

CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Special Called Meeting
August 24, 2022, MINUTES

The City of Virginia Beach Development Authority (“VBDA”) held a special called meeting on Tuesday, August 24, 2022, at 3:00 p.m. in the Economic Development Town Center Boardroom at 4525 Main Street, Suite 700, Virginia Beach, VA, pursuant to notice given by the Chair.

Full video of item presentations and discussions can be viewed on our website at the following link –
<https://www.yesvirginiabeach.com/vbda>

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lisa M. Murphy, Chair
William Brunke, Treasurer
David Bernd, Secretary
Nneka Chiazor, Commissioner
Penny Morgan, Commissioner
Joseph Strange, Commissioner
Guenter H. Weissenseel, Commissioner

ADVISORS PRESENT: Robert M. Dyer, Mayor
Taylor V. Adams, Deputy City Manager/Director of Economic Development
Alexander W. Stiles, Senior City Attorney
Kathy Warren, Deputy Director of Economic Development
Kaitlen Alcock, Planner II
Michael Anaya, Planner III
Emily Archer, Project Development Manager
Bryan Clark, Media and Communications Coordinator III
Devin Cowhey, Business Development Manager II
Katrina N. Flowers, VBDA Accountant
Paige Fox, Business Development Manager II
Elisabeth D. Parker, Administrative Assistant
Svetla Tomanova, Business Development Rep
Ray White, Business Development Coordinator
Deborah Zywna, Planner III
Dorothy Wood, Special Guest

REPORTED BY: Taylor V. Adams

RECORDED BY: Vicki L. Kelley

Chair, Lisa Murphy, began the meeting at 3:00 p.m. and read her letter requesting a special meeting.

OPEN FLOOR

No Public Speakers

SPECIAL MEETING

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT PROGRAM (EDIP)

1. Approval of a Resolution authorizing an EDIP Part “A” award in the amount of \$800,000 for DroneUp, LLC, presented by Ray White.

Discussion:

Ms. Dorothy Wood shared that she has known the owners Tom and Diane for a long time and is very proud of them. She also added that we could not have a better new company.

MOTION: William Brunke
SECOND: David Bernd
APPROVED: 7-0-0

Chair Lisa Murphy announced that Mayor Dyer would like to say a few words:


Mayor Dyer shared that it was a privilege to be at the meeting and thanked all for making Virginia Beach the economic engine that it is today. There is something to be said about starting roots and expanding the roots within the city that grow and expand into an overwhelming success. Virginia Beach is on the cusp of such a positive transformation. We have cables, broadband, and technology coming in. But, before that, we had DroneUp. They proved that we could have an incubator company come here and not only survive but also thrive and take us to the next level. This sends a clear and coherent message to the rest of the country (Virginia Beach is open for business). We are going to be a technology hub in the future, and I tell my friends that friends don't let their friends let their children go to Northern Virginia to work. We want to be able to find them jobs, right here in Virginia Beach. If you look at DroneUp, and what they are going to bring with the caliber of jobs that they are going to bring here. The City of Virginia Beach is a City in transition and we have been a great City for many years now, going on sixty years. With a legacy of greatness and people have worked together to make the City of Virginia Beach the City that we are. One pride I take in this city is that no Mayor does anything by himself but it's through your efforts here with the Authority to bring in new businesses. I defy anyone to find a city in this Nation that made it through Covid as well as we did, because of our community coming together in a most positive way. Once again, I would like to say to Tom and his entire crew, thank you for putting your faith in Virginia Beach.

Mayor Dyer presented Mr. and Mrs. Walker with a City of Virginia Beach Flag and asked them to fly the flag with honor.

Mr. Walker shared that he had the honor to express his appreciation to the Governor of Virginia this morning. Back in 2018, I was asked by a reporter, of all the great places you could build an unmanned systems company, why would you build in Virginia Beach? Right then I decided that was the challenge that I needed. To put things in perspective, we moved into the building we are in now with five people, in January of 2021 we were twelve people, today we are almost 300 and by the end of the year, we will be about 750 people. We have done this with a 98.6% retention rate, and a 52.6% diverse workforce with almost 25% veterans. There is nowhere else in the world you could do that with a tech company with an average salary of \$105,000 but we are doing it right here. One of our big sources of pride is every time we move someone here from California, Seattle, Austin, or anywhere else; those people move here where they finally feel like they have a career. Thank you for this great opportunity and I can't imagine being anywhere else but right here in Virginia Beach. Thank you for believing in us and we will continue believing in you.

Chair Lisa Murphy thanked Mr. and Mrs. Walker and DroneUp for wanting to grow and be in Virginia Beach. We are thrilled you are staying in our wonderful city. We had to wait to do our part for the Governor to make his big announcements.

Chair Murphy adjourned the meeting at 3:21 p.m.


Lisa M. Murphy, Chair