



# Grayson County Economic Development Authority

P. O. Box 217; Independence, VA 24348

July 19, 2022

## MEETING MINUTES

### Members Present

Christopher J. Butler  
Gary Rascoe  
Justine Jackson-Ricketts - teleconference  
Elisa Blevins - teleconference  
Todd Cannaday  
Joseph M. Killon  
Jonathan Warren  
Darin Young - teleconference

### Staff Present

William L. Shepley  
Leesa A. Gayheart  
Deb Jones - teleconference  
Lyndsie Young

### Members Absent

Elizabeth Hash

### Staff Absent

Mitchell L. Smith

### OPEN MEETING

Mr. Butler, Chair, opened the meeting and determined a quorum is present and opened the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Rascoe made the motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of June 21, 2022; duly seconded by Mr. Cannaday. Motion carried 8-0.

### FINANCIAL REPORT

Mrs. Gayheart gave a report of the current financials and explained the only new listing is a check for the Virginia Foundation of Ag & Innovation which is the first installment of the \$10,000 that was approved at last month's meeting. Mr. Cannaday asked about the previously dedicated funds and Mrs. Gayheart noted she is working to encumber those funds for future reports. Mr. Killon made the motion to approve the financial report; duly seconded by Mr. Rascoe. Motion carried.

### PRESENTATIONS

- Josh Lewis, Mt. Rogers Regional Partnership Director, addressed the Authority and gave a brief overview of what the regional partnership provides to the member agencies that belong and works with localities to recruit industry such as Food City here in Grayson. A marketing/advertising specialist has been hired and is doing a great job. Mr. Shepley also explained that small counties can turn to agencies such as these for economic development opportunities. Nichole Hair then introduced herself and explained her role with BRCEA and that MRRP has researched the needs for a strategic plan for the area EDA's (Carroll, Galax, Grayson) and asked

the EDA to set aside up to \$25,000 for a consulting firm to put together a strategic plan. Ms. Hair noted that Carroll County is meeting today to discuss the support from Carroll. Mr. Cannaday asked for clarification and Mr. Lewis explained that because none of the 3 localities have an Economic Director nor a strategic plan. This consulting firm will survey each group and collect the necessary data to determine recommendations. Mr. Rascoe asked for a copy of the RFP for the consulting group and Ms. Hair noted she would share via email to Mr. Shepley and Mrs. Osborne. Mr. Lewis reiterated the collaborative nature of the project. Mr. Warren confirmed that each EDA would determine the plan for each locality and Mr. Killon wanted to make sure that the workforce would be included in the study and Mr. Lewis confirmed. Mr. Butler recognized Mr. Shepley for his service to Grayson County. Mr. Cannaday expressed is concern over Mr. Shepley's leaving and Mr. Butler reassured everyone that regardless of who steps into that roll, the EDA and Board of Supervisors will still work hand in hand to accomplish things. Mr. Rascoe made the motion to approve up to \$25,000 to BRCEDA for a strategic plan for the county as it relates to the EDA; duly seconded by Mr. Cannaday. Roll call vote: Gary Rascoe – aye; Justine Jackson-Ricketts – aye; Elisa Blevins – aye; Todd Cannaday – aye; Christopher J. Butler – aye; Joseph Killon – aye. Motion carried 6-0. Mr. Lewis also requested 2 Grayson County EDA members to serve on the Planning Advisory Committee; Mr. Butler noted that advisory committee members would be selected at a later date.

- Mr. Cecil King & Co. – Sheep & Goat Club

Mr. David Hood, sheep producer and shearer for the last 13 years addressed the Authority and noted he's seeing an increase of sheep production. Costs are escalating and a collaboration of farmers to work together to support each other especially in the growing wool business – pulling together adds benefit to the market as the middleman can be skipped. Mr. King explained the wool production process and the benefits of baling wool over bagging it – bags 10 cents/lb and bales 40 cents/lb and explained the benefits of wool and especially smart wool. Mr. King then presented a power point to support his presentation:

- Approximately 2,000 head of wool sheep and lambs
- 7,000 head of ewes and rams
- Wool storage options – bag or bale
- Transport – wool in 8-foot bags: 60' in circumference; 15,000 lbs on 53' trailer
- Wood in 350-400 lb bales – loaded 45,000 lbs on 53' trailer
- Cost – bag - \$5 each; bale - \$14 each; each farmer pays for: bag or bale; transportation; miscellaneous; tax ourselves for extra fees
- Selling Wool – only one broker for bags – 2022 wool price .10 cents per lb; bales – one buyer – Chargeurs in Jamestown, SC; 2022 wool price - .40 cents per lb
- Chargeurs; US Military (Berry Act); Smart Wool
- Uses for Wool: clothing; socks; shoes; carpet; insulation; bed liners; rugs; crafts; medical uses; other uses
- Why Sheep? – wool sheep are carbon neutral; added farm income; excellent source of protein and B0vitamins; convert forage into a human food
- Grants Awarded: AFID Grant - \$20,000; Virginia Tobacco Commission - \$2,500

Asked the Grayson County EDA for \$5,000 or more for support in making/purchasing a new baler to replace the current baler that is over 40 years old. Mr. Hood estimates that there are approximately 12 families that would benefit. Mr. Warren inquired about the match and if this is the same baler mentioned at a previous Board meeting whose grant required no match. Mrs. Young explained that it is the same baler but that was a Tobacco Commission grant which required no match and this is an AFID grant that does require a match. Mrs. Gayheart supported Mrs. Young regarding an explanation of the 2 grants. Mr. Rascoe inquired about the old baler and Mr. King advised that it will be kept to use alongside of the new one. Discussion took place regarding sheep/goat meat and its popularity. Mr. Cannaday made the motion to approve \$5,000 towards the purchase/matching grant funds and/or repair of the existing bailer to purchases a baler through the AFID Grant Program; duly seconded by Mr. Rascoe. Motion carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- MOU Wool Baler Project – Lyndsie Young, Grayson County Ag/ED Director  
Mrs. Young explained that the MOU for the Tobacco Commission Grant (listed below) is necessary because the EDA is the granting agency of the County. Mr. Butler agreed to sign with previous vote to approve.

## **AGREEMENT**

This Agreement entered into this 19<sup>th</sup> day of July 2022, by and between the Economic Development Authority of Grayson County, a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia (hereinafter referred to as the EDA), and the County of Grayson, Virginia, a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia (hereinafter referred to as County):

## **WITNESSETH**

**WHEREAS**, the County has been approved by Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission (hereinafter referred to as the TRRC) to receive a grant (TRRC Grant #3970, hereinafter, the "Grant") for the acquisition of a sheep wool baler to be utilized by the New River Valley Sheep and Goat Club for the benefit of local agribusiness in the region, in order to stimulate and sustain economic development in Grayson County and the tobacco region; and

**WHEREAS**, in order to provide the funds and/or equipment for the benefit of business in the region, the parties intend for EDA to act as subrecipient for the project, and the EDA is willing to receive the Grant funds and assume any and all obligations of the County under the Grant; and,

**WHEREAS**, the County is willing to provide such Grant funds to EDA to act as subrecipient in consideration of EDA's agreement to perform all obligations of the County thereunder.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, for good and valuable consideration, including the mutual exchange of promises by and between parties, the County and the EDA do hereby mutually agree as follows:

1. The County agrees to execute the TRRC Grant agreement with the TRRC, accept the Grant from TRRC, and disburse the Grant funds to EDA as sub-grantee.
2. The County agrees to enter into the necessary agreement with the TRRC and to make all of the assurances required to receive the Grant funds; the EDA hereby formally agrees that it will fully and responsibly perform all the terms, conditions, assurances and requirements which the application and TRRC requires of the County as Grantee, including providing any necessary documentation and reports as may be required of the County by TRRC.
3. Each and every obligation of County under the Grant are hereby assumed jointly and severally by the EDA. The Grant agreement is hereby incorporated herein by this reference and attached hereto.
4. The EDA agrees to initiate the activities required by the grant documents beginning as soon as possible after this agreement is fully executed.
5. As used in the Agreement, the term "grant documents" mean the following documents which are hereby made a part of this Agreement, and are incorporated by reference herein as if set out in full:
  - A. The Grant TRRC funding application for the project including any and all revisions.
  - B. The Budget approved by TRRC for Grayson County
  - C. This Agreement and the Grant Agreement.
  - D. Amendments to this Agreement and amendments to any of the grant documents.
6. The EDA hereby agrees to properly administer and use the project funds in accordance with all applicable federal, state and county laws. It is agreed by and between the parties that any and all financial, administrative and other records required to be maintained in conjunction with the project by any applicable regulation or agreement will be prepared and maintained by the EDA.
7. This Agreement may be amended from time to time only by written authorization of both parties, executed with the same formality as this Agreement.
8. This Agreement is governed in all respects by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In witness whereof, the parties have here unto set their signatures and seals this 19 day of July 2022.

THE COUNTY OF GRAYSON, VIRGINIA

BY

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William L. Shepley, Clerk  
Grayson County Economic Development Authority

BY

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Christopher J. Butler, Chair  
Grayson County Economic Development Authority

- Grayson County EDA By-Laws

Mr. Butler noted Section VIII and Section II regarding advisory members and would like for the questions about alternate members being allowed to vote as a substitute. Mrs. Blevins made the motion to ask legal and table this item to the next meeting; duly seconded by Mr. Cannaday. Motion carried.

Next meeting will be August 16, 2022 at 4pm.

**ADJOURN**

Mr. Killon made the motion to adjourn; duly seconded by Mr. Cannaday. Motion carried.