



**TOWN OF BOWLING GREEN
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING**

MINUTES

**Wednesday, January 14, 2026
6:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM ESTABLISHED:

- India Adams-Jacobs, Town Manager, called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM with one absence (Economic Development Authority member Katrice Howard). The meeting opened with a call for members to select a chair and vice chair; the newly elected officers then presided over EDA business. At 6:07 PM, Economic Development Authority member Katrice Howard joined the meeting.

Members Present: Jason Manns, Randy Hageman, David Storke, Kyaer Lee, Jessica Beale, Katrice Howard

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes- November 12, 2025
 - Economic Development Authority Member Hageman motioned to approve the minutes, followed by a second from Economic Development Authority Member Storke. The minutes were approved unanimously.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 2026 ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

1. Election of Chair
 - Jason Manns was nominated and elected as chair, with members confirming unanimously via a voice vote.
2. Election of Vice Chair
 - Randy Hageman was nominated and elected as vice chair, with the Town Manager briefly pausing to confirm there was no legal restriction on a council member serving in this role.
3. Treasurer and secretary appointments
 - Members noted that the EDA also requires a treasurer and secretary, and that one person may hold both positions under the draft bylaws.
 - A member nominated Katrice Howard to serve as treasurer, and another member seconded the nomination, citing her comfort handling financial matters. A roll-call-style affirmation followed, and the treasurer role was assigned to Ms. Howard was supported without objection.
 - Jessica Beale was also nominated and agreed to serve as secretary, with another member seconding and some discussion about what level of detail would be expected for minutes.

- Staff explained that audio recording and available technology, including AI assistance, would help prepare draft minutes for the secretary to review rather than requiring extensive original taking.
4. Statement of Economic Interest Forms & Required Documents Due Dates, India Adams-Jacobs
- Staff reminded members that State and Local Statements of Economic Interests must be completed and returned by February 2, 2026, consistent with state ethics filing requirements that generally require annual filing by February 1, 2026. Members may submit forms by email directly to staff (without copying the full board), hand-deliver them to Town Hall, or mail them, though staff discourage relying on mail because of delivery uncertainty.

NEW BUSINESS:

5. Economic Development Authority Bylaws
- Staff reported that draft EDA bylaws were prepared with assistance from the Town Attorney and were included for the Authority's review, covering purpose and scope (Article 1), board composition (Article 2), officer responsibilities (Article 3), meetings, agendas, special meetings, and remote participation. The regular meeting schedule was confirmed for the second Wednesday of each month, and staff indicated that agendas would follow a standard order: call to order, minutes, citizen comments, treasurer's report, chair's report, committee reports, old and new business, presentations, and adjournment.
 - Members identified several areas for clarification in Section 1.1 and related language:
 - The text referenced "Town of Bowling Green County ..." in a way that appeared to be a clerical carryover from another locality.
 - There was discussion of Section 2.1 regarding four-year staggered terms:
 - Members informally reconstructed the intended staggering as: Jason – 4 years; Jessica – 3 years; Dirk – 3 years; Kyaer – 2 years; Katrice – 2 years; Randy – 1 year; David – 1 year.
 - Members noted that Dirk's seat is now vacant and will need to be filled, and confirmed that other appointees had been assigned to various boards (EDA, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals).
 - The Authority agreed to return the bylaws to the Town Attorney for cleanup of dates, references (EDA vs IDA), and any other clerical issues, with a revised version to come back for adoption at the next meeting. Members were invited to send any additional edits or concerns to staff before the next draft is finalized.
6. 2026 EDA Workplan & Goals Discussion, India Adams-Jacobs, Town Manager
- Staff introduced the 2026 EDA work plan and goals discussion by referencing prior EDA work plans from 2020 and 2021–22, which focused on graphic design, marketing materials, postage/legal fees, and a façade improvement grant program.
 - Staff summarized recent Town Council retreat discussions on economic development and noted that the BGBA/Main Street group has been working with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development and the National Main Street Center on transformation strategies, with a formal report expected in the coming weeks.
- 6.1. Rack Card proposal

- Staff presented a proposed tourism rack card as a potential first-funded item for the 2026 work plan, explaining that a design firm could create a Bowling Green piece (with Town and BGVA logos) modeled on examples from other localities at an estimated cost of about \$1,200, not including printing. The rack cards would be placed at locations in Town and at regional destinations such as Interstate 95 visitor centers and Kalahari, to promote Bowling Green for tourism.
- Members asked about possible Virginia Tourism Corporation grant funding; staff indicated that a full branding initiative is typically grant-eligible, but a single rack card project would likely not qualify and would need to be locally funded.

6.2. Identity, tagline, and history assets

- Members discussed the need to decide what Bowling Green wants to be “known for” and to develop a consistent tagline and message for use across materials, including any rack cards.
- One member reported using an online AI query that returned “the cradle of thoroughbred horse racing in America” as a key association, referencing Old Mansion, its historic racetrack, and the existing town logo featuring horse imagery and colonial figures.
- Members noted additional themes:
 - Washington–Rochambeau Revolutionary Route (historic marching route of Washington and Rochambeau toward Yorktown).
 - The Loving v. Virginia story and related local civil rights history.
 - Bowling on the Green/lawn bowling heritage.
 - The Town Green, historic architecture, and local special events.
 - There was interest in organizing these into a small set of core identity pillars and “tattooing” them onto all marketing and tourism materials going forward.

6.3. Old Mansion relationship and potential events

- Members discussed the Old Mansion as a key but currently under-utilized historic asset; concerns were raised about “false advertising” if horse-racing heritage is promoted heavily without visible or accessible horse-related attractions in town.
- It was noted that the Old Mansion is privately owned but has historically hosted community events, including a wine festival and lawn bowling demonstrations, and that the current owners had previously expressed willingness to partner with the Town but were discouraged after an earlier proposal for a Christmas tree/lighting event was declined.
- Members suggested:
 - Re-engaging the owners, inviting them to an EDA meeting, and rebuilding the relationship so that the property can again be part of community-facing events.
 - Exploring a wine-themed event on a major lawn (such as in partnership with Union Bank or other local partners), leveraging the large number of regional wineries and the popularity of wine festivals in Virginia.

6.4. Next steps

- Re-engaging the owners, inviting them to an EDA meeting, and rebuilding the relationship so that the property can again be part of community-facing events.
- Exploring a wine-themed event on a major lawn (such as in partnership with Union Bank or other local partners), leveraging the large number of regional wineries and the popularity of wine festivals in Virginia.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

- Economic Development Authority Member Hageman motioned to adjourn the meeting, followed by a second from Economic Development Authority Member Storke. Following unanimous approval, the Economic Development Authority meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Attest:

Chair: 
Jason Marns

Clerk: 
India Adams-Jacobs, MPA, ICMA-CM

