

ARLINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
 Regular Meeting
 Tuesday, May 14, 2024

Member Name	Present	Virtual	Absent
Amal, Tommy	X		
Bates, Kate	X		
Boyd, Ryaan		X (Personal)	
Brewer, Janetta	X		
Burchard, Anthony	X		
Cooper, Steve		X (Personal)	
Dunn, Bill	X		
Fedorchak, Stephen	X		
Garthwaite, Ben		X (Personal)	
Gregorios, Nick	X		
Lynch, Catherine	X		
Mansur, Sid	X		
Mason, Brad	X		
Meyyan, Praveen	X		
Oyler, Joseph			X
Pedowitz, Scott	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 (Sick)	
Weinstein, Matthew			X

WELCOME AND CALL TOGETHER

The April EDC (Economic Development Commission) meeting was held at the Arlington Economic Development (AED) office. Chair Bill Dunn called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Dunn opened the floor for comments and corrections to April’s meeting minutes. Chair Dunn noted that there was, in fact, a correction to April’s minutes. Rather than requesting EDC members to encourage members already part of the EDC to participate in the EDC in the future, as the minutes said,

Chair Dunn wants EDC members to encourage others to join. Chair Dunn then made a motion to approve the April meeting minutes. The motion was moved, seconded, opened for vote, then carried.

CHAIR'S REPORT — BILL DUNN

Chair Dunn briefly addressed the Commission. Report highlights:

- Karen Rosales of Arlington Federal Credit Union has resigned from the EDC.
- Chair Dunn then concluded his report.

AED DIRECTOR'S REPORT — RYAN TOUHILL

Director Touhill shared the following during his report:

- The final FY25 budget was passed for AED on April 20.
- Overall, AED's budget has increased by about 3%.
 - Two positions were eliminated from MarComm team.
 - Ongoing funding was added for a role on the BizLaunch team.
 - Additional funding was added for County partnerships (Clarendon and Langston Boulevard Alliance) and their operations.
 - Key investments made by the board: \$250,000 for the Arlington Innovation Fund to continue that program next year, \$250,000 for BizLaunch to continue support for small businesses and a \$250,000 increase to the arts grant program — the first increase in years.
- Earlier this year, AED announced the awarding of \$225,000 in funding to five grantees through the Arlington Innovation Fund/Catalyst Grants. Those five grantees are all tech startups located in Arlington. AED is also wrapping up a second round of grants and anticipates awarding up to five more grants by the end of the fiscal year. Director Touhill noted that AED vastly exceeded the goal of having a diverse applicant pool, with at least 50% of awarded founders coming from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Two members of AED's BizLaunch team recently traveled to Kansas City to participate in an event sponsored by the Kaufman Foundation.
- In all EDC members' packets, a new AED events flyer was included.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION — AED STRATEGIC PLAN PRESENTATION, DIRECTOR TOUHILL AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR KATE ANGE

Director Touhill provided a high-level overview of AED's Strategic Plan. Highlights include:

- Arlington is seeing strong consumer revenue growth and hotel occupancy increases.
- The County is also experiencing strong interest and engagement from folks who want to start businesses here or bring businesses here in the County.
- There are headwinds Arlington is facing:
 - Office market
 - Increased demand for high-quality workers
 - Missing daytime workers and business travelers
 - Disparities among Black and Latino residents
- Strategic Plan:
 - AED is working to transform Arlington into an all-in destination for job creators, thinkers, entrepreneurs and creatives.
 - AED is under new leadership.

- Strategic plan confirmed the need for existing and ongoing initiatives.
- Strategic plan is centered around five goals.
- AED has also incorporated a new vision, mission and values.
- Strategic planning process:
 1. Seven months of consultant engagement
 2. Three steering committee work sessions
 3. Two all-staff work sessions
 4. Eleven focus group meetings
 5. Eleven one-on-one interviews with elected officials and senior staff
 6. Now that the plan has been shared, AED is undergoing division assessments internally.

Deputy Director Kate Ange presented the Strategic Plan specifics.

- Five goals of the AED Strategic Plan:
 - **Goal 1: All in on business investment**
 - We will build and promote a world-class business environment ready for investment.
 - **Goal 2: All in on thriving commercial areas**
 - We will reimagine and bolster the vitality of our commercial centers and corridors.
 - **Goal 3: All in on tech jobs**
 - We will attract and retain tech businesses and develop our talent pipeline to cement our position in the tech economy.
 - **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 global arts, culture and tourism**
 - We will invest in arts and culture while bolstering our creative and tourism industries.
- What's Next:
 - Finalize recruitment for Special Projects Manager
 - Develop work plans to advance near-term priorities (1–18 months)
 - Refine our measures and metrics for success
 - Create cross-divisional working teams for implementation

Deputy Director Ange opened the floor for questions where a discussion occurred on several important, plan-related topics.

GUEST SPEAKER — MARC MCCAULEY AND VAL WEINER, AED'S REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT GROUP (REDG)

Members of AED's REDG divisions presented on the County's CMRI initiative, focusing on CMRI 2.0. Marc covered several topics, including:

- Recent Past and Ongoing CMRI work:
 - Fitness center parking mins → approved by County Board (CB) in April
 - Compact spaces → approved by CB in April
 - Shared parking/offsite parking → CB Consideration in May
 - Outdoor Visual Entertainment → CB Consideration in May

- Uses (Live work units and self-storage) → CB RTA in May
- Ongoing Work from April RTAs
 - Adaptive Reuse → First priority, Fall/Early Winter 2024
 - Signs → More complicated/moving parts, incremental approach
- Other Active Workstreams
 - Maj/Min/Admin (MMA)
 - Green Building Incentive Program
 - Financial Incentives Analysis

WORKING GROUP UPDATES

Commercial Vacancy Working Group: Marc and Val from AED's REDG team presented an extended presentation to the group. As a result, they drafted a letter. Overview:

- The working group recommends that EDC endorse all items outlined in the letter. The motion was moved, seconded, voted on and passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

- A Commissioner requested ways for EDC members to network more and get to know each other better.
- Another Commissioner mentioned that the Executive Committee is working on both industry representation and skills matrix as they look at the future team of the EDC.