

Town of Richlands
Industrial/Economic Development Authority
June 1 2026

The Richlands IEDA held its regular monthly meeting at 6 PM with the following present:

Lynna Mitchell	Joseph Vance
Craig Earls	Cody Harman
Mike Bales	Jeff Casey

Members Absent:

Town Representatives: Billy Shelton

Guests:

Call to Order:

Joseph Vance called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda:

Craig Earls made a motion to approve the agenda. Lynna Mitchell seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the agenda was unanimously approved.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

The minutes of the May 4th 2026 meeting were presented for approval. Lynna Mitchell made a motion to approve the minutes. Craig Earls seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the minutes were unanimously approved.

IEDA Discussion Items:

Pop-Up Program Funds:

Joseph Vance asked if there were any updates from the Town's budget discussions.

Lynna Mitchell reported that the Town of Richlands budget had been approved; however, the remaining Pop-Up Richlands funds did not appear to be included in the Town Council's monthly agenda packet.

Billy Shelton explained that the approved budget includes a deficit, which may make it difficult to get the remaining Pop-Up funds for IEDA use. Members discussed the budget and the status of the funds.

Lynna Mitchell noted that any budget deficits would be addressed through the reserve balance in the Town's General Fund if necessary.

Joseph Vance suggested meeting with the Town Manager to verify whether the remaining Pop-Up funds are still available before determining whether to present the matter to Town Council again. He also reminded members that he will distribute the revised Small Business Expansion Grant Program application for review and requested feedback.

The group agreed that confirming the availability of the remaining Pop-Up funds should be the first priority before moving forward with additional discussions.

IEDA Long-Term Plan

Joseph Vance suggested that, depending on the tenure of the Interim Town Manager, the IEDA should begin working with him to develop a long-term strategic plan.

Lynna Mitchell noted that former Town Manager Jason May had previously developed a planning document containing several valuable ideas that could serve as a starting point. She also noted that while the Town's Enterprise Zone incentives have been approved, they are not currently being actively promoted.

Members discussed creating a Business Welcome Packet to provide prospective and existing businesses with information about available incentives, Town resources, and the business development process.

Craig Earls commented that the absence of an Economic Development Director has made it more challenging to promote business opportunities and economic development initiatives.

Billy Shelton suggested that once completed, the Business Welcome Packets could be made available at the Town's front office for prospective businesses.

General Economic Development Updates

Joseph Vance reported that he spoke with Darrell Addison, who serves on the Tazewell County Industrial Development Authority. Darrell indicated that he would be available to attend Richlands IEDA meetings to provide updates and collaborate on regional economic development initiatives.

Lynna Mitchell revisited the group's previous discussion regarding the promotion of food trucks within the Town. She noted that prepared meals generate meals tax revenue and suggested exploring whether a reduced business license fee or similar incentive could encourage additional food truck participation.

The group discussed the role of social media as the primary platform for promoting food truck events and agreed that it would be an effective marketing tool. Members also noted that the Town could assist with promoting future events through its communication channels. It was further discussed that any community events would require coordination and approval from the Town Manager.

Additional IEDA Member

Billy Shelton reported that Town Council postponed consideration of new IEDA appointments until its June meeting. He also noted that the Town has advertised for volunteers interested in serving on the IEDA to help identify potential candidates for appointment.

Action Items:

N/A

Additional Discussion:

Craig Earls made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Lynna Mitchell seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved, and the meeting adjourned.

Next meeting July 6th, 2026, 6:00PM