
- d. **Business Ribbon Cuttings & Recognition: the Historical Society will 'unveil' the Boonsboro flag that has been reissued (designed 50 years ago) on September 9th during Boonsborough Days. They would like to have a ribbon cutting as part of the ceremony. Time TBD. Gifts Inn Boonsboro will celebrate their 15th anniversary with a reception on October 15th. Ribbon Cutting at 5pm. Others – does StoneWerks want to celebrate their anniversary? Upper Cervical Chiropractic is open. Pathfinder Farm Distillery plans to open in October.**
- e. **Quarterly Rack Cards – Marie is sending email now to collect for 4th Quarter events and will get to Laura Oates for printing asap.**

Committee Reports:

- a. **Food Truck Festival: Ron Humbel is getting the permit for the Beer Garden, lot cut, dumpster dropped off, 12 Bathrooms (will discuss locations), 2 Handwashing Stations, Golf Cart and Gator. BABI will donate \$1000 to BTA – this depends on Beer Garden Sales too. Tyler Hornbecker spoke to Tim about parking details, we will have vests for attendants. Terri ordered parking signs, we have cones and caution tape for handicap needs. Tyler needs stakes to put inside cones, Ron ordered these. 9 am to 12 pm – Set-Up Crew, 3 pm to 6 pm – Information, 5 pm – Clean-Up Crew. Food Truck Vendors to send menus, and Bryan will create a QR Code for attendees to view ahead. Tractor Pull – emailed Ron the insurance document and will forward to Bryan Wachtel. Town will send letters of road closure to residents on Park Dr & McKeldin. Dianna said she had hired 3 teens to volunteer to help with parking – being paid \$50 for the day. Cochran is donating the use of 2 sets of bleachers. Antietam Broadband is not interested in sponsoring or providing a hotspot in the park for the day.**
- b. **Boonsboro Town Alliance – Ron is frustrated with the State of Maryland, a document needed to be resigned by Resident Agent (causing delay).**
- c. **Commission Mixer 2023: no update**
- d. **EDC Marketing Committee:**
- e. **BooneFest October 21st: Natoma reported that 1 Band has been booked, 1 Food Truck-Glamour View. We will not have a beer garden.**

New Business:

Easterday property – no movement, meeting with our town attorney. Ron said there is a public notice of auction for this property. Post Office – road and parking lot need upgrades. Ace Hardware to open mid-October. Branded Steakhouse to open October 11th. The Vanish Brewery, pizza shop, coffee shop, Off-track betting and event center to employ 117 employees.

Adjournment: Motion by Ron Humbel to adjourn, second by Dianna Crisci-Palmer; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:15 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Oyster, Secretary