

**ALBEMARLE COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MINUTES
April 21, 2026
Room 235, 5:00 p.m.**

Directors present: Don Long, Chair; Steve Hood, Vice-chair; Andrea Johnson, Treasurer; David Storm; Frank Friedman; Bill Mechnick; Andrew Cox

Directors absent: None

Staff present: Emily Kilroy, Director of Economic Development; Ashley Hernandorena, Business Development Manager; Avery Thompson, Management Analyst III; Lauren Bodhan, Senior Assistant County Attorney; Bea LaPisto-Kirtley, Board of Supervisors Liaison to the Economic Development Authority (EDA), Rivanna District; Trevor Henry, Deputy County Executive

Staff absent: Andy Herrick, County Attorney

Other Presenters: Jason Burch; Anne Allison; Rebecca Kendall; Peter Krebs

1. Call to Order and Establish Quorum

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

Chair Long requested to amend the agenda to add an item under New Business regarding a request from the Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport for a letter of support and funding commitment to obtain matching grant funds.

Motion to amend the agenda to add an item under New Business regarding a request from the Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport for a letter of support and funding commitment to obtain matching grant funds was made by Mr. Long and seconded by Mr. Hood.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously.

2. Matters from the Public

Peter Krebs, Piedmont Environmental Council, spoke about the importance of investing in outdoor recreation and quality of life in the Charlottesville area. He noted that outdoor recreation drove economic activity, attracted businesses, and improved the quality of life for residents. He proposed calling a joint meeting with City, County, and University of Virginia (UVA) representatives to discuss this further.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the March 17, 2026 meetings was made by Mr. Friedman and seconded by Mr. Long.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously.

4. Financial Report

Avery Thompson, Management Analyst III, provided the financial report. He noted the changes from previous month.

5. Unfinished Business

a. Penny's Imperfect Pizza A.F.I.D. Resolution for Approval

Ashley Hernandorena, Business Development Manager, introduced the item, which included a draft performance agreement. She said that the grant was awarded, so they only had to execute the performance agreement.

Motion to approve the resolution approving the AFID grant agreement between the Economic Development Authority (EDA) and Olive Branch Gardens, LLC, doing business as Penny's Imperfect Pizza was made by Mr. Storm and seconded by Mr. Cox.

MOTION: The motion carried (6-1). (Mr. Long, Mr. Hood, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Cox, Mr. Mechnick and Mr. Storm voted aye; Mr. Friedman voted nay)

b. GOVA Region 9 Wine Coalition Update Presentation

Matthew Brown, MWJ Brown Consulting LLC, provided the presentation.

Mr. Friedman asked how much the grant was for, how long it would last, and how they would measure success.

Mr. Brown replied that the grant was approximately \$218,000, and it would end in March 2027. He said that the success metrics included changes in Virginia wine sales and engagement with various resources and services.

Ms. Johnson asked if they had considered creating a platform for Virginia wine producers to sell their product.

Mr. Brown said that ABC regulations made the logistics of such a platform very complex, if not impossible.

Mr. Storm asked if there was a local entity that could fill the role of Silicon Valley Bank. He noted that the bank provided reports and information that promoted wineries, and he wanted to know if there was a similar local agency for Region 9.

Mr. Brown noted that the head of the wine division at Silicon Valley Bank was from Virginia and invested in the industry. He said that while there were some banks in Virginia with winery clients, they did not provide the same comprehensive services as Silicon Valley Bank.

6. New Business

a. Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) Biotech & Life Sciences Workforce Pathways Presentation

Dr. Anne Allison, Executive Director of Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Manufacturing at PVCC, and Rebecca Kendall, Director of Grants at PVCC, provided the presentation.

b. Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport request for USDOT Small Community Air Service Development Program grant match

Ms. Kilroy presented the request. She explained that the route would add direct service to Boston. She said that the route would benefit local biotech industries by opening up networks to the Boston biotech industry. She said that the USDOT grant had a local match component, and applications closed on May 4, 2026. She said that the airport had requested a local match contribution from the EDA of \$15,000.

Jason Burch, CEO of CHO, provided comments regarding the economic impact.

Motion to authorize the Chair to sign a letter of support from the Albemarle County Economic Development Authority to the United States Department of Transportation in support of the Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport Authority's application to the Small Communities Air Service Development Program and approves the appropriation of \$15,000 in matching funding to the Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport Authority, if the airport authority is awarded the grant, to be used as a Minimum Revenue Guarantee (MRG) to attract new direct air service between Charlottesville and Boston was made by Ms. Johnson and seconded by Mr. Hood.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously.

c. Economic Development Strategic Plan – Catalytic Projects

Sabawoon Ahmadzai, Senior Manager, provided a presentation reviewing catalytic project ideas.

Mr. Long said staff would send the list of projects out after the meeting, and they should think of additional ideas to discuss at the next meeting.

Mr. Cox asked if there was a list of sites in the County categorized by development tiers.

Ms. Kilroy said that there was not one at the moment. She said there were a few lists which were out of date, and none were specific enough to match sites to tiers. She said they were currently scoping out what creating such a list would cost.

d. **Staff Report**

Ms. Kilroy provided the staff report. She reviewed the business retention and expansion activity since the last meeting. She highlighted several successful events, such as the ribbon cutting at Agrospheres and the quarterly meeting of the Virginia Economic Developers Association. She said the National Security Data and Policy Institute held its first annual conference, and the Virginia Defense Forum held an inaugural event. She said that Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) held a bootcamp class for economic developers interested in the life sciences sector.

Ms. Hernandorena said they recently wrapped up a series of budget town halls. She noted that the Charlottesville Business Innovation Council held a mixer every second Tuesday at 5 p.m. hosted at the Omni.

Ms. Kilroy announced that the TomTom festival started tomorrow. She said that Economic Development Week would be recognized on May 4. She said that the annual CBIC Awards Gala was upcoming, and a delegation would be making a trip to Chapel Hill for the Chamber Intercity Trip. She said that Mr. Cox had volunteered to judge the Piedmont Ascent Business Conference on behalf of the County. She said that the Charlottesville EDA had expressed interest in scheduling a joint meeting with the County. She said that the current plan was to schedule a joint meeting on September 15, hosted by the City, to discuss collaboration on outdoor recreation opportunities and the innovation corridor strategic roadmap report.

7. **Closed Session**

Motion to convene a closed meeting pursuant to section 2.2-3711(A) of the code of Virginia under subsection (1), to discuss employment of legal counsel for the Authority was made by Mr. Long and seconded by Mr. Mechnick.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously.

Motion to certify by recorded vote that to the best of each Director's knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the Closed Meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the Closed meetings was made by Mr. Long and seconded by Mr. Hood.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously.

Motion to authorize the Chair to negotiate and engage Sands Anderson as bond counsel for the Authority was made by Mr. Long and seconded by Mr. Storm.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously.

8. **Other Matters**

There were none.

9. **Adjourn**

Chair Long adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m. The next meeting is May 19, 2026 in Room 241.

Teste: _____
Don Long, Chair

Approved: _____
Emily Kilroy, Assistant Secretary