

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF NORFOLK

Meeting Minutes

The Economic Development Authority of the City of Norfolk called, and held, its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, May 6, 2026, at 12:03 PM, 999 Waterside Drive, Suite 400, Norfolk, Virginia 23510.

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Morgan Whayland- Chair
Carter Smith- Vice Chairman
Jaeson Dandalides
Michael Hull
Henri Patten
Simon Scott
Keith Warren (participating remotely)
George Polizos
John Garrett

STAFF PRESENT:

Sean Washington- Executive Director
Mike Paris- Secretary-Treasurer
Bob Sharak- Assistant Executive Director

COUNSEL PRESENT:

Barry Hunter- Kaufman & Canoles, P.C.

ABSENT:

Director Richard Ottinger
Dawn Ryan- Assistant Secretary-Treasurer

GUESTS:

Anita Poston- Woods Rogers
Shenette Felton- Department of Finance
Allison Alcantara- City Controller's Office
Mia Byrd Wilson- Department of Economic Development
Wayne Green- Department of Economic Development
Brittney Hatcher- Department of Economic Development
Nikki Southall- Department of Economic Development
Delk Koolman - Department of Economic Development
Malijah Rubin- Department of Economic Development
Amy Diggins- Department of Economic Development
Christine Barreca - Department of Economic Development
Trevor Metcalfe- The Virginian Pilot
Jared Butts- Keeping It Kleen, Business Owner

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chairwoman Whayland called the meeting to order at 12:03 PM. After confirming that Director Warren's voice could be heard by all persons at the central meeting location, Chairwoman Whayland requested a motion to approve Director Warren's remote participation in the meeting. Director Hull moved to approve Director Warren's remote participation, which motion was seconded by Director Garrett and unanimously approved (Vote 8-0-0). Director Warren joined remotely from Charlotte, NC due to leadership meetings for his full-time job. This is Director Warren's first time in the calendar year participating remotely.

Chairwoman asked if there were any changes or questions regarding the minutes from the last meeting. Director Hull mentioned that Director Warren asked about the Commercial Corridor Program in Ocean View last meeting, not himself. Director Hull then moved to approve the minutes as corrected, which motion was seconded by Director Patten and unanimously approved (Vote 8-0-0).

Chairwoman Whayland welcomed Anita Poston to the meeting and announced that she and Mr. Hunter would discuss the Bond Resolution on the agenda. Mr. Hunter provided some background for the Resolution, stating that his firm was representing Old Dominion University Real Estate Foundation (the "Foundation") in the application for the Bond issue, so Ms. Poston had been engaged to represent the EDA in the matter. Mr. Hunter said the Resolution was for approval of the issuance of a Bond for a subsidiary of the Foundation to acquire "Proximity at ODU" and lease it to Old Dominion University. He said the Bond initially would be taxable, but that after a transition period of a year or so, the taxable bond would be refunded by a tax exempt bond. So, the Resolution would approve a Bond Purchase and Loan Agreement for the Taxable Bond and a Forward Purchase Agreement for the tax exempt bond once conditions for issuance of the tax exempt bond have been satisfied.

Anita Poston then advised the Directors that in representing the EDA she would be reviewing the documents and making sure there was authority for the EDA to issue the Bond. Ms. Poston said the EDA would be the issuer of the Bond but would not have any liability or cost, the borrower would.

Chairwoman Whyland said the Bond issue was the direct result of making the admin rate more competitive. She said the EDA's bond proceeds have been a declining revenue source, but this provides new revenue to forward the EDA's mission. Mr. Washington said that there would be three (3) years of interest-only payments during which the full admin fee would be received. Mr. Hunter confirmed there would be an interest only period not to extend three years but would likely be less and then the Bond would be amortized over a thirty (30) year period with fifteen-year tender option.

Director Scott asked if this would have an impact on tax revenue that the City would receive. Mr. Hunter said that he didn't know if there would be any impact on City tax revenue, but Mr. Washington indicated that the property would be owned in an LLC so taxes would go to the City. Mr. Hunter then stated he didn't know if leasing the project to the University would affect the real estate taxes but that the Foundation would work to reduce taxes any way it could. Mr. Washington said he would reach out to the City of Norfolk Real Estate Department to confirm the payment of real estate taxes.

Director Dandalides moved to approve the Resolution, which motion was seconded by Director Smith and approved, with Director Scott voting no (Vote 7-1-0). Chairwoman Whyland asked Mr. Washington to report back when he talks with Real Estate. (Attachment #1)

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Mr. Paris gave the monthly financial update, highlighting revenues, expenses, and grants. Mr. Paris reported that revenues are good and expenses are low.

Director Warren asked if the expenses shown on the budget handout were associated with the Military Circle Mall transfer. Mr. Paris stated that the EDA is still incurring expenses, but that the

EDA should be done with the Military Circle Mall expenses and revenue by the end of FY26. Mr. Paris said he would provide more information about grant activity in the future.

Director Garrett asked for more context on the timing of new bond revenue, and Mr. Paris responded that admin fees are billed in arrears. (Attachment #2)

DIRECTORS REPORT

Mr. Washington began his report by stating that he would provide an update on the Opportunity Zones and hoped to have an update on department job vacancies once the hiring freeze is lifted at the start of FY27. Mr. Washington mentioned that Christine Barreca would be considered as an additional Assistant Secretary-Treasurer for the EDA at a future meeting.

Mr. Washington reported that the Military Circle Mall transfer was almost finalized and \$600,000 was transferred to the City by ordinance approved on April 28, 2026. He also stated that Divaris was approved to open accounts on behalf of the City and that demolition of the Mall would commence in early fall. He stated that there is an RFP out for the demolition work.

Director Garrett asked about the RFP currently out for the demolition work. Mr. Washington stated that Ross and Sentara are being considered with respect to the demolition. Chairwoman Whyland asked if the transfer of funds includes the money from the Cinemark settlement, to which Mr. Washington replied yes.

Mr. Washington stated that the staff was working with Timmons for reports on the Virginia Business Ready Site Program grant and that an application would be submitted on behalf of the EDA via a resolution approved last month. He mentioned that the PIDP application date is June 6, 2026, and briefly compared the PIDP grant funds in FY23 versus FY26. He stated that staff was talking with contractors to help with the application and noted that the EDA will want to issue an RFP for help with the financial administration of the grant.

Chairwoman Whayland said that, since the EDA was applying for the grant, she encouraged everyone to ask for some letters of support from local, state, and federal representatives to increase support for the application.

Mr. Washington reported that the Mil-Spec grant application is in the hands of the DHCD and will work with Mr. Hunter when it's time for EDA approval. He then reported on the "Back in the Building" event, which had the goal of filling vacancies downtown. He mentioned that at the event they discussed strategies to help with messaging to fill vacancies downtown.

Director Dandalides asked if we had a list of who owns properties downtown and if we had a database. Mr. Washington stated that Costar and Norfolk Air are two databases that track this information.

Mr. Washington said that we are doubling down on our relationship with MEDAC. He then reported on the Opportunity Zones, stating that there are sixteen zones in Virginia. Mr. Washington then stated that VA DHCD did a survey with us with our recommendations on the zones with the Alliance. He also mentioned that we only have two Maritime Prosperity Zones in Virginia.

Director Warren asked who makes the nominations for the Opportunity Zones. Mr. Washington answered that these go through the VA DHCD, and then the Secretary of Commerce and VEDP. Director Warren then asked if we, the mayor, or City Council would influence nominations for the zones. Mr. Washington stated that City Council votes and then it is routed to the State. Director Warren asked how big the zones were, and Mr. Washington stated that there was no answer on this yet.

Mr. Washington said that the DNC is soliciting micro grant program sponsorships for facade work to prep businesses for Sail250 on June 19-23, 2026. He then mentioned that the EDA still owns property in Central Business Park and did an overview of the Simon Outlet parcels the EDA owns.

Director Hull asked what efforts the City staff was undertaking to bring in new business and how the City meets and attracts companies. Mr. Washington reported that the City partners with the

Alliance on targeted industries, with site consultants, noting that eight out of ten businesses come from site consultants. He also said MEDAC helps the City get in front of folks. Director Hull then asked what we do to have Norfolk stand out with the Alliance so that they don't only share business with other municipalities. Mr. Washington and Mr. Sharak said that this decision-making is based on the availability of sites, not assignments. They also stated that the Alliance knows Norfolk well and the City staff goes on trips with them and VEDP, noting Mia Byrd was going to the VEDP Knowledge Conference. Mr. Washington also mentioned that the City does selective advertising but is open to more ideas. Director Hull wanted to know if there was an opportunity to ramp up these ideas or whether we were constrained by the City Budget. Mr. Washington said that he didn't think we were constrained for FY27, although there were travel restraints in FY26.

Chairwoman Whyland asked about how much the EDA and the City are supporting travel, to which Mr. Washington responded that Mike would be addressing that later. (Attachment #3)

NEW BUSINESS

Chairwoman Whyland gave the floor to Mr. Paris to present the FY27 proposed budget. She stated that the vote would come next month and today is just the first conversation. Mr. Paris gave an update on FY27 revenues, expenses, and surplus.

Chairwoman Whyland mentioned that some people think the EDA budget is large, but the EDA operates on thin margins with most money just flowing through the EDA or specific projects. Mr. Paris said that he would share more about the Revolving Loan Fund and pass-through grants on a monthly basis. Mr. Paris then reported that EDA staff met with TowneBank and they agreed to increase our money market account interest rate and lower fees. He also mentioned that no property sales are anticipated in FY27.

Director Hull asked what types of functions came out of the legal expenses line. Mr. Paris stated that this could be anything from assistance on property acquisitions, loans, bonds, general matters, etc.

Chairwoman Whyland asked if budget lines are based on costs and revenue we expect, to which Mr. Paris said that we usually over-budget and think conservatively.

Director Dandalides asked if we get any cigarette tax back, and Mr. Washington replied that we may receive a portion. Mr. Washington said there was a Cooperation Agreement which authorized some of those cigarette dollars to come to the EDA, which lasted for ten years. He said he recently spoke with Finance about a new Cooperation Agreement. Chairwoman Whyland asked if there were any other Cooperation Agreements on this timeframe, to which Mr. Washington said no.

Director Smith asked about the Small Business Program budget line. Mr. Washington said that this line was previously used to provide funds to non-profits that support start-ups such as the Small Business Development Center and ODU Women's Center. He then said that these funds were pulled out for MacArthur Mall shortfalls. Mr. Washington said that if there are any recommendations from the Board, we could reinstate the budget line items.

Director Smith said that he thinks the Small Business Program budget line is worth discussing at some point. Chairwoman Whyland said that she thinks if we have a surplus, we should use it if it will make an impact.

Director Hull mentioned that we have spent more money on food than travel and disagrees with the allocations. He said that we should have as many publications for marketing as possible. Chairwoman Whyland clarified that the food budget line also included food for travel and perhaps it should be better delineated.

Director Smith said that he would like to see the actuals and year to date figures in the FY27 proposed budget, which Chairwoman Whyland seconded. Mr. Paris said that he would make this change. Director Garrett left the meeting at 1:07 PM.

Mr. Paris continued to report on pass-through grants and said that he would give more information on the timing of payments. Mr. Paris reiterated that he would include information on the Revolving Loan Fund in monthly reports and not just the annual reports. Chairwoman Whyland

suggested a cover page summary with the grants and pending Cooperation Agreements for the Board to reference in the meetings. Mike agreed that this could be done.

Director Hull asked if it would be possible to share the City budget with the same rows to compare it to the EDA budget. Mr. Paris said the budget is still proposed for FY27, but he could get a projection. Mr. Paris noted that if we are not spending City dollars we will lose them, and reminded everyone that EDA money rolls over, which is a factor in spending.

Director Hull said that he wanted to know more about City spending versus EDA spending. Mr. Paris thanked Ms. Felton and Ms. Alcantara for being at the meeting from Finance and said that they would help with this comparison.

Director Hull then suggested calling a budget line “business recruitment travel, food, and marketing” for clarity. Mr. Paris reported that eventually the staff would want to automate budget reports, but that staff will need to work with Finance so the charts of accounts match.

Chairwoman Whayland then asked Mr. Washington for a quick summary of relevant Façade Improvement Grants (FIG). Mr. Washington mentioned that a Cooperation Agreement would be on the docket for the next City Council meeting. Chairwoman Whayland asked for a clarification of the responsibilities of the EDA and of City Council regarding giving input for the program. Mr. Washington said that City Council has already decided and it would go through them. (Attachment #4)

Ms. Southall and Mr. Koolman reported on the FIG program outcomes and metrics. They presented the Commercial Corridor Program metrics, including how \$1.7 million was awarded for façade grants with an ROI of \$7.2 million. They discussed how City departments and City Council identify commercial corridors.

Director Warren asked whether “vacant spaces” meant lots or buildings. Mr. Koolman clarified that they meant buildings.

Chairwoman Whyland asked whether all new businesses were part of the applications. Ms. Southall said that some businesses are new, but Mr. Koolman further explained that sometimes property owners are awarded funds so a future tenant can benefit.

Director Polizos asked how business improvements are tracked and quantified. Mr. Koolman said that staff was tracking increases in rental rates and property values, as well as following up with business owners.

Director Hull asked if we had more data on the interior and exterior grants that are awarded. Chairwoman Whyland discussed being mindful of the structure of FIG. Mr. Washington stated that we want the hybrid option to improve the interior and exterior of buildings based on the data and anecdotal evidence from awardees. Mr. Washington explained that the program was created originally to reduce the blight of structures and encourage folks to invest in their businesses. Chairwoman Whyland said that she gets lots of questions on the program and wondered if this is a branding issue. She mentioned that we should follow City Council's goal for the program and would defer to conversations with the City Manager and Council before changing anything.

Ms. Southall then showed before and after pictures of ongoing Commercial Corridor efforts and mentioned continued meetings with the community for the Sewell's Point and Church Street Corridors. Mr. Washington said that he was asked to add language to the Commercial Corridor Program to add that property can be acquired. At 1:28 PM Director Warren left the meeting virtually. At 1:38 PM, Director Smith left the meeting.

Mr. Washington concluded by reporting that there was \$265,000 left to transfer to the EDA to fund NEON district infrastructure grants.

Chairwoman Whyland thanked everyone for attending the meeting and Mr. Washington said he will provide the City Budget and EDA Budget crosswalk to the Directors. (Attachment #5)

CLOSING

Chairwoman Whayland adjourned the meeting at 1:39 PM.

Approved by Meg Whayland

- Attachments:
1. Bond Resolution ODUREF
 2. Financial Report
 3. Directors Report
 4. FY27 Proposed Budget
 5. FIG Presentation