

Town of Richlands  
Industrial Development Authority  
December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

The Richlands IDA held a regular monthly meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. with the following members present:

Blake Ray	Jan White
Craig Earls	Gary Jackson
Larry Johnson (remote)	

Members Absent:	Reese Strong	Cody Elswick
Town Staff present:	John O’Daniel	
Other Guests:	Seth White	

Blake Ray called the meeting to order.  
Jan White gave the invocation.  
Blake Ray let the pledge of allegiance.

Craig Earls made a motion to approve the agenda approved. Jan White seconded the motion. All voted “Aye”. Motion carried.

Gary Jackson made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Jan White seconded the motion. All voted “Aye”. Motion carried.

**New Business:**

IDA Goals:

Blake Ray discussed the importance of the IDA and for us as a group to determine our goals for 2022 as a board. We all want to make a meaningful impact and to be more involved with economic development of the town. He requested we all think about the next year and our goals as a board. We will discuss during our next meeting.

Greenway and Library Restoration Project Removal:

Blake Ray discussed both of these projects with the IDA and that we should not own these projects as a group. We all want these projects to be successful, but this is outside of the scope of the IDA to manage these projects. The members discussed, and agreed. Craig Earls made a motion to move both the Greenway and Library Restoration projects back to the Town Council. Blake Ray seconded the motion. All voted “Aye”. Motion carried.

Pop-up Richlands:

Blake Ray discussed the Pop-up Richlands proposed program that could be adopted by the IDA. This program was implemented in Marion, VA and drove the vacancy rate for downtown business locations to 4%. This program provides training and gives the participants an opportunity to present to pitch a business. If they are chosen, then they are offered a micro-grant of an estimated \$5,000 to cover expenses. The IDA discussed the program and potential benefits. The town can potentially get other matching money for the program and the goal is to increase funds over time. Craig Earls made a motion to allow Blake Ray to discuss the program

at the next Town Council meeting to request funding. Gary Jackson seconded the motion. All voted "Aye". Motion carried.

**Iron Street Property Discussion:**

Blake Ray discussed potential economic use of the former Ingersoll Rand property near Iron Street if it was donated to the town. Several members of the IDA reiterated concerns about taking over the property liability due to it being a 'Super Fund' site due to environmental issues in years past. More research is needed and several feel this site would be very limited in what it can be used for due to the environmental issues. A vote of confidence for Blake Ray to discuss the site with the Town Council was approved, but no action was taken to recommend that the town accept the donation for the site.

**Seth White Business Discussion:**

Seth White discussed a potential new 'data center' business to be located in town and the importance of the town to be business friendly with permitting and zoning.

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

Next Meeting January 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 P.M.

IDA Secretary – Craig Earls

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Earls". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.