

**Waynesboro Economic Development Authority
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Friday, August 14, 2026**

Members Present: Mr. Chris Straight
Ms. Victoria Evans
Ms. Crystal Farmer
Ms. Kelly Maggi
Ms. Jackie Kurtz
Ms. Mary Sullivan

Members Absent: Mr. Mark Snyder

Others Present: Mr. Greg Hitchin- Director of Economic Development & Tourism
Ms. Stephanie Duffy- Assistant Director of Economic Development & Tourism
Ms. Amanda Stone- Admin Assistant of Economic Development & Tourism

Welcome

Ms. Kurtz called the meeting to order at 8:02am. While Mr. Snyder was unable to attend, his service was recognized, this would have been his final meeting of an eight-year term served. Ms. Katie Harris has been newly appointed, beginning a four-year term on September 1, 2026.

Approval of Minutes

There being no changes to the minutes presented from the regular meeting on June 12, 2026, Ms. Farmer made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Ms. Evans and passed by unanimous vote.

Financial Report

Mr. Hitchin reported on the July financials with four bills to be paid totaling \$21,833.48 as well as a \$30,000 Grow Loan disbursement to Valley Alley. The bills include three bills for Nature's Crossing Technology Center (NCTC) and one GWRG expense to Virginia Metalcrafters for Trellis. As detailed in the summary, there were six debit card transactions totaling \$258.46.

Mr. Hitchin also reported on the August financials with six bills to be paid totaling \$71,979 as well as a \$15,000 Grow Loan disbursement to Crack O' Dawn. The bills include four bills for Nature's Crossing Technology Center (NCTC), two bills for Timmons, two bills for T&L, and one expense for New Venture for Shared Kitchen consulting. As detailed in the summary, there were seven debit card transactions totaling \$450.09.

Ms. Farmer made a motion to approve the financial summaries and bills to be paid as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Straight and passed by unanimous vote.

Committee Reports

Loan: Ms. Duffy gave a Grow Loan bi-annual report. As of July 1, 2026, there have been 35 loans totaling \$353,000. There are currently six open loans. Two loans are current and will be paid off in the next month, one is current with seven payments in, another is current on a new payment plan of \$100/month, and two are past due. It was recommended to send a certified letter to the loanee that is behind and not responding to outreach. It was the consensus of the board to proceed after clarifying that a certified letter was a signed receipt. It was also reported that there is a new loan review committee member representing small businesses. Mr. Straight and Ms. Maggi both represent EDA on the review committee with Ms. Mary Katherine Froehlich having served for several years as a small business representative. Ms. Janie Rambo, her business partner, has taken her place on the committee. There will also be four new loans starting repayment in December that include three GWRG winners and one previous Grow Waynesboro winner.

Audit: Ms. Duffy confirmed that Ms. Farmer had received and reviewed the bank audits. She had no questions and signed off on them.

Staff Update on Allston Court affordable house project (information only)

Mr. Hitchin reported that the attorneys updated the previously approved agreement with some adjustments to the procedures for repayment, but the structure and spirit of the agreement has not changed. The resolution approving the agreement included the clause "subject to amendments deemed necessary by the City Attorney." The agreement does not need to be reintroduced.

Staff Presentation on Importance of Manufacturing Jobs (information only)

Mr. Hitchin provided a review of the strategic plan that was adopted last year with a presentation that included the five key goals (P.L.A.C.E.): Prepare areas for development, Provide local business support, Attract new investments and jobs, Communicate attributes and successes, and Entrepreneur development. Mr. Hitchin highlighted the importance of manufacturing jobs and how those jobs have a higher annual wage and how that relates to the industrial park development.

Monthly Updates

- **Downtown Development**

- Summer festivals: Ms. Duffy reported that the Street Arts Festival was a huge success. The city now has 30 art installations on the Street Arts Trail. A new physical brochure was created in-house by Ms. Meghan Murphy, Marketing Communications Manager. Hiker Fest was also a success with the hiker feed having more attendees than ever before. Riverfest was a success with an estimated 3,000 attendees. Upcoming events include Chili Blues & Brews on September 12th, PRISM on September 26th, 55th Annual Fall Foliage Art Show on October 10-11th, and Winterfest on November 28th which is also Small Business Saturday.
- Waynesboro at Work: Ms. Duffy reported three new videos have been created with a new format and vendor. Bonobos, Basic City Beer, and Happ, which all reside within the Rockfish Gateway corridor, are featured and they will debut soon.

- Grow Waynesboro Rockfish Gateway (GWRG): Ms. Duffy reported that MOUs have been signed by grant recipients and spending plans have been approved. TrellisArt Collective is now open and operational (\$3K), Inspiration Station just signed the lease agreement and will be located in downtown (\$3K), Passerine Market is in negotiations to purchase a building in downtown (12K), Valley Alley's landlord has been working on buildout and equipment purchasing has begun (\$22K), and Shenandoah Bouldering is in final lease negotiations with climbing equipment having been ordered (\$25K). All should hit the target goal of being open by the end of November.
- **Tourism**
 - Statewide Strategic Tourism Plan: Ms. Duffy reported the plan has been released and she has been working on a Steering Committee for the Shenandoah Valley over the last year. The plan has been finalized and is 116 pages long. It is also available online. It outlines the plan for 2026-2029 with findings pointing to consistent statewide needs regarding more full-service and boutique hotel expanded lodging options, more family-friendly attractions, outdoor recreation access and amenities improvement, as well as tournament-caliber sports infrastructure to capture the fast-growing market for sports tourism. She foresees this information being utilized for future grant funding. It was also shared that the 2025 Economic Impact numbers have been released. Virginia welcomed a record 46.6 million overnight visitors with travelers spending \$99 million per day, saving the average Virginia household \$1,020 in taxes. Visitor spending reached a record-high in the Commonwealth, reaching \$36.2 billion. Local numbers will be available in September.
- **BOOST Tourism Grants (local marketing grant for tourism and events)**
 - Ms. Duffy reported there were a record number of 14 applicants that were all awarded funding. A few new recipients include GWRG winners such as Valley Alley and Inspiration Station. The Augusta County Railroad Museum, Bowman House Bed and Breakfast, Common Wealth Crush, Fall Foliage Art Show, Hiker Fest, Inspiration Station, Lightwell Survey, Riverfest, The Foundry at Basic City Beer Co., The Russell Museum, Rusticae, Virginia Institute of Blacksmithing, Valley Alley and Chili, Blues, and Brews all received funds this year.
- **New Initiatives**
 - Ms. Duffy reported that there is a new Street Arts Trail brochure and the App is current and up to date. In partnership with Parks & Rec, Tourism has launched a new "Go Touch Grass" initiative. The challenge is app based and encourages visitors to visit city parks to earn prizes. Waynesboro's Top Dog Contest is currently running, with 161 dogs submitted so far. You can upload a photo of your dog to the Visit Waynesboro website through September 1st. Voting will be on Facebook and the "Top Dog" will receive prizes that include a monogrammed bowl, pup cup tokens, and a local photo shoot amongst other swag. This is the first initiative using CrowdRiff uploader and will be generating lots of engagement. A new LOVE sign is currently staged in front of the Tourism office. It is mobile and will be utilized at special events.

- **Industrial Properties**

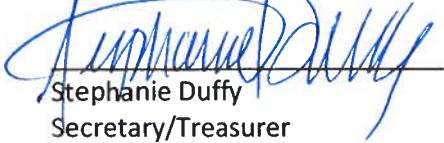
- Mr. Hitchin provided an update on the 170-acre park directly off Interstate 64, exit 96. He reported that all due diligence has been completed or updated; the elevated water storage tank has been redesigned with the new storm water regulations; the off-site water and sewer design is planned to be completed by the end of August. Both projects are expected to go to bid around October 1, 2026. Staff have submitted a grant request to the state for offsite water and sewer construction. Staff is still waiting on news about a federal grant application submitted July 2025 for the water tank construction. Aggressive marketing for the site has begun, including digital marketing and meeting with location advisors. A recently completed visualization video of NCTC was shown.

Correspondence and Communication of the Chairman

The next regular EDA meeting is scheduled for September 11, 2026

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49am.

Certified as approved 10/09/2026


Stephanie Duffy
Secretary/Treasurer