

**NEWPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**Tuesday, September 16, 2025**  
**7:00 A.M.**  
**Business Resource Center**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Chairman Dean Sides, Vice-Chairman Jim Gowen Sr., Secretary/Treasurer Mike Turner, Nyesha Greer, Benjy Harris, Typhanie Myers, Scott Foushee, and Lee Scoggins.

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT**

Hiro Kado

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Others present were NEDC Executive Director Jon Chadwell, Director of Chamber Affairs Julie Allen, Director of Workforce Christel Taylor, Newport Superintendent Jon Bradley, Nancy Churchwell, and Mayor Derrick Ratliffe.

**OPEN MEETING**

Chairman Dean Sides opened the meeting and welcomed the guests.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Benjy Harris made a motion to accept the minutes from August, with a second by Scott Foushee, motion carried.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Director Chadwell presented the financial report for August. Call Center expenses show as \$397,125 but \$317,700 will be reimbursed after October 24 per the EDA grant. Property assets total \$2,087.83. The sales tax and obligations were presented to the commission. Secretary/Treasurer Mike Turner made a motion to accept the financial statements for July with a second from Jim Gowen Sr., motion carried.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- Alison Williams, Excel by 8
- Julie Reardon, Newport School District CTE
- Chancey Taylor, Summit Utilities
- Kenneth Robinson
- Nature's Vault

**DIRECTOR OF CHAMBER AFFAIRS REPORT**

- PB&J Ribbon Cutting
- AEDCE Conference
- New Vision Newport Class 21 Retreat
- Depot Days/KidsFest
- 75 Strong Training

## **RENEWPORT GRANTS**

PB&J, located at 518 Malcolm, in Newport, has requested a ReNewport grant to help with signage and painting. The total cost is \$4,572.53 and the ReNewport grant would be responsible for \$2,286.26. Jim Gowen Sr. made the motion to approve the ReNewport Grant with a second from Lee Scoggins, motion carried.

## **UNDER THE RAINBOW/CHILDCARE**

The Commission discussed the recent closure of Under the Rainbow childcare facility and the resulting gap in infant care options. Together with Newport School District Superintendent Jon Bradley and Nancy Churchwell, members explored possible solutions to address this need. Superintendent Bradley has also visited surrounding schools that currently operate on-campus infant rooms as a potential model for Newport.

## **INDUSTRIAL SITE INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT UPDATE**

The bid to repair and to extend Comet Drive came in higher than originally anticipated. Commissioner Benjy Harris made a motion to increase the grant match by \$18,700 with a second by Mike Turner, motion carried.

## **GEN4JETS REQUEST – CPU ASSISTANCE**

Gen4Jets has requested the installation of a ground power unit at a total cost of \$48,000. Both A&P and Gen4Jets have committed \$12,000 each toward the project, and the Airport Commission is considering an additional \$12,000 contribution. A motion was made by Jim Gowen Sr., seconded by Scott Foushee, to allocate \$12,000 from the NEDC for the ground power unit, with the stipulation that the unit remain with the airport, motion carried.

## **AEDC COUNCIL MEETING IN NEWPORT WRAP UP**

The AEDC Council meeting on Thursday and Friday at Tech Depot went smoothly. As well did the tour and reception. The tour focused on projects that have occurred in Newport and see where AEDC grant money was invested in Newport.

## **THIRD AND LAUREL PARKING LOT UPDATE**

The Newport City Council will vote to accept the bid on the parking lot on Third and Laurel at the next city council meeting. The bid came in under budget.

## **PROSPECT RING 2**

Prospect Ring 2 is a call center that is interested in locating in Newport.

## **JACKSON HOLDINGS HOUSING PROJECT**

Jackson Holdings, Kyle Tiffée and Matt Johnson, is looking to build housing in Newport. Jackson Holdings has built one home in Tuckerman that is currently sold. They are looking to build eight at a time. Director Chadwell has asked to look at their current financial situation.

## **75 STRONG**

Julie Allen, Jon Chadwell, and Christel Taylor have an upcoming IEDC Virtual meeting for 75 Strong on September 25 and September 26.

## **TECH DEPOT UPDATE**

Tech Depot has recorded 4,048 visits to date and unique attendance being 1,572. The new ADC Training Academy will soon begin with 61 cadets enrolled in the class. The Newport Chamber Board is scheduled to meet today, and ASUN Adult Education will host an event on Wednesday. An “Introduction to Excel” course is set for September 30, with a follow-up session on October 2. In addition, a Manufacturing Roundtable is scheduled for October 28.

## **PROSPECT ELEVATE**

Prospect Elevate, led by Ben and Leslie Glidewell, is fully staffed with a waiting list.

## **PROSPECT CLIPPINGS UPDATE**

Prospect Clippings has signed a lease for five years and is looking at potentially moving some assembly to the Newport location.

## **CALL CENTER UPDATE**

Province Construction is set to complete the project by February 17, 2026.

## **P3 GROUP HOUSING UPDATE**

The Newport School District is waiting to see what the lot sizes are for the homes and trying to lower the cost for the lots.

## **A-STATE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER UPDATE**

The A-State Child Development Center has a six week turn around on hiring employees. The commission discussed how this process could be started earlier so that employees do not take a job before those six weeks are up.

## **PROSPECT SMOCO**

Waffle House has been pushing for an amended lease with Tractor Supply but currently the contract has not been signed.

## **PROSPECT RICE STRAW**

Prospect Rice Straw has ordered equipment and continues to move forward. Director Chadwell met with the Prospect yesterday.

## **PROSPECT FRESH AT HOME**

Prospect Fresh at Home is looking to start in December.

**PROJECT FUEL UP UPDATE**

Project Fuel Up is looking to sign a contract soon.

**PROJECT LANDSHARK**

Project Landshark are in negotiations.

**PROJECT TERMINATOR**

Project Terminator is an AI project that would require 1,200 acres.

**ADJOURNED**

Jim Gowen Sr. made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second from Lee Scoggins, meeting adjourned.