

APPROVED MINUTES
KING WILLIAM COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
LOCAL BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE JOINT MEETING OF OCTOBER 25, 2023

A joint meeting of the King William County Economic Development Authority Board of Directors and Local Business Roundtable Members was held on the 25th day of October 2023, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the King William County Parks & Recreation Building in Aylett, Virginia.

Agenda Item 1. WELCOME – Jay Brown, EDA Chair

Agenda Item 2. BLESSING OF THE MEAL - Eugene Campbell, EDA Treasurer

Agenda Item 3. BREAK FOR MEAL

Agenda Item 4. 6:30pm - JOINT MEETING ROLL CALL

EDA Members

Eugene L. Campbell, Jr. – Secretary/Treasurer	Present
Sarah Williams	Present
C. Meade Rhoads, Jr.	Absent
Robert Hardwick	Present
Charles F. Piersa	Present
Kenneth A. Holderied – Vice Chair	Present
Jay Brown - Chair	Present

Local Business Roundtable Members

Abbot Truck Sales, Inc.	Wesley Walker	Present
Atlantic Union Bank	Kenneth Hughes	Absent
Aylett Tire	Buck Rice	Present
Darrell Kellum, Inc.	Darrell Kellum	Present
Farm Bureau	Randy Kelley	Present
Glenn's Automotive Inc	Glenn Fowlkes	Present
J N Mills Farms	JN Mills	Present
Kenwood Builders	Kenny Wood	Present
KTR Equipment LLC	Ryan & Katie Benton	Absent
LM Tool Company	Lenny Mills	Absent
M&M Pizza, BP, April's Place	Sami & April Frioui	Absent
Mattapony Reserve	Lonnie Custalow	Present
Mattapony Reserve	Ginger Custalow	Present
Rudy's Hose and Fittings LLC	Raymond Rudolph III	Present
Twin Rivers Realty	Allen Brintley	Present

Agenda Item 5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SPECIAL GUESTS - Jay Brown, EDA Chair

Chairman Brown acknowledged the special guests in attendance: Ed Moren, Board of Supervisors, District 5; William Hodges, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, District 1; Steve Hudgins, Deputy County Administrator; Sherry Graham, Director of Planning;

Barbara Trimmer, Planning Secretary; and Marci Harris, Administrative Assistant. (Percy Ashcraft, County Administrator, was not present due to illness.)

Agenda Item 6. ROUNDTABLE MATTERS

Chairman Brown gave a brief review of the purpose of the group and their focus. The two main objectives were the Business Roundtable and to get a site developable to help existing business grow and thrive.

6.a. Update on Economic Development Activities

Mr. Hudgins read the Economic Development topics that were outlined in the memo from County Administrator, Percy Ashcraft, provided in the packet.

Mr. Hardwick asked if the New Mexican Restaurant was publicly or privately owned. Ms. Graham said it was privately owned and should be open sometime in December or January.

Mr. Holderied went into depth on the Economic Development Specialist position. He explained why the position was changed from a director level to a specialist level. He emphasized that the filling of this position was crucial to moving forward with the economic development in the county. He encouraged business owners, if they knew of someone who was qualified and interested, to have them apply.

Mr. Brintley (Twin Rivers Realty) asked what type of applicants we were seeing applying for the position.

Ms. Custalow (Mattapony Reserve) asked if the position was full-time or part-time. Chairman Brown said that hopefully it will be a permanent full-time position – that is the goal. The budget would need to be approved on an annual basis.

Mr. Brintley feels that the position should be filled by someone who knows King William. We should look at other counties and see what they are doing to entice qualified applicants.

Mr. Kellum (Darrell Kellum, Inc.) asked what the expectations were for this person on Day One, the plan for three months and six months down the road, and whether it is a results-driven position. Mr. Brown said the position would report directly to the County Administrator, Percy Ashcraft, and he had a plan on what the expectations would be.

Mr. Kellum said he would like to see this position as a POC for new businesses to hold their hand and walk them through the process of getting started – sort of a ‘red carpet’ treatment. Chairman Brown said that is what is expected, to provide support to existing businesses and help new businesses get started. They should represent the county in regional conferences, tourism, entice new businesses, support those we have, and push the sites on the 30/360 corridor.

Mr. Kellum asked if there have been any conversations on how to attract new businesses. He gave an example of the City of Richmond and how they offered some type of tax relief over a five-year period to entice new businesses to come in. Mr. Holderied shared how they

did provide some tax relief to Purina to entice them to move here. Mr. Hudgins discussed tax reliefs and what the county can and cannot do. He also discussed what the EDA has the authority to do.

Chairman Brown said he sees the EDA as a conduit between the county and the businesses.

Mr. Brintley discussed the missed opportunities of not having this type of person as a POC and not offering incentives to come to the county.

6.b. Discussion of Small Business Grant Program

Mr. Hudgins reviewed the grant program that was provided in the packet and Mr. Holderied explained the rationale for the decisions in the policy.

Mr. Kellum shared how he helped facilitate a new business moving into K & Q County, Electra Force, through a Governor's Initiative Program. This program has funds earmarked for each county to use. Th program is geared more towards industrial property. He asked if KW had tapped into that resource. Chairman Brown said that he was not aware of it, but they would look more into it.

Chairman Brown asked if there were any specific questions on the grant program. Mr. Holderied asked if the grant program policy was OK as written.

Mr. Walker (Abbot Truck Sales, Inc.) said \$3,500 was not much of an incentive to entice a business into the county. He would like to see more of a 'reward' program put into place. He'd also like to see the regulations for starting a business eased, make permitting easier/faster, and streamline the entire process. The new EDA Specialist should do this. This position should have one purpose only and that is to streamline the process and work for King William County. He would also like to see a local person who knows the county in the position.

Mr. Kellum said we need someone in that position who knows the county and the important players in the county. This person needs to know who to go to for answers. He said commercial properties are limited right now and the problem of VDOT and VDH holding up the permit process needs to be resolved. He suggested that some parcels be rezoned and made ready for commercial use to attract businesses to the county. We should know who we want to go after and have a clear path forward. He asked if Blueprint 2041 is the plan we are following. Mr. Campbell said yes.

Mr. Rice (Aylett Tire) said \$3,500 is enough.

Mr. Kellum said we need to help new businesses navigate through the process – that would be more help than \$3,500. He also said new businesses should be helped more than existing businesses.

Mr. Walker said that a reward program and a recognition program for running a successful business for a year or 18 months would be great.

Mr. Kellum said we should have an event once or twice a year to show what we have to offer in the county for new businesses.

Mr. Holderied asked how the group felt about using the grant funds for signage.

Mr. Kellum asked how much money the EDA had for this grant program. Chairman Brown said \$12,500, but \$29K available to spend. Mr. Kellum said the funds would be better spent on the person hired for the new position for things such as office space, phone, business cards, etc. He said to provide what is needed so this person can hand-hold a new business through the process.

Agenda Item 7. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION - Jay Brown, EDA Chair

Chairman Brown asked each of the roundtable members to introduce themselves and speak a little on their business.

Some of the common concerns were:

- Staffing issues - cannot get or keep skilled staff.
- Sewer and water connections.
- Availability of natural gas lines.
- We need to learn from other counties that are doing well.
- The large companies in the county are hiring most of their staff outside of the county instead of locals.
- Make the startup process easier for new businesses.

Mr. Mills (JN Mills Farms) said we need to control development.

Mr. Kellum said we need to target businesses who do not need direct access to I95.

Mr. Kelley (Farm Bureau) said we should know the top ten types of business we want to attract and target those.

Ms. Custalow said their restaurant has visitors from outside of the area, state, and the country and they are always getting questions about what else there is to do in the county. They feel KW offers a unique experience in itself and we should capitalize on it. They do see a need for more lodging in the county. She shared about a project in Caroline County that involves dumping sewer water into Pole Cat Creek which directly runs into the Mattaponi River and urged the county to investigate what is going on.

Mr. Kellum said a lot of land has been zoned commercial in the county for the 2041 Blueprint that could have been used for residential use and allowed more homes to be built for teachers, EMS, fire fighters, etc. He said too many properties are zoned B-2. He said that all subcontractors working in the county should be required to have a business license for the county and pay taxes in the county. Most counties already require this, but KW does not require it on all types of contractors.

Mr. Walker said we need a good ratio of business to citizens – an 80/20 mix. He also said the policies around signage are too restrictive and need to be improved.

Mr. Rice said he has not been able to hire and keep good employees. KW schools used to teach trades in school but are now busing students out of the county for training.

Agenda Item 8. FINAL THOUGHTS

Chairman Brown said the feedback was great and the conversations need to continue.

Mr. Campbell said it was a great meeting and feedback from the business owners is necessary.

Mr. Piersa asked what new business the Roundtable Members would like to see come to the county. Several responded with something like Agri Supply.

Mr. Hodges said he would be taking the discussion points back to the BOS.

Mr. Moren said the ideas were good and reminded everyone that the county has limited resources. He said we need to execute a plan and not deviate from it.

Agenda Item 9. NEXT MEETING - DECEMBER 13, 2023

Agenda Item 10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

COPY TESTE:

Jay Brown
Chairman

Marci Harris
Administrative Assistant, Clerk's Office