

1 **TOBACCO REGION REVITALIZATION COMMISSION**

2 701 East Franklin Street, Suite 501

3 Richmond, Virginia 23219

4

5

6

7 **Southern Virginia Committee Meeting**

8 Friday, January 8, 2021

9 2:30 o'clock p.m.

10

11

12 *(Electronic Conference Call Meeting)*

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1     APPEARANCES:

2     The Honorable Edward Owens, Chairman  
3     The Honorable Jordan Miles, III, Vice Chairman  
4     The Honorable Lashrecse D. Aird  
5     Ms. Gayle Barts  
6     Ms. Coley Drinkwater  
7     The Honorable James E. Edmunds, II  
8     Dr. Alexis I. Ehrhardt  
9     The Honorable Franklin Harris  
10    Mr. Richard T. Hite, Jr.  
11    The Honorable Joseph D. Morrissey  
12    Mr. Cecil E. Shell  
13    The Honorable Roslyn C. Tyler

14

15    COMMISSION STAFF:

16    Mr. Evan Feinman, Executive Director  
17    Mr. Andy Sorrell, Deputy Executive Director  
18    Mr. Michael F. Kaestner, Grants Program Director  
19    Ms. Stephanie S. Kim, Director of Finance  
20    Ms. Sarah K. Capps, Grants Program Administrator,  
21        Southside Virginia  
22    Ms. Michele Faircloth, Grants Assistant  
23        Southside Virginia  
24    Mr. Jordan Butler, Public Relations Coordinator

25

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

COUNSEL FOR THE COMMISSION:

Ms. Elizabeth B. Myers, Assistant Attorney General  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

1 January 8, 2021

2

3 MR. OWENS: Good morning, everyone. I'm going to  
4 call the Southern Virginia Committee to order, and call on Andy.

5 MR. SORRELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all,  
6 I just wanted to read from some prepared wording about our  
7 electronic meeting ground rules. Due to the Governor's declared  
8 state of emergency, this meeting is being held electronically  
9 without a quorum of the public body physically assembled at one  
10 location. The nature of this pandemic makes it impractical and  
11 unsafe to assemble a quorum in a single location.

12 In addition, the purpose of this meeting is to discuss  
13 or transact business that is statutorily required to continue the  
14 operations of the Commission. Public notice of this meeting was  
15 provided on both the Commonwealth's calendar and the  
16 Commission's website contemporaneously with the notice  
17 provided to the Commission. A recording of this meeting, as well  
18 as the minutes, shall be posted on the Commission's website as  
19 soon as practical after the conclusion of this meeting. The  
20 agenda and all other meeting materials can also be found on the  
21 Commission's website. And there will be an opportunity for  
22 public comment at both the beginning and the end of the  
23 meeting.

24 Relating to the electronic meeting ground rules, please  
25 mute yourself if you're not speaking. If you're only participating

1 by phone, please remember to press Star 6, mute or unmute  
2 yourself. All participants are unmuted at the start of the  
3 meeting, and participants will be returned to mute if background  
4 noise or other disruptions occur. If repeated disruptions occur,  
5 participants will be removed from the meeting.

6 Public comment will be provided, as I mentioned, at  
7 the beginning and at the end of the meeting. And if a member of  
8 the public desires to address the Commission, please reserve  
9 your questions until this portion of the meeting. Participants  
10 may also use the raised-hand feature or send a comment in the  
11 chat box feature of the electronic meeting program, and the  
12 comment will be read during the public comment portion.

13 At the time of public comments, please state your full  
14 name, your location, and the organization that you may  
15 represent. Please keep your comments to two minutes each.  
16 That's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

17 MR. OWENS: Thank you, Andy. At this time, we'll  
18 have roll call. Mr. Feinman.

19 MR. FEINMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
20 Mr. Owens.

21 MR. OWENS: Here.  
22 Delegate Aird.

23 DELEGATE AIRD: Here.

24 MR. FEINMAN: Ms. Drinkwater.

25 MS. DRINKWATER: Present.

1 MR. FEINMAN: Delegate Edmunds.

2 DELEGATE EDMUNDS: Here.

3 MR. FEINMAN: Dr. Ehrhardt.

4 DR. EHRHARDT: Here.

5 MR. FEINMAN: Senator Morrissey.

6 SENATOR MORRISSEY: Here.

7 MR. FEINMAN: Mr. Shell.

8 MR. SHELL: Here.

9 MR. FEINMAN: Delegate Tyler.

10 DELEGATE TYLER: Present.

11 MR. FEINMAN: You have a quorum, Mr. Chairman.

12 MR. OWENS: I want to welcome new members to the  
13 Committee.

14 Ms. Drinkwater, Mr. Hite, Mr. Miles, I look forward to  
15 working with you.

16 And at this time, I'd like to have a motion to approve  
17 the minutes from 9-28-20. Do I hear a motion to approve?

18 MS. EHRHARDT: This is Alexis Ehrhardt. So moved.

19 DELEGATE TYLER: Second.

20 MR. OWENS: Any other discussion on the minutes?

21 Hearing none, all those in favor, signify by saying aye. (Ayes).

22 Opposed? (No response). The minutes are approved

23 Now, we have to elect a Vice Chair of the Committee.

24 Do I hear a nomination for the Southern Virginia Committee?

25 DELEGATE EDMUNDS: Mr. Chairman, I nominate

1 Jordan Miles.

2 MR. OWENS: Is there a second?

3 MR. HARRIS: Second.

4 MR. OWENS: Who was that, Mr. Harris?

5 MR. HARRIS: Yes.

6 MR. OWENS: It's been moved and seconded. Any  
7 other nominations? Hearing none, the nomination is closed. All  
8 those in favor of the motion, signify by saying aye. (Ayes). All  
9 opposed? (No response). The ayes have it. Congratulations to  
10 Mr. Miles.

11 MR. MILES: Mr. Chairman, if I may. Hello,  
12 everybody, it's a pleasure to serve alongside Mr. Owens. Hope to  
13 be working hard for the Southern Virginia Committee and in the  
14 Tobacco Commission Footprint. I do look forward to hearing  
15 from you all and working with you all on these great projects in  
16 the future together. So, thank you. And thank you, Mr.  
17 Chairman.

18 MR. OWENS: Thank you, and look forward to working  
19 with you.

20 At this time, we'll talk about Extensions and  
21 Modifications, and I'll ask Sarah Capps to come forward.

22 MS. CAPPS: Mr. Chairman and members of the  
23 Committee. There are three Extension and Modification projects  
24 that requires your approval for an extension or modification to  
25 the individual projects. Staff has been in close contact with the

1 grantees for all of these projects.

2 The first one is the Danville-Pittsylvania Regional  
3 Industrial Facilities Authority, which is Grant Number 3358. This  
4 involves the Berry Hill Industrial Park Site Improvement project.  
5 It was originally improved with the title, Site Improvements for  
6 Project Lignum. They are recommending a sixth year extension  
7 to January 31, 2023. It was originally approved in 2018 to focus  
8 on the grading of Lot 8, and that was the Berry Hill Site. This  
9 was specifically for a prospect at that time, Project Lignum. The  
10 project did not proceed. However, there was a need for a large  
11 graded site. They shifted their focus from this grant to Lots 1  
12 and 2, a need to grade a 65-acre site.

13 The reason for the change was that in order to, there  
14 was a much larger Lot 8, and that was to be a mega-project.  
15 And the parties got together the latter part of last year and  
16 working with a very active prospect, that prospect goes by the  
17 name of Project Cactus. And if that project comes to fruition, it'll  
18 be approximately or result in a half a million dollar capital  
19 improvement or a half a billion dollar capital improvement and  
20 1,100 direct jobs.

21 This is an interim approval of the changes, and to  
22 clarify, this was specifically to allow the A&E work to continue in  
23 order to allow staying on schedule. So, some of these details  
24 have been clarified and they have a need for this site, whether  
25 Project Cactus ultimately chooses the region, or they also have a



1 need for other prospects, two other active prospects that could  
2 use a site of this scale. Other than the construction scheduled  
3 target completion of the site work by the end of 2021. They are  
4 requesting a sixth year extension to January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, and for  
5 the construction to continue through 2022, in the event that  
6 there are unanticipated delays with such a large grading project  
7 and that could involve the weather or what have you.

8 Staff recommends approval of the change of scope,  
9 budget revision, and fifth year extension to January 31, 2023.

10 Mr. Chairman, would you like to hear all three projects  
11 or take them up individually?

12 MR. OWENS: Does anybody have any questions about  
13 this project? Anybody in the community have any questions  
14 about this project? Hearing none, we'll press on.

15 MR. CAPPS: The next one on the list is for Lunenburg  
16 County, this is the Acquisition and Development of the New  
17 Industrial Park, it's Grant Number 3035, a request for a four-  
18 month extension to 9-30-2021. Back in May, 2015, the  
19 Commission approved a \$550,000 grant to support development  
20 of a new industrial park in Lunenburg County. Seventy-two  
21 thousand of those funds have been spent to acquire the property.

22 After the property was acquired, they went into a  
23 stalled period where there was no activity and there was a  
24 turnover of County personnel and there was a lot of attention to  
25 moving the project forward. Back in June of 2019, the

1 Commission approved a sixth year extension, and this had to do  
2 with some revisions. The Committee indicated the extension  
3 could be granted, and the revised budget was recently approved.

4 The County has been working with Timmons to  
5 develop an asbestos abatement and building demolition plans  
6 and they have received bids from contractors. The County does  
7 expect to complete the abatement and demolition work by April  
8 of 2021. However, there's also the need to remove the concrete  
9 pad, and that requires a DEQ permit to proceed, and Timmons is  
10 estimating that they require an additional four-months to  
11 complete all of those activities. That's just a very modest four-  
12 month additional extension that's being requested here.

13 Staff does support this, Staff supports the approval of  
14 a final four-month extension until September 30, 2021 to allow  
15 completion, completion of the abatement and demolition work  
16 and receipt of DEQ permits.

17 MR. OWENS: Anybody have any questions on this  
18 project? Hearing none, move on.

19 MS. CAPPs: The last project on the list is Campbell  
20 County. It's the Last Mile Broadband Southeast Project, Number  
21 3524. This project would have been approved for funding under  
22 the R&D Committee for a broadband project. That committee no  
23 longer exists.

24 This comes before your Committee. This was  
25 originally a grant award for \$156,313 to support a wireless

1 broadband project in underserved areas of Campbell County.  
2 The Commission faced some challenges with the internet service  
3 provider and then working with a different internet service  
4 provider to fund the wireless work to the County. The County  
5 received CARES Act funding and to do some work that was  
6 originally intended to be supported with a Commission grant.

7 The County has approached the Commission about  
8 approving a revision to the scope of work to focus on other areas  
9 of the County that were identified as unserved. Those areas  
10 proposed to be targeted are in the Concord area of the County  
11 and the primary focus on Mount Athos Road and Oxford Furnace  
12 Road areas. There are more household and businesses that'll be  
13 provided services under the revised scope, there's an estimated  
14 1,485 households and 144 commercial units that would be  
15 provided. We certainly commend the County for accomplishing  
16 the original with other sources.

17 So, the Staff recommends the revised scope, and the  
18 requested change of scope will authorize B2X to serve as the ISP  
19 and expand on the tower locations and wireless network  
20 established with the CARES Act funding and make broadband  
21 available to additional underserved communities in Campbell  
22 County.

23 So, Staff recommends approval of the revised scope  
24 and budget.

25 MR. OWENS: Does anyone have any questions or

1 comments about this project? Any reason to pull anything out of  
2 the block or do you want to vote in a block?

3 MR. FEINMAN: I think a block would work just fine  
4 unless there are folks who need to pull for the purposes of  
5 abstention or contesting the vote.

6 MR. OWENS: Any discussion? All those in favor of  
7 the Staff recommendation, say aye. (Ayes). The ayes have it.

8 All right. Any other business before we open it up for  
9 public comment?

10 MR. FEINMAN: No, Mr. Chairman, and I commend  
11 you for starting on time and getting us back on schedule. We are  
12 running into a 15-minute break and then have the Full  
13 Commission at 3:15. And after public comment, if any, we can  
14 adjourn.

15 MR. OWENS: I'll open the floor for any public  
16 comment? All right, there's no indication of public comment.

17 I want to thank the Staff for doing your work and  
18 presenting the case.

19 If there's no further business, we're adjourned.

20

21

22

---

**PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED.**

23

24

25

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

**CERTIFICATE OF THE COURT REPORTER**

I, Medford W. Howard, Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public for the State of Virginia at Large, do hereby certify that I was the Court Reporter who took down and transcribed the proceedings of the **Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, Southern Virginia Committee Meeting**, when held on Friday, January 8, 2021, at 2:30 o'clock p.m.

I further certify this is a true and accurate transcript, to the best of my ability to hear and understand the proceedings.

Given under my hand this \_\_\_\_\_ day of January, 2021.

---

Medford W. Howard  
CCR