

**Loudon County Economic Development Agency/  
Joint Economic and Community Development  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Williamson House  
March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

**The following members were present:** Mayor Buddy Bradshaw, Charlie Bettis, Mayor Jeff Harris, Mayor Tony Aikens, Eddie Simpson, John Evans (Proxy for Ron Jordan), Harold Duff, Bruce Giles, and Bob Elliott

**Also present were:** Ex-Officio Members Amber Scott, Ty Ross, and Clayton Pangle, Loudon City Councilman Tim Brewster, County Commissioner David Meers, News Herald reporter Jeremy Nash, citizen Pat Hunter, and LCEDA staff members Jack Qualls and Blair Patterson

Chairman Buddy Bradshaw called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

**Approval of the minutes from the February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Board of Directors Meeting**

The minutes were emailed to the Members prior to the meeting for their review. **Bruce Giles made a motion to approve the February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019 minutes, seconded by John Evans. All approved.**

**Financial Report**

Charlie Bettis presented the Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet reviewing current assets, fixed assets, and liabilities. **Eddie Simpson made a motion to approve the financial report, seconded by Bruce Giles. Motion passed.**

**Proposed FY 19-20 Budget**

The Executive Committee recommended the approval of the proposed FY 19-20 Budget. **Bruce Giles made a motion to approve the Proposed FY 19-20 Budget, seconded by Jeff Harris. All approved.**

**Approval of Executive Committee's Recommendation to Opt in or Opt out of Retiree Health Insurance Coverage**

The Executive Committee recommended the Board choose to opt in to offering retiree health insurance coverage.

**Jeff Harris made a motion to opt in to offering retiree health insurance coverage, seconded by Bruce Giles. All approved.**

**LCEDA Credit Card Policy**

The Executive Committee recommended the adoption of the presented LCEDA Credit Card Policy. **John Evans made a motion to adopt the LCEDA Credit Card Policy, seconded by Charlie Bettis. All approved.**

**Centre 75 – Agriculture Lease**

Jack Qualls stated that Mr. James had plans to send his lease payment in the mail and continue with business as usual. Bruce Giles brought up the issues that remain with the current contract and would like to discuss amending the wordage. He stated the corrections made to the lease would protect both Mr. James and the LCEDA Board for the remaining terms of the agreement. The issues discussed that needed to be resolved in the contract were the specified planting of crops, mowing requirements, and hunting restrictions.

**Bruce Giles made a motion to amend the current document to specify the agricultural practices allowed for the remainder of the lease, make it be known to the public that there is no hunting on the property, and take away the requirement to mow.**

**Eddie Simpson made a motion to amend adding the requirement to provide proof of liability coverage.**

The Board discussed that this is something that he should be able to provide without it being put in the contract. Jack Qualls asked for clarification as to what he is taking to the attorney to be amended in the current active contract. The conversation took place as to what agricultural growth should be permitted on the property, concluding to allow the growth of corn and soybeans.

**Eddie Simpson withdrew his amendment.**

**Charlie Bettis made a motion to amend to have Jack move forward with the original motion and recommendation having an attorney draft the changes to the original contract, seconded by Jeff Harris.**

**Amendment passed.**

**All approved the motion as amended.**

### **Loudon County EDA Office Location**

Mayor Aikens asked for clarification on the status of the City of Loudon's decision moving forward with the Williamson House; stating the Board was told that the EDA could stay, but the newspaper reporting of the City of Loudon's workshop stated otherwise. Loudon City Councilman Tim Brewster stated that he changed his mind and wanted the EDA offices to move out of the Williamson House. Brewster commented that the location of the house is an embarrassment including the drive into the house. Chairman Bradshaw asked if the City of Loudon is okay with the EDA being located in the house, Brewster answered no and Mayor Harris stated the council decided to base their decision on the EDA Board's decision on where to locate. Brewster said that if the EDA Board decides to stay in the Williamson House the council will put a stipulation that the other city help with the cost and upkeep. He also stated that Lenoir City has a nice place and so does Loudon and questioned as to why they wouldn't move the EDA. Harris restated that the council will base their decision on the EDA Board's recommendation and go from there. Eddie Simpson posed the question asking what the Board see best for Loudon County, looking into the big picture as to what is best for the community. Bruce Giles stated that he has been on this Board for a long time and seen the great things the EDA has done for the community, and he doesn't understand why there is suddenly a problem. Giles said the EDA has done a phenomenal job in the past few years and it is made clear to him that the City of Loudon does not want the EDA to function here for some reason. Brewster stated that this is not about the successes it's about the location and curb appeal. Giles stated Brewster came into the last meeting telling the EDA Board they could stay if they would like to, and now he is saying the opposite. Mayor Harris stated that the EDA moving out of the Williamson House may not be the mindset of the rest of the Council. Mayor Aikens stated that the EDA Board was originally formed to keep politics out of the decision making process and that it is unfortunate that politics began playing such a big role in the function of the EDA a few months ago. Also stating that the EDA staff does a fantastic job which both cities and the county have benefitted from. John Evans made the comment to begin talking about the options in Loudon and Lenoir City questioning the costs associated with each location and other factors going into moving the EDA. Both cities concluding the costs would be minimal. Tim Brewster stated that if the Board were to move the EDA to the LCUB building, the City of Loudon would still be able to provide a meeting location for the EDA to host prospects looking in Loudon. John Evans stated that it might be a good compromise to house the EDA in both the City of Loudon and Lenoir City.

**Bruce Giles made a motion to move the LCEDA offices and primary location to the LCUB building with a satellite office in Loudon, seconded by Eddie Simpson.**

**A roll call vote was taken:**

**Bradshaw – Nay**

**Harris – Nay**

Evans – Yea

Simpson – Yea

Bettis – Yea

Giles – Yea

Duff – Yea

Elliott – Nay

**Motion passed.**

The discussion took place on next steps with relocating including space, assets, and costs.

**Additional Business**

Chairman Bradshaw stated that the LCEDA and TRDA will both be working on the Christenson Yachts project coming back to the TRDA property located in Loudon County.

Jack Qualls stated the activity is picking up with prospect interest and visits, with a positive outlook on landing a project in the near future.

With no further business **Jeff Harris made a motion to adjourn seconded by Bob Elliott, motion carried.**

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Blair Patterson, Recording Secretary