

**Town of Wise Economic Development Authority**  
**Thursday, July 11, 2024**  
**6:00 PM – 501 West Main Street**  
**Wise, Virginia 24293**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jennifer Sturgill-Mullins, Chairman  
Cory Dotson, Vice-Chairman  
Valerie Lawson, Treasurer  
Bonnie Aker  
Brandi Cox  
Bill Thompson

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Rachel Helton

**TOWN STAFF PRESENT:**

Reagan Walsh, Secretary

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**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Sturgill-Mullins called the meeting to order.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Secretary Walsh called the roll. It was determined that a quorum was present.

**3. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS (CHAIRMAN, VICE-CHAIRMAN, TREASURER):**

**3.1. Nomination and Election of Chairman to Serve until 7/31/2025**

Director Lawson made a motion to nominate Director Jennifer Sturgill-Mullins to serve as Chairman until 7/31/2025 with a second by Director Aker. Motioned carried 5-0 with Director Sturgill-Mullins abstaining.

**3.2 Nomination and Election of Vice-Chairman to Serve until 7/31/2025**

Director Lawson made a motion to nominate Director Cory Dotson to serve as Vice-Chairman until 7/31/2025 with a second by Director Cox. Motion carried 5-0 with Director Dotson abstaining.

**3.3 Nomination and Election of Treasurer to Serve until 7/31/2025**

Director Thompson made a motion to nominate Director Valerie Lawson to serve as Treasurer until 7/31/2025 with a second by Director Cox. Motion carried 5-0 with Director Lawson abstaining.

**4. APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY TO SERVE UNTIL 7/31/2025**

Treasurer Lawson made a motion to nominate Town Planner, Reagan Walsh, to serve as Secretary until

7/31/2025 with a second by Director Aker. Motion carried 6-0.

**5. ESTABLISH DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION OF REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS**

The directors discussed potential meeting dates and times and settled on the second Thursday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in the council chambers at the Wise Municipal Building. A motion was made to change the meeting time by Director Cox with a second by Director Dotson. Motion carried 6-0.

**6. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 13, 2024:**

Director Cox made a motion to approve the June 13, 2024, meeting minutes with a second by Director Aker. Motion carried 6-0.

**7. PUBLIC EXPRESSION:**

No one from the public was present for public expression. Chairman Sturgill-Mullins dispensed with public expression.

**8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**8.1. EDA RESOLUTION #1, 2024**

“A RESOLUTION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA ESTABLISHING THE COMMUNITY BUSINESS BILLBOARD PROGRAM FOR FY2024-2025 AND ALLOCATING \$15,000.00 FOR PROGRAM EXPENSES”

The directors discussed the draft program guidelines and recommended some changes be made to the scoring criteria and program guidelines. Vice-Chairman Dotson made a motion to table EDA Resolution #1, 2024 pending changes, with a second by Director Thompson. Motion carried 6-0. The following resolution, EDA Resolution #2, 2024 will now be EDA Resolution #1, 2024.

**9. NEW BUSINESS:**

**9.1. EDA RESOLUTION #2, 2024**

“A RESOLUTION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA SPONSORING CREATORCON 2024”

The directors discussed sponsoring CreatorCon 2024. The organizers of CreatorCon requested a donation of \$2,500.00. Secretary Walsh explained that if the EDA chooses to donate to the event, it is important that there be some representation from the EDA at the event. The directors felt that it would be best to sponsor the event at the lower sponsorship level of \$1,000.00 since it was unsure if any of the directors would be able to attend. This would also allow time for those who can attend to experience the event to see if the EDA should sponsor next year's event at a higher sponsorship level. Director Thompson made a motion to sponsor CreatorCon 2024 in the amount of \$1,000.00 with a second by Treasurer Lawson. Motion carried 6-0. This resolution is approved as EDA RESOLUTION #1, 2024 due to the original EDA RESOLUTION #1 being tabled to the next meeting.

**10. MATTERS FROM STAFF:**

**10.1. Virginia Economic Developers Association Membership Request**

Secretary Walsh requested authorization to join the Virginia Economic Developers Association for a yearly fee of \$250.00. She explained that this is a professional organization comprised of economic developers from across the state that provides valuable resources, training, and in-person events. She also provided information on membership to the International Economic Development Council. The prorated amount for 2024 is \$89.50 and \$179.00 for following years. Treasurer Lawson made a motion to approve both requests with a second by Director Cox. Motion carried 6-0.

### 10.2. **International Economic Development Council Membership Request**

This item was approved along with agenda item 10.1.

### 10.3. **Department of Planning and Zoning Monthly Report**

Secretary Walsh explained to the directors that this report is for updates for projects around town. Director Thompson asked about the scope of the East End Pedestrian Project. Secretary Walsh stated it was for new sidewalks from Railroad Avenue to the curve at First Church of God. Director Thompson stated he was hoping that project would get funded. All the directors agreed. Director Aker asked if, during the West Main Street Pedestrian Project, would a crosswalk be added near the Post Office. Secretary Walsh stated she was unsure and that she would check on it. She also explained that she would be submitting applications in the fall for Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Program funds. Director Dotson asked if the new speed signs were installed by VDOT or the town. Secretary Walsh stated that it was a police department project.

Secretary Walsh discussed establishing a subcommittee for creating a microloan program. Directors Thompson and Dotson volunteered to work on this. Secretary Walsh also stated that the EDA should restart work on a Façade Improvement Program due to the slower than anticipated progress on establishing a Virginia Main Street Program.

## 11. **MATTERS FROM THE DIRECTORS**

Director Aker asked if designation from the Virginia Tourism Corporation would help us. Secretary Walsh stated she was unsure which organization would need to be the one to apply for designation, whether it could be the EDA, Virginia Main Street program, or the locality, but that she would check on it and provide more information at the next meeting. Director Cox recommended that someone from VTC come to an EDA meeting to discuss their programming. Secretary Walsh stated she would look into it.

Director Cox brought up the Small Business Development Center and that she spoke with one of their representatives who is interested in speaking to the EDA. The directors agreed that this is a good idea. Director Cox also discussed her idea of the EDA sponsoring Lunch and Learns for local businesses. This would be an opportunity for the EDA to host events that provide valuable information for local businesses.

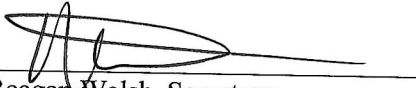
Vice-Chairman Dotson requested an update on the Food Truck Incubator Site. Secretary Walsh stated that money has been allocated for construction for this fiscal year and she would get an update for the directors. The directors discussed the need for more restaurants and the potential for food trucks to set up around town. Secretary Walsh stated that there is an ordinance that governs food trucks in town and that it doesn't prohibit food trucks generally. She stated that if any of the directors wanted to have them set up at their businesses, to reach out to her for permitting.

The directors briefly discussed the need for more businesses on the western end of town. Treasurer Lawson explained that after the gas station across from town hall and the medical offices closed, other businesses in the

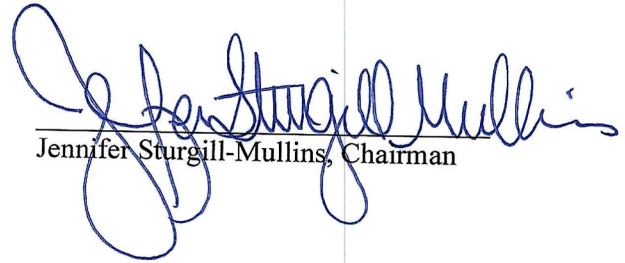
area noticed a significant decrease in foot traffic.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further discussion, Chairman Sturgill-Mullins adjourned the meeting.



Reagan Walsh, Secretary



Jennifer Sturgill-Mullins, Chairman