



Process Improvement Steering Committee

June 24, 2020 at 3:30PM
STiR Innovation Center
Building 21, CRE8 (Large) Lab
Virginia Beach, VA, 23456

Present: Richard Tuck Bowie, Larry Dotolo, Mayor Bob Dyer, Brad Martin, Preston Midget, Neva White

Absent: Councilmember Jessica Abbott, Tom Etter

Call to Order: 3:30pm by Richard Tuck Bowie

Adjourned: 4:25pm by Richard Tuck Bowie

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Tuck Bowie called meeting to order at 3:30pm.

2. Approval of January 29, 2020 & February 26, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Larry Dotolo motioned to approve January's & February's meeting minutes.

Brad Martin seconded.

Motion unanimously approved.

3. Old Business

a. Subcommittee to create standards for Food Trucks (On hold)

Not Discussed.

b. Development Review Process

Tuck Bowie would like Neva White to reach out to Bobby Tajan (Planning Director) about returning to the next PISC meeting to go over the items that were discussed in February's PISC meeting.

c. Small Business Subcommittee Report

Not Discussed.

4. New Business

a. Real Estate Tax Abatement for Seniors

Not Discussed.



b. Agriculture Reserve Program

Not Discussed.

c. Discussion with Taylor Adams – Director of Economic Development

Tuck Bowie asked Taylor Adams to speak to the Committee about the *Improving the Small Business Environment White Paper* observations and what has been going on in the small business community recently. He would also like to talk about the newly adopted Public Works Stormwater Standards and the impacts it will have.

Taylor discussed 3 observations from the *Improving the Small Business Environment White Paper*.

Observation 1 and Observation 2 are discussed together.

- **Observation 1** – The City gives preference to large businesses over small. When recruiting large business interests from out of town and offering incentives to relocate to or expand in the City, the impact on small existing businesses is often not considered. No steps are taken to mitigate the impact on these businesses, nor are incentives offered to encourage the expansion of these existing small businesses.
- **Observation 2** – Information and services available to new businesses are not easily available or promoted. Information on available city and private sector resources are not adequately accessible through the City website or City personnel. These include resources such as licensing and regulatory requirements as well as financing resources and educational resources such as workshops, classes, and mentoring for new entrepreneurs.

Economic Development (ED) has looked at recent data and nation-wide best practices and shifted focus away from recruiting large businesses as that strategy has been found outdated. The Department is no longer actively recruiting businesses to come to Virginia Beach but focusing on New-to-Market Capital. Meaning, Virginia Beach will be bringing in new companies (businesses at the industrial level) that will not compete with existing businesses.

Additionally, if City Council chooses to engage in a large mixed-use development, they may ask ED to participate in that role. ED will do research & calculations to look at the economic impact and give that information to Council.

Economic Development has just signed a lease to stand up a Small Business Recovery Center in Town Center. This center will help retail and hospitality businesses through the current economic crisis and on into the future. This will be a



place where people can learn about opening a business, receive help from experienced mentors, get connected with higher education contracts, etc. It will also be the home of the upcoming Small, Women, and Minority (SWaM) Center.

Preston Midgett mentioned the struggles of small “mom and pop” businesses in the resort area (Oceanfront). They don’t have the knowledge or foresight to figure out how to make their existing businesses grow. There is a plan in the newly adopted Resort Area Strategic Action Plan (RASAP) to create a design studio where small business owners can talk to someone about the RASAP and the future of the resort area. This new Small Business Recovery Center would tie in great with that.

Taylor stated the reason the recovery center is located in Town Center because that is where the Economic Development office is. There is talk about an opportunity for a satellite location somewhere in the future. It would be great to work together in the future on this. “Mom and pops” are very important because they create the unique sense of Virginia Beach that you don’t see in other resort areas.

- **Observation 3** – The process of licensing and opening a new business is too cumbersome. The process needs to be streamlined, and the steps involved reduced and clearly outlined.

The Economic Development Office has hired a facilitator to be a perpetual liaison to the Planning Department. Taylor has been working closely with the Planning Department Director to help smooth out the permitting process and to support their effort in creating a more agreeable planning function. There has been a lot of progress made but there is still a lot to do.

Brad Martin acknowledged there is a liaison to the development review process, however, they have not been very helpful. He suggested Economic Development could be a motivator in helping with that process.

Taylor agrees that there needs to be improvement with customer service. Economic Development has got to get in the space of advocating for development projects. Staff should be making a case for the developer, showing what the project means to the community and figuring out how to work things out between developers and city staff.

It is mentioned that Stormwater plans (if the developer applies with all the required information) still takes 100 days for approval.



Larry Dotolo asked Taylor if he is aware of a new grant through the Department of Education which will help small businesses through training, incubators, short term certificate programs, etc. Larry will send the information to Taylor via email.

d. Additional Committee Member (Update from PISC members)

Tuck Bowie confirms that Barry Frankenfield is definitely interested in joining the Committee. He was never able to get in touch with Karen Eagle. He is talking to Tony DiSilvestro tomorrow about his interest in joining.

Larry stated that Bill Coley is also very interested in joining.

Preston Midgett stated that Mike Eason has indicated an interest in joining as well.

Tuck Bowie suggested Barry Frankenfield and Bill Coley for the two open positions. He would like to get Tom Etter's input before deciding and would like to finalize the recommendation to the Mayor in the July meeting.

Regarding Councilmember Abbott's membership, she told the Mayor that she has not been receiving notification of PISC meetings. Taryn will double check the email address that her notifications have been going to. (*The email address Taryn is using is jabbott@vbgov.com*). The Mayor will check with Councilmember Abbott on resigning from the team as a voting member.

5. Announcements – Next meeting – Discuss if we want to meet in the summer

The Committee decides they would like to continue meeting in the summer months. He asks Taryn to book the STiR Innovation Center for the July meeting. Next meeting July 29, 2020.

6. Adjournment

Adjourned at 4:25pm.

