

ARLINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2023

Member Name	Present	Virtual	Absent
Amal, Tommy	X		
Bates, Kate	X		
Boyd, Ryaan		X	
Brewer, Janetta			X
Cooper, Steve		X	
Dunn, Bill	X		
Fedorchak, Stephen	X		
Garthwaite, Ben	X		
Gregorios, Nick	X		
Lynch, Catherine			X
Mansur, Sid	X		
Mason, Brad	X		
Meyyan, Praveen			X
Oyler, Joseph	X		
Pedowitz, Scott	X		
Rosales, Karen	X		
Sampaio, Flavia			X
Schoenfeld, Mary Margaret			X
Sisk, Avril Ussery	X		
Sorrell, Paula	X		
Tate, Jordan		X	
Van Horn, Andy	X		
Virasingh, Vicky	X		
Yam, Kevin	X		

1. WELCOME AND CALL TOGETHER

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 a.m. by Chair Dunn

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Commissioner Pedowitz and seconded by Commissioner Van Horn to approve the Nov. 14, 2023, meeting minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

3. CHAIR’S REPORT — BILL DUNN

Chair Dunn announced that Commission Member Meyyan was not in attendance because he and his wife had just had their first baby, a boy named Neal. Chair Dunn offered congratulations to their family. Chair Dunn gave the Commission Members a preview of what to expect in the coming new year. The January 2024 EDC meeting will welcome a discussion with the EDC’s County Board liaison,

Member Takis Karantonsis. He will address the Commission, followed by a discussion with the Commissioners. In March, County Board Manager Mark Schwartz will preview the County budget. Later in the year, the EDC will consider having a panel discussion on the Innovation Fund. Chair Dunn also mentioned a potential presentation with the VEDP President Jason El Koubi to give a state of Virginia ED perspective. Chair Dunn informed the Commission of a recent VRE announcement about the bipartisan Federal Infrastructure Act, with \$739 million allocated towards VRE for increasing rail traffic again. Lastly, Chair Dunn Recognized Andrew Schneider, the newly appointed executive director of the Columbia Pike Partnership, who gave a brief introduction of himself.

4. AED DIRECTOR'S REPORT — RYAN TOUHILL

AED Director Ryan Touhill reminded the EDC that staff have established work streams and working groups for each of the issue areas related to CMRI that will be explored over the next year. Staff recently briefed the County Manager on items to bring forward and recommendations to put on the County Board docket beginning in January. Staff are exploring other options for initial consideration, including office conversions to hotels and residential. Staff are also considering site plan conditions and special GLUP studies that align with the County's current site plans and retail plan. Director Touhill also gave an update on the Arlington Innovation Fund. There were 22 applicants for the Innovation Fund this fall. AED's consultant is reviewing all the recommendations and will recommend funding awards to staff and the IDA. We expect the announcement of the award recipients in late January. In the meantime, we have allocated nearly all of our money of that \$1,000,000, about 1/3 of which was sponsorship and partnership agreements with various groups in the startup community in Arlington. We are excited about the program's success and have requested funding for the program in the next fiscal year.

5. INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION — AED Strategic Plan Presentation by Consultant, Resonance

Deputy Director Kate Ange gave an intro to the presentation and introduced the Consultants, Steven Pedigo and Jordan Cooley. Steven led the presentation with a walk-through of the strategy parameters and takeaways. He emphasized that the strategy presented was a draft. An initial A-frame of the strategy is that AED is at a crossroads, especially as it starts to think about its economic development strategy in the future, identifying that the immediate challenge is commercial real estate. Still, there are opportunities to reimagine the approach. We should think about how we want to reinvent some things around economic development and redevelopment and set a path forward for AED and the department's economic development efforts, both in the short and long term. The strategic plan and the parameters of that plan are very intentional about encouraging cross-contextual engagement and collaboration.

Steven discussed the department's vision, goals and strategies. He discussed five key goals. **GOAL 1:** All in on thriving commercial areas — We will reimagine and bolster the vitality of our commercial centers and corridors. **GOAL 2:** All in on tech — We will attract and keep tech businesses and develop our tech talent pipeline to cement our position in the tech economy. **GOAL 3:** All in on our world-class business engagement — We will establish a reputation for a world-class business environment. **GOAL 4:** All in on our small business ecosystem — We will support the small businesses that make Arlington unique and inclusive. **GOAL 5:** All in on our global culture, unique art, entertainment and exceptional visitor experiences — We will invest in art makers and placemaking while bolstering our creative and tourism industries. Detailed strategies and measurements of impact and success followed each goal.

Following the presentation, Chair Dunn opened the floor for discussion. The discussion covered various topics about AED's goals and strategies, including engaging incubators and accelerators VC

related to Goal 2. Additional suggestions are to continue to develop the talent program and integrate the arts into the strategies. Further discussion suggested that the strategy should engage all the county leaders across all the departments and not operate in a silo. Commissioners inquired which of the strategies AED is currently implementing and which are new and would cause a need to pivot. A consensus of the Commission is that there are too many sub-strategies for each of the five goals and that the scope should be reduced and prioritized.

6. WORKING GROUP UPDATES — *(This item was not on the agenda but was added by Chair Dunn.)*

Office Vacancy Working Group: Commissioner Pedowitz informed the Commission that the next meeting group is Friday, Dec. 15. If you would like to join, provide your information to him or Jennifer Aguilar (staff liaison). Commissioner Pedowitz said the discussion topic will be on accomplishments in 2024 and how the group could be a resource and sounding board for staff.

Workforce Taskforce: Chair Dunn addressed the status of this group and that it has been on hiatus for several months. He mentioned that the structure or mission might change format in the future. He recognized that many commissioners were interested in being involved with the task force, so please contact him if you would like to participate.

7. OLD BUSINESS

None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Dunn adjourned the meeting at 9:27 a.m.

Upcoming Meetings: Regular Commission Meeting, 8:00 a.m., Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2023
1100 N. Glebe Rd., First Floor Conference Center