

**ALBEMARLE COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MINUTES
May 20, 2025
Room 241 4:00 P.M.**

Directors present: Don Long, Chair; Jeff Morrill, Vice-chair; David Storm; Steve Hood; Frank Friedman, Bill Mechnick

Directors absent: Andrea Johnson

Staff present: Emily Kilroy, Director of Economic Development; Johnathan Newberry, Deputy Director of Economic Development; Ashley Hernandorena, Business Development Manager; Avery Thompson, Management Analyst III; Jeanette Ark, Project Manager; Richard DeLoria, Senior Assistant County Attorney; Bea LaPisto-Kirtley, Board of Supervisors Liaison to the EDA, Rivanna District; Trevor Henry, Deputy County Executive

Staff absent:

1. Call to Order and Establish Quorum

Chair Long called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. Matters from the Public

Ms. Kilroy confirmed no speakers had signed up or raised their hands to speak.

3. Approval of Minutes

April 15, 2025

Chair Long noted that they would defer approval of the minutes until next month to add more detail.

4. Financial Report

FY25 as of May 14, 2025

Avery Thompson provided the financial report.

5. Unfinished Business

Chair Long reported that he, Ms. Kilroy, and Mr. Richardson met with Ed Rogers of Bonumose.

6. New Business

a. Strategic Plan Work Session

Ms. Kilroy presented the data analysis completed by the consultant and the collected stakeholder engagement. She said that the EDA and the Board of Supervisors had scheduled work sessions, and the feedback at this phase would be

used to refine the draft. She said they expected to have a draft of the Strategic Plan by June. She said a joint meeting was scheduled with the Board on August 13 where it had the option to adopt the plan.

Ms. Kilroy noted there were 13 discovery insights from the consultant, identifying several strengths within the County. She said that the consultant analyzed six target industries, and they proposed that the County focus on three: biotechnology, intelligence and national security, and agribusiness. She said the consultant indicated that the County should focus on infrastructure, land use and zoning, and workforce retention to scale existing businesses.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that the EDA should approach the Board with a strong statement of priorities, specifically including modernization of the zoning ordinance.

Mr. Mechnick noted the need to develop land-use specific metrics to determine the effectiveness of County policies.

Mr. Morrill suggested that they should consider ways to increase the gross regional product without relying on significant population changes.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley noted that the Board was considering data centers, which provided significant revenue without requiring a large number of employees.

Mr. Morrill said that when they considered the best use of developable land, there was still ample room within the development area for housing. He said the County needed to focus on increasing density, especially at the edges of the development area, where they were not currently achieving the density that they needed. He said that they should not be so picky about what types of businesses they pursued because it would continue to increase the residential tax burden on residents.

Chair Long expressed a need to support the people who worked in the County. He said it was important to consider whether the people who worked in the County could live in the County and whether people were able to make community connections.

Ms. Kilroy said that she would provide a summary of the Board's discussion after its work session, and then the EDA could consider scheduling another meeting to discuss any specific feedback.

b. Staff Report

Ms. Kilroy provided the staff report. She said that the Innovation Corridor Strategic Roadmap was a regional effort to examine biotech, data science, and national

security. She said that the CVPED-led application to the GO Virginia program was approved, resulting in a \$100,000 award. She said that the EDA provided a substantial cash-match for the application.

Ms. Kilroy said that a request was submitted to congressional and senatorial representatives to consider funding site-readiness for Rivanna Futures. She said that the state-level program would address the first 55 acres, if fully funded, and the federal request was to address the remaining 50 acres.

Ms. Hernandorena said an improvement project was underway for Crozet Square and Oak Street to update existing infrastructure. She said that staff worked with County departments to provide marketing support to businesses in Crozet Square, including radio advertisements and branded merchandise. She said staff facilitated BRE visits with Rep. McGuire.

Chair Long requested a year-to-date report on the BRE visits conducted by staff.

7. Other Matters

There were none.

8. Adjourn

Chair Long adjourned the meeting at 5:25 p.m. The next meeting is June 17th, 2025, in Room 241.

Teste: _____
Donald Long, Chairman

Approved: _____
Emily Kilroy, Assistant Secretary