



**TOWN OF SMITHSBURG**  
**Economic Development Commission**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Thursday, August 22, 2024**  
**Town Hall – 1<sup>st</sup> floor conference room/council chambers**

*Present:* Liz Farmer Bedard, Chair; Jamie Fogle, Vice-Chair; Cathie McCormick, Secretary/Bookkeeper; Amber Dwyer, Michael Schwartz, Town-Council Liaison; Guitson Louis, EDC Coordinator

*Absent:* Ben Rodriguez

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chair Bedard

McCormick moved to accept the agenda; Fogle seconded; motion carried.  
Fogle moved to accept July minutes; Dwyer seconded; motion carried.

**Chair's Report**

Bedard reported that she completed the SHA permit for the October 19 Cider Fest event on Water Street before leaving on vacation, and that she would double check to see if all signatures had been secured and the finished form submitted.

**Bookkeeper's Report**

McCormick reported the following financial information:

*Financial report for August*

National Night Out (8/6) and Third in the Smithsburg Dog Days (8/17)

Expenses: \$ 762.

Pizza giveaway (food truck problems; see event report): \$62.

Entertainment: \$700.

Revenue: \$ 297.

Vendor/food truck registrations: \$ 150.

EDC Merchandise sales \$ 147.

The event's expenses and revenue were in keeping with the FY25 budget. McCormick reported that two lemonade vendors registered for the August event, and expressed concern over the redundancy in product that would their impact sales. Both were also registered for October's event, and the decision was made to honor the registration that was received first and refund the registration fee for the second vendor. McCormick moved, and Dwyer seconded that the EDC refund *Fresh Squeezed Please's* vendor registration fee of \$25 for the October event. **Motion carried.** McCormick will submit the paperwork to the town manager and treasurer.

## **Coordinator's Report**

Louis reported: He has been meeting with business leaders and government officials from Hagerstown and Washington County to introduce himself and to begin determining strategies for moving the town's economic development forward.

## **Sub-Committee Reports**

1. *Events and Promotions:* August Dog Days was held on 8/17 in Veterans Park. The venue worked well for the dog performances in the grassy area. There was some confusion over the use of the pavilion with a child's birthday party using that area of the park. Because of the overlap, the DJ was set up in the area adjacent to the pavilion. Attendance was good in the early part of the day, but a sharp decrease occurred in the afternoon. Sweet Grub Machine (the food truck) had to leave due to a problem with their generator and it's possible that was the cause of the audience drop. Coordinator Louis arranged for pizza delivery from Vince's to help provide some food service for the event. The pizza was distributed free of charge. The Fun Dog Trick Show did not occur because of a lack of participant registrations. The Washington County Humane Society did attend as did the CARE emergency veterinary services. Many residents brought their dogs to the event.

*October 19 Cider Fest:* The contract and deposit for The Fabulous Hub Caps is complete, and the toilets from AC&T have been ordered. Official ordering of the band shell/tent, which was a condition of the band's performance, is pending. McCormick will forward information on Ted's Rent-it-Center to Louis. Fogle recommended we also hire the magician for Cider Fest.

Schwartz reported that research and a discussion he had with the town's attorney determined that the town may run a 50/50 raffle at events if the proceeds are donated to a non-profit. Discussion concerning the process of collecting and distributing the funds reached no definite conclusion. Bedard will check to see if Venmo or PayPal could be used.

*September 21 Cinnamon Bun Fun Run:* Rodriguez reported (via text) that there are currently 80 runners registered for the event and thanked the EDC for their ads on Facebook for assisting in the recruitment of participants. The shirts have been ordered. Chief Marker is scheduled to meet with Hadley Farms on Sept. 5, and Rodriguez will have further details after that meeting.

2. *Public Relations:* Dwyer expressed concern over the status of the Farm Trail program with the resignation of Commissioner McKinnon. Bedard will check with McKinnon on the status of the program. Dwyer also volunteered to take over some of the Facebook posting on the *Visit Smithsburg* site. Bedard and Dwyer will coordinate. McCormick reported work on the marketing survey discussed last month. The survey is in progress, and will be ready for launch during/following the October event.
3. *Business Development:* Nothing new to report

4. *Arts and Culture:* McCormick met with library director Tammy Gantz on 8/22 to set up a juried art show at the library in coordination with the Smithsburg Arts and Culture Association for 2025. Dates starting in January were chosen for artwork submission, jurying, and display. Additional information will be available in September.

### **Public Comment**

No public comment

### **Old Business**

#### *1. Maryland Main Street Application Presentation*

The bulk of tonight's meeting focused on preparation for the Sept. 12 meeting with the coordinators of the Maryland Main Street program. In her email scheduling the meeting, Maryland Main Street director Christine McPherson provided a checklist of items to be included in the presentation. Bedard facilitated the discussion following the checklist which developed into the following draft list of goals:

#### **Improve mobility**

- ADA sidewalks and intersections
- Clear and marked public parking and signage for visitors

#### **Increase services and retail downtown**

- Adding urgent care center
- Addressing the bank(s) on Main Street
- Caboose/dining car
- Acquire residential property on Main Street to convert to commercial (look at Williamsport model/experience)
- Community center (or long-term goal?)

#### **Beautification**

- Amplify art and culture - Murals
- Expand(?) grants/support for facade improvements
- Stepping up enforcement on business code compliance
- Community garden

To support the goals (and respond to the checklist), McCormick will take photos of businesses, open spaces, town amenities, etc. and place them in the shared Google Drive folder for use in the PowerPoint presentation. The storage on the Google Drive is limited, and Bedard recommended shifting ownership of the EDC Shared Folder to the *Visit Smithsburg* account. Bedard will follow up.

Louis will begin putting together the PowerPoint presentation and submit a draft for the commissioners review as soon as possible.

2. *EDC member recruitment:* Dwyer suggested that it is important that we recruit new members for the EDC, and that one way to accomplish this would be a call in the water/sewer bill mailing. Dwyer will contact town hall to determine the process for placing a document in the

water/sewer bill. Bedard will post on the *Visit Smithsburg* Facebook page for EDC applicants.

### **New Business**

1. *Resignation:* In an email to Chair Liz Farmer Bedard this month, commissioner Dawn McKinnon submitted her resignation as an EDC member, effective immediately. Her reasons were personal, and she expressed her sadness in leaving the team. Her contributions to the EDC over the past year have been immeasurable. She is responsible for the Third in the Smithsburg branding, the Farm Trail project, much of the *Visit Smithsburg* content, the creation of the monthly banners for events as well as the design and purchasing of Third in the Burg t-shirts. She will be sorely missed for her professionalism, creativity, energy, and commitment.

Dwyer motioned to adjourn at 8:35 p.m. Fogle seconded. **Motion carried.**

**Next meeting: September 26, 2024 at 7 p.m. in the conference room/council chambers of town hall.**