

**ALBEMARLE COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MINUTES
September 16, 2025
Room 241, 4:00 p.m.**

Directors present: Don Long, Chair; David Storm; Steve Hood; Frank Friedman

Directors absent: Jeff Morrill, Vice-chair; Andrea Johnson; Bill Mechnick

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

Staff absent: None

1. Call to Order and Establish Quorum

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

2. Matters from the Public

No speakers had signed up or raised their hands to speak.

3. Approval of Minutes

August 19, 2025

Mr. Storm proposed changes to the minutes, to include mention of Director Johnson, and to remove mention of JT Newberry as Deputy Director of the EDA, which he was no longer.

Chair Long mentioned that another set of minutes may have erroneously included Mr. Newberry as Deputy Director, so those should be corrected.

Chair Long proposed a correction, under the Thomas Jefferson bond discussion, to correct "council" to "counsel".

Richard DeLoria, Deputy County Attorney, said that a full copy of the closed session motion will also be included with the minutes.

Motion to approve the August 19, 2025 minutes as amended was made by Mr. Storm and seconded by Mr. Hood.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously. (Morrill, Johnson, and Mechnick were absent)

4. Financial Report

End of FY25 report

Avery Thompson, Business Manager, provided the financial report for the beginning of FY26 and the end-of-year report for FY25

Chair Long suggested removing bonds and loan repayments from the performance agreement report. Instead, he suggested tracking contributions, total commitments, outstanding balance, and whether there were any obligations beyond the current fiscal year.

Mr. Thompson said that an additional column tracking the length of the agreements would help delineate them.

Motion to approve the financial report was made by Mr. Storm and seconded by Mr. Hood.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously. (Morrill, Johnson, and Mechnick were absent)

5. New Business

a. BRE FY25 Summary

Ashley Hernandorena, Business Development Manager, provided a review of the BRE program. She gave a summary of the work done in FY25, highlighting the progress made towards the economic development strategic plan and showcasing some of the key findings from the business climate questionnaire and stakeholder roundtables.

b. EDSP Implementation

Ms. Kilroy said that the scope of work for the economic development strategic plan implementation would be limited, with a focus on facilitated work sessions, and would involve a year-one work plan, a five-year roadmap, and an investment framework to guide the use of available funds. She said that a proposal from [Stephen Pedigo's] new company, Civic Soul, was being considered to support this scope of work, with a budget of under \$10,000.

Motion to approve the appropriation of up to \$15,000 for the Civic Soul proposal was made by Mr. Storm.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously. (Morrill, Johnson, and Mechnick were absent)

c. Afton Scientific Performance Agreement

Chair Long recused himself from the discussion.

Mr. Storm recused himself from the discussion.

Ms. Kilroy provided a summary of the Afton Scientific Performance Agreement. She explained that the company had committed over \$200 million and would create over

200 new jobs. The County had proposed a one-to-one match of \$540,000 from the economic development investment pool, tied to three benchmarks, with a third of funds dispersed after each benchmark: obtaining a building permit, receiving a certificate of occupancy, and completing the agreement with the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Mr. Friedman asked if there was a projected timeline for when the three benchmarks would be met.

Ms. Kilroy said that building permits would be obtained within the next couple of months, followed by a construction period of 12 to 18 months, although no specific plan had been provided by the company. The funding would be spread out over a period of 3 to 5 years.

Mr. DeLoria specified that the state's agreement had a performance date of December 2027, but the overall completion deadline was December 31, 2030. He explained that the County's funding structure would provide local payments as the company met benchmarks within the specified time period, without any provisions for a clawback if the benchmarks were not met.

Ms. Kilroy said there were two documents for approval: the Commonwealth's Development Opportunity Fund Performance Agreement, which the County was a signatory to, and the Economic Development Investment Pool Performance Agreement and Commonwealth Opportunity Fund Match Grant, which outlined the local match between the County and the company.

Mr. Friedman expressed concerns that new businesses may not benefit local communities, and suggested that requiring local hiring could be a consideration for future agreements using EDA funds.

Ms. Kilroy said that based on the projected wage levels, they assumed people would not be relocating for the jobs. She said that verification for local hiring introduced new challenges and additional paperwork.

Ms. Hernandorena noted that some agreements did require a workforce attestation letter, which indicated that a certain percentage of the workforce came from the local area.

Motion to adopt the resolution attached to the meeting materials as Attachment 4c was made by Mr. Friedman and seconded by Mr. Hood.

MOTION: The motion carried (2-0-2). (Friedman and Hood voted aye; Long, and Storm abstained; Morrill, Johnson, and Mechnick were absent)

d. Staff Report

Ms. Kilroy provided the staff report. She introduced Senior Manager for Economic Development Sabawoon Ahmadzai, who was hired in July. She noted that the joint meeting with the Charlottesville EDA was scheduled for the second Tuesday in October, at 4:00 p.m. in Room 241. She said that staff recommended canceling the regular meeting in October. She said they planned to discuss the Innovation Corridor and GO Virginia grant along with the respective economic development strategic plans.

Ms. Kilroy reported that the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors conducted work sessions in September on the Comprehensive Plan, and one more work session was scheduled with the Board in October. She noted that the Economic Development Strategic Plan was now available online.

Ms. Kilroy discussed the new funding they were considering, specifically the Economic Development Access Program by VDOT, and mentioned that the second read of their application was scheduled on the CTB agenda. She said that the application was for the extension of Boulders Road.

Ms. Kilroy said the Home Depot grand opening was held a couple weeks ago, and they were expected to generate significant sales tax revenue for the County. She said that the project represented the first step in redevelopment of Fashion Square Mall.

Ms. Kilroy reported that Mr. Ahmadzai had participated in a VDOT STARS meeting to discuss the Route 29 corridor. She said she had attended the Charlottesville-Albemarle Area Realtors' annual development and economic summit, where she shared information about the County's economic development strategic plan and heard from industry professionals about interest rates and supply and demand trends. She said that the Charlottesville-Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau announced that visitor spending in the region had reached nearly \$1 billion annually, with food and beverage being the highest contributor.

In terms of Business Retention, Ms. Hernandorena reported that since their last meeting, they had conducted six site visits, including one for intelligence and national security and five in manufacturing or other. She said the next quarter's focus would be on agriculture and food processing.

6. Unfinished Business

There was none.

7. **Closed Session**

Motion to adopt the closed meeting motion attached to the meeting materials as Attachment 5 was made by Chair Long and seconded by Mr. Storm.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously. (Morrill, Johnson, and Mechnick were absent)

Motion to certify the closed meeting was made by Chair Long and seconded by Mr. Storm.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously. (Morrill, Johnson, and Mechnick were absent)

8. **Other Matters**

There were none.

9. **Adjourn**

Chair Long adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m. The next meeting is October 21, 2025 in Room 241.

Teste: _____
Donald Long, Chair

Approved: _____
Emily Kilroy, Assistant Secretary