



Agenda

Date: April 16, 2026

Time: 3:00 pm

Location: City of Charlottesville - Office of Economic Development

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Approve January 17, 2025, Meeting Minutes
4. Election for Vice Chair
5. GO Start-Up Update
6. Piedmont Ascent/Piedmont Pitch
7. Launch Pad Program
8. Procurement Fiscal Report for First Half of FY26
9. SWAM Training for Decentralized Buyers
10. Reverse Vendor Fair
11. Discussion
12. Adjournment

Additional Information:

Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in the public meeting may call the ADA Coordinator at (434) 970-3182 or submit a request via email to

ada@charlottesville.gov. The City of Charlottesville requests that you provide a 48-hour notice so that proper arrangements may be made.



Minutes

Date: January 15, 2026

Time: 3:00 pm

Members Present

Madi Alvis

Teira E. Farley

Keith Groomes

Conan Owen

Juandiego Wade

Absent

Jamaala Hamilton

Marlena Reid-Joyner

Meeting was called to order by Keith Groomes at 3:04.

Mr. Groomes began by sharing that the release of the Office of Economic Development's (OED) Annual Report for 2025 is expected by the end of February. He provided updates on the GO Start-Up program, whose next cohort will begin April 1. Mr. Groomes also shared that OED had just completed a GO Start-Up Teen program in conjunction with the Department of Human Services to provide young people with an introduction to entrepreneurship and workforce development. Mr. Groomes concluded OED's updates with the reminder that the Launch Pad program, which provides vendors free access to booth space at the IX and Downtown Farmer's Markets, is accepting applications for the 2026 market season.

Mr. Groomes continued by addressing the Commission's need to appoint a Chair and Vice Chair. Conan Owen volunteered to serve as the Commission Chair. His appointment was proposed by Tiera Farley and seconded by Juandiego Wade. Mr. Owen was thus confirmed as the Commission's Chair. The Commission agreed that the decision on Vice Chair would be postponed to the April meeting, so that Marlena Reid-Joyner could weigh in on the decision.

The meeting minutes for the October 16, 2025, meeting were approved.

Madi Alvis began Procurement updates with an overview of all solicitations awarded to small, women-owned, minority-owned, and micro (SWAM) vendors during the first half of fiscal year 2026 (from July 2025-January 2026). Ms. Alvis then provided a report of newly SWAM-certified vendors added to the Minority Business Directory within the last quarter; she noticed that this number is lower than normal, likely due to a delay in processing at the Virginia Department of SBSD caused by the Federal government's required reclassification of all disadvantage-business enterprises (DBEs). Ms. Alvis concluded by providing an overview of local businesses that she had advised on procurement processes within the last quarter and a reminder of the City's monthly WHO Sale.

Ms. Alvis then followed up on last month's conversation about educational courses on proposal writing. Ms. Alvis contacted APEX (formerly PTAC) and learned that they had a number of courses on proposal writing already available and free to all vendors. Following discussion with the Commission, it was decided that for the time being, the APEX courses on proposal writing would serve as resources for any vendor interested in learning more about this process.

Ms. Farley began the discussion period by informing Commission members that the CIC Resource Fair will be held in Charlottesville on March 11, and in Culpepper on March 18. In addition to this, Ms. Farley shared that CIC is piloting the Social Entrepreneur Bootcamp targeting social impact driven businesses. She concluded by reminding Commission members that the Business Equity Loan Fund has micro-loans available for qualifying businesses up to \$100,000.

Mr. Owen inquired about the possibility of Procurement offering preferences to local business when soliciting for services. Ms. Alvis provided that this is not possible due to the State's current Procurement laws. Mr. Owen concluded by sharing that he is working on a Latino Business Directory for the greater Charlottesville area, which he hopes to have completed by the end of the first quarter.

The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Grooms at 3:54.