

Town of Richlands
Industrial Development Authority
November 22nd, 2022

The Richlands IDA held a regular monthly meeting at 6:00 P.M. with the following present:

Jordan Bales	Joseph Vance
Craig Earls	Phillip Horton
Brandon Buskill	Gary Jackson

Members Absent: Jan White
Town Staff present: John O'Daniel
Guests Speakers: Tal McBride

Phillip Horton called the meeting to order and Joseph Vance gave the invocation.
Phillip Horton led the pledge of allegiance.

Joseph Vance made a motion to approve agenda. Craig Earls seconded the motion. No further discussion. All voted "Aye". Motion carried.

Craig Earls presented the minutes from the September 6th, 2022 meeting. Gary Jackson made a motion to approve the minutes. Jordan Bales seconded the motion. No further discussion. All voted "Aye". Motion carried.

New Business:

Pop-up Richlands Update:

John O'Daniel advised that we have a drawdown approval for the following recipients.

Michelle Ball (Blue Moon Consignment) - \$562.00 (Final) was presented for approval for utilities and building expenses. Carly Dula (CD Salon) - \$211.29 (Final) for utilities, and Sharon Horton (Magic Moments) October rent - \$695.57 (First).

Craig Earls made a motion to approve the Pop-up Richlands drawdown request of \$562.00 to Michelle Ball, for payment. Joseph Vance seconded the motion. No further discussion. All voted "Aye". Motion carried.

Craig Earls made a motion to approve the Pop-up Richlands drawdown request of \$211.29 to Carly Dula, for payment. Phillip Horton seconded the motion. No further discussion. All voted "Aye". Motion carried

Craig Earls made a motion to approve the Pop-up Richlands drawdown request of \$695.57 to Sharon Horton, for payment. Phillip Horton seconded the motion. No further discussion. All voted "Aye". Motion carried

John O'Daniel advised that Jaci Barret (Bleachy Mama) requested an extension. She sent John an email explaining that the prior tenant moved out late and the land lord wants to do some basic renovations before her expansion, which delayed her expenses. If approved, we can put her in the line with the second cohort on draw down requests.

Craig Earls made a motion to extend Jaci Barret (Bleachy Mam) and have her drawdown requests to align with the 2nd cohort. Brandon Buskill seconded the motion. No further discussion. All voted "Aye". Motion carried.

IDA Openings:

Phillip Horton advised that current members Jordan Bales and Gary Jackson will be leaving the IDA next month for the Richlands Town Council. Jan White will also be leaving the IDA to join the Richlands Town Council in January. Jordan and Gary will be sworn in tomorrow, Jan will be effective January 1st. Phillip Horton would like Seth White to join the IDA. He is currently on the Tazewell County IDA and would be a great asset to the Richlands IDA. The group also discussed a few names: Keenan Bowman, Dillon Smith and Anthony Tharp. John will take names back to the next council meeting for discussion.

Richlands Solar Update:

Phillip Horton: We have the draft ordinance provided to us from John which was prepared by GDS Associates for the town. Richlands started producing electricity in 1907. There are some discussions around electricity and increasing costs in the town. Radford replaced a hydro dam, and it helped them rebuild and provide service at a lower cost to the citizens. Seth White has found a 5MW generator that we can install, and we are looking at potential locations. Next year, we have a power agreement that will be expiring, and it will need to be replaced. I would like to see us energy independent. I also would like to see the natural gas project and the solar project to move forward. Tal McBride has helped us at the church prepare for getting solar to help with the electricity.

Craig Earls: How do we (as the IDA) fit into this from a zoning perspective on the solar ordinance?

John O'Daniel: This is something handed to us by council, and if we are ok with it, we should support it. GDS is looking at the rates on which we pay back to the solar customer. We need to manage this from a budget perspective and GDS will present this to council. We are just looking for support on moving forward with it. We will have to look at how we handle the applications internally, and who can approve projects.

Joseph Vance: Practically, there are not many using it. In general, the amount of people using solar is low, but it will improve over time.

Phillip Horton: Will the planning commission handle this.

John O'Daniel: Yes, from a zoning perspective. Any conflicts will be handled, along with the zoning board of appeals.

Tal McBride: Reviewed the draft ordinance and discussed concerns with the proposal. He advised that the ordinance makes it difficult for the customer to understand, as it was way too complex of a process for approval and implementation. The town has a rare opportunity that it can run their own utility. The group discussed the draft ordinance.

Jordan Bales: Who will do the inspection, the county?

Gary Jackson: Yes, the county will continue to provide that service.

Phillip Horton: I would like to see us put together a committee from the planning commission, council, and IDA to address any concerns we have.

Tal McBride: You could offer a co-op for solar were citizens can buy into the town. The investor would get back a certain amount. You could start small, and scale up over time. It would take price off the bill. These types of projects have worked in other areas.

John O'Daniel: With the complexity of paying back the customers for power, what do we thing about allowing customers to put solar in, but not buy it back at this point, and then look at that later. The planning commission will have the zoning restrictions, and will handle those types of issues. The group discussed this position on the solar ordinance proposal.

Tal McBride: I am going to leave these other sample ordinances that you can look at as well.

John O'Daniel: I will work on an ordinance and get with Gary next week to review. Do we need a meeting on the 6th of December? Group: Yes

Jordan Bales requested an IDA consensus to support John O'Daniel and Gary Jackson for the creation of a draft solar ordinance to allow solar interconnection without a buy-back option, and will bring it to the next meeting. Craig Earls seconded the motion. No further discussion. All voted "Aye".

Old Business:

Craig Earls made a motion to adjourn. Joseph Vance seconded the motion. All voted "Aye". Motion carried.

Next Meeting December 6th at 6:00 P.M.