

**WORK SESSION MINUTES**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (EDA)  
OF JAMES CITY COUNTY (JCC)  
5308 DISCOVERY PARK BLVD. SUITE 203 CONFERENCE ROOM  
WILLIAMSBURG, VA 23188  
8:00 AM, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2010**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The work session was called to order by Chairman Tingle at 8:04 AM.

**2. ROLL CALL**

A roll call identified the following members present:

Mr. Brien Craft  
Ms. Leanne DuBois  
Mr. Douglas M. Gebhardt  
Mr. Paul W. Gerhardt  
Mr. Lawrence B. Pulley  
Mr. Thomas G. Tingle  
Mr. Marshall Warner

Also Present:

Ms. Mary Jones, Board of Supervisors (BOS) Liaison to EDA  
Ms. Laura A. Messer, EDA Recording Secretary  
Mr. Daniel Plaugher, Executive Director, Virginians for High Speed Rail  
Ms. Rona Vrooman, JCC Human Resources Coordinator  
Mr. Steven Yavorsky, Assistant EDA Secretary

**3. MISCELLANEOUS**

Mr. Tingle asked Ms. Messer to provide an update on Mr. Taylor. She stated that following his knee surgery, Mr. Taylor was already mobile and had stopped by the office last week. She expects him to return to work in the next few weeks.

Mr. Tingle introduced Ms. Rona Vrooman, JCC Human Resources Coordinator, to the EDA. He said Ms. Vrooman would facilitate the EDA at its April work session regarding strategy for current and future initiatives. Mr. Tingle stated that Ms. Vrooman had assisted the Business Climate Task Force in a similar way.

**4. PRESENTATION**

## 1. Virginians for High Speed Rail

Mr. Tingle introduced Mr. Plaughner to the EDA. He stated that Mr. Plaughner has been the executive director of Virginians for High Speed Rail (VHSR) for the past three years.

Mr. Plaughner began a review of both high speed rail and VHSR. He stated that VHSR was founded at a pivotal time, approximately 15 years ago, and is a non-profit organization with the goal to improve infrastructure of high speed rail to accommodate increasing service and reliability. Mr. Plaughner reviewed the three different types of high speed rail separated by their maximum speeds:

- Emerging high speed rail; 90-110 mph
- Regional high speed rail; 110-150 mph
- Traditional high speed rail; 150-220 mph.

Mr. Plaughner discussed the stimulus funding that the federal government had passed to encourage high speed rail. In 2009, 8 billion dollars of stimulus funding was dedicated to high speed rail. Of this allotment, 75 million dollars will go to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Mr. Plaughner continued and said that additional money was dedicated by the federal government to assist high speed rail through fiscal year 2014.

He stated that the Commonwealth Transportation Board was reviewing the fundings best use.

A brief discussion on the focus for high speed rail locations took place concluding that the majority of the urban, northern and eastern parts of the state were the focus due to the Northern Virginia-Richmond-Hampton Roads corridor. The corridor is vital because it connects North Carolina to the north east through Washington D.C.

Mr. Plaughner stated that the state is fortunate to have the Virginia Rail Enhancement Fund that appropriates a portion of car rental tax to support high speed rail. He continued and reviewed the public-private partnership that was necessary for high speed rail success.

Mr. Warner asked about funding specifically the breakdown of the Virginia total. Mr. Plaughner stated that it was 80% federal funding with 20% state support.

Mr. Pulley inquired about the timeline for high speed rail and Mr. Plaughner responded that the process was slow, but that progress was being made.

Mr. Craft asked if high speed rail had congressional support in Virginia and Mr. Plaughner stated that there was support, but that it was also necessary for inter-state cooperation in order for the success of high speed rail.

Mr. Tingle questioned what the EDA can do to support high speed rail. Mr. Plaugher stated that urging state and local delegates and senators to support the initiative was vital.

After questions, Mr. Tingle thanked Mr. Plaugher for his time and the information regarding the current status of high speed rail.

## **5. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **a. Business Climate Task Force (BCTF) Update**

Mr. Tingle briefly summarized the BCTF, a two-year study that was conducted several years ago that reviewed the business climate in JCC, as several EDA directors were not on the EDA when this study was conducted.

Mr. Yavorsky presented a matrix of the BCTF recommendations that were adopted in 2008. Mr. Yavorsky reviewed the implementation and business ready items, and also discussed the items that had already been completed such as the creation of the business facilitator position.

Regarding the recommendation to create a Technology Zone, Mr. Yavorsky distributed a hand-out detailing the creation of a Technology Zone in James City County that also reviewed a variety of cities and localities in Virginia that have technology zones.

Mr. Yavorsky stated that the Office of Economic Development's intern, Mr. Michael Coticchio, had prepared the research. Many of the existing technology zones were created to foster growth in "blighted downtowns" and to cluster similar companies together.

Mr. Yavorsky said that it was important to target business to business organizations in a technology zone rather than business to consumer. Mr. Yavorsky suggested that JCC form an area-specific technology zone in an area such as depressed retail area. He then stated that he had spoken with the County Attorney's Office, who supported the legality of the concept and that it would also be necessary to present the Zone to Financial Management Services and County Administration for their input.

Following Mr. Yavorsky's information about technology zones, the EDA had a discussion about the potential for a technology zone. Mr. Tingle led a discussion about the areas and how it may make sense to focus on an area that encourages the needs of a technology company rather than an area such as a depressed retail area which has been affected by the economy. It was decided that a mature office park would more than likely be suited for a technology zone. An ordinance amendment is another way to successfully approach a technology zone's creation.

Mr. Pulley noted the EDA may need to try to connect all incentive programs into one complete package in order to do the most with each. He cited the James City County Business Technology Incubator, Business Assistance Program, and Enterprise Zone as references to offering such a variety of programs.

Mr. Craft stated it was plausible for the JCCBTI and a technology zone to benefit one another.

A brief discussion about the concentration of Department of Defense work in the Hampton Roads region took place and how it may positively affect a technology zone.

Mr. Pulley asked if it would be possible to have a zone for something such as health care that is not so popularized like technology-related businesses.

Another key to the creation of a technology zone is the cooperation from property owners who are part of the decision making. If a technology zone were created, it would be vital that everyone cooperates.

Mr. Tingle summarized the issues that Mr. Yavorsky would need to address to assist in continued discussion:

1. Review the localities on the Technology Zone handout and decide the success
2. Decide why or why not localities chose "locality wide" versus specific areas
3. Examine the types of businesses in technology zones

Mr. Yavorsky said he would research further into the success of technology zones.

A selection of other BCTF recommendations were discussed including the ordinance occurred. Ms. Jones stated there was a two-year plan for ordinances amendments.

Lastly, Ms. DuBois mentioned the angel investor group that had come to speak to the EDA and was curious if they may have network connections who would be interested in occupying in a technology zone. She stated she would contact Ms. Susan Petersen for an update.

#### b. Business Assistance Program Update

Mr. Gebhardt provided a brief update on the Business Assistance Program. He stated that JuJu Beads had submitted a second application with minor changes. It has been reviewed and determined that it did not meet the goals and objectives of the program.

Mr. Gebhardt stated that several specifications on the Business Assistance Application program guidelines have been revised and that changes had been posted to web.

He then asked Mr. Yavorsky to follow-up with Greystone to see if the company was still investing in their Toano location.

c. Board of Supervisors Liaison Budget Update

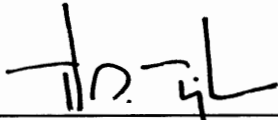
Ms. Jones provided a brief update on the Board of Supervisors budget progress. She stated that everything would be finalized in mid-May.

Mr. Tingle thanked Ms. Jones for the insight.

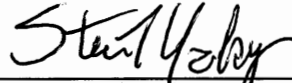
**6. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Tingle stated that in March that Mr. Jim Golden from the College of William & Mary would update on the Historic Triangle Collaborative Economic Diversification Task Force. He asked if it would be possible for the EDA to extend their April work session with Ms. Vrooman as additional time would be helpful. Everyone agreed it may be possible to stay longer for the meeting.

There being no further business, Mr. Warner made a motion to adjourn. The work session was adjourned at 10:03 AM.



Thomas G. Tingle, Chairman



Steven T. Yavorsky, Assistant Secretary