FAIRFAX COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
ZOOM/Virtual COMMISSION MEETING TRANSCRIPT
July 13, 2020

The first Commission meeting of FY2021 was held via Zoom videoconferencing due to COVID-19 pandemic. Joining the meeting were:

COMMISSIONERS:

Chairman Lange, Chairman
James Quigley, Vice Chairman
Christian Deschauer
Linnie Haynesworth
Ron Johnson, Secretary
Rocky Mitchell
Steve Partridge

STAFF:

Victor Hoskins, President and CEO	Juhi Naithani, International Business Investment- India and Canada
Mike Batt, Manager, Talent Initiative	Sharon Reed, Manager, Communications
Cathy Riley, Vice President, Business Investment	Theresa Rhodes, Manager, Business Research
John Blair, Assistant Director, National Business Investment	Anne Rosenblum, Business Investment
Barbara Cohen, Director, Operations	Karen Smaw, Director, Diversity, Investment and Entrepreneurship
Alan Fogg, Director, Communications	Andrew Taherzadeh, Manager, Digital Communications
Ben Gaither, Coordinator, Diversity, Investment and Entrepreneurship	Stephen Tarditi, Director, Market Intelligence and Real Estate
Donna Hurwitt, Vice President, Operations	Alex Thalacker, Manager, National Business Investment – Financial Services, Insurance
Alex Iams, Executive Vice President	Sandra White, Manager, Human Resources
Jatinder Kaur Khosla, Manager, International Business Investment – Europe	Greta Wiles, Outreach Coordinator
Asher Kotz, International Business Investment— Cyber Security & Israel	Spencer Wood, Manager, National Business, Investment - Digital, Media, and Mobility Services
Cheryl Martelli, Executive Administrative	Obed Vasquez, IT Manager
Andrew McCue, Assistant Manager, Market Intelligence	
Jan Mul, Director, International Business	

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LEGAL COUNSEL

Michael W. Graff, Jr., Esq., McGuireWoods

GUESTS

Rafael Arancibia, Mason District
Eta Davis, Fairfax County
Rebecca Gehman, DCI
Supervisor Penny Gross, Mason District
Supervisor Pat Herrity, Springfield District
Bryan Hill, County Executive
Taylor Holland, Chairman McKay's office
Aaron Jones, DCI
Spencer Levy, CBRE
Chairman Jeff McKay
Allan Mercado, AWS
Christine Morin, Mt. Vernon District Office
Supervisor Dalia Palchik, Providence District
Supervisor Kathy Smith, Sully District
Supervisor Dan Storck, Mt. Vernon District
Mark White, California FCEDA Representative
Ben Wiles, Dranesville District

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Welcome:

Mr. Andrew Taherzadeh, Manager, Digital Communications, introduced himself and provided direction to the Commission, the presenters, and guests about the videoconferencing venue and how comments and inquiries would be addressed. He stated that it was a public meeting and anyone from the public wishing to submit a question or a comment could do so via email addressed to Ms. Cheryl Martelli, cmartelli@fceda.org.

Call to Order:

Chairman Lange called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Those present were Chairman Lange, Vice Chairman Quigley, Commissioners Deschauer, Haynesworth, Johnson, Mitchell and Partridge.

Chairman Lange: (introducing Mr. Spencer Levy) . . . first few moments, experienced technical difficulties with Zoom recording . . . .

Spencer Levy: Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak here today. I guess I can start with my drop-the-mic moment. I have two punch lines. I have to give them right up front.

We have a report that's being published late this week. It's called our tech talent ranking. Which city moved up the most. The Washington DC region is now second passing Seattle as the second best tech region in the country. And so you heard it here first. It hasn't even been published yet. So is that it, Victor, can I go home now.

So I thought I'd start with positive news. Number one, I'll start with positive news. Number two, and Victor knows this, because I presented in Victor's office a couple of times. And that is before the Covid crisis, I used five factors to rank regions and cities that I liked the most. The five factors never change but certain cities rank higher than others. These factors are infrastructure, foreign money, ease of doing business, talent and live/work/play. Which city comes in second in the entire United States in ease of doing business - Northern Virginia - you guys right there.

And so that, combined with your live/work/ play environment, combined with the improving infrastructure, makes it a wonderful place to be, notwithstanding the fact - now here comes the tough love. Nobody's immune to the tragedy that's going on right now with Covid-19. Because of that, our forecast, while more bullish on places like Fairfax, Northern Virginia than others, certainly is going to be a tough 2020 just the same. I'll just cut right to it. We have been in the optimistic camps since the beginning of the crisis. And that optimistic camp - and we've stuck to it, notwithstanding the fact there is a lot of negative news out there, not the least of which is the recent flare up of disease in Florida, in Texas, in Georgia, and elsewhere. That said, and despite the challenges that that poses, the objective economic data supports our case for overall optimism.

The stock market may seem like a side note. It is the single most important indicator of both business and consumer optimism according to Ben Bernanke, the former chairman of the Fed and I happen to agree with him. And the reason is very simple. Very few people, if any, on this call have a defined benefit pension plan anymore. Most of you are in some form of IRA or 401k. So we're all in it together and that's why what the federal government support did, it raised the bottom. If we did not have the scope and speed of federal government support, we would be having a very different conversation right now than we are. Where the stock market has largely bounced back, in fact, for a brief moment in time, to day-to-day, the S&P hit a new all-time high and went and then bounced back. But the bottom line is that we are seeing in the commercial real estate sector also raising that bottom. And what is raising that bottom – collections. Collections in office industrial multifamily have been better than expected. We have been trending at close to 80 to 90% in all those asset classes. The two asset classes that have materially underperformed and are likely to stay there are going to be retail and hotels. But even in those sectors, we are seeing many of what we call "green shoots." Green shoots are evidences of growth in the face of a pretty tough, tough time. I speak to people all over the world every day and the attitudes and the opinions of people that are in major, dense metro areas are a fair bit more negative than they are outside of it.

My son plays travel baseball. I have been driving every weekend for the last six weeks to the great state of West Virginia. I went to Morgantown. I went down to South Carolina. I'm going to Atlanta this weekend. And when I go to places like that, notwithstanding the fact that some of these places are seeing a rise in the disease, the optimism down there is much more palpable than it is elsewhere. In part because they have somewhat looser restrictions and they have less density. That lack of density gives them a little bit more freedom and probably a little bit more comfort and safety.

So let me tell you where we are from a commercial real-estate perspective. So today, the, what we call in the business, the spot market, where it stands as we speak. Capital markets activity, sales, and finance transactions are down anywhere from 50% to two thirds and the reason for that is very simple. There is no price discovery. People do not know the value of the assets. They're trying to buy because the rent rolls and the underlying income and credit worthiness of the tenants is unknown.

Now the good news is, as I suggested, the bottom has been raised so collections are better than they were expected. But nevertheless, we have not hit bottom yet. Now, if we had had this call a couple of months ago and I probably had this conversation with you, Victor, I said we're going to hit bottom in June. Well, we did. We probably aren't going to hit bottom until August in the office asset class. We're not going to hit bottom until then, industrial, and we're probably not going to hit bottom in multifamily or apartments maybe not until the end of the year. And the key X Factor, there has been the same key X Factor we've had and everything, is the level of ongoing government support or not. It's the one thing you can't underwrite well - how much more is going to come.

The good news is I'm pretty close to the federal government in a lot of ways. Number one, I had on my podcast and I'm taking an advertisement right here for my podcast, so sorry about that. So I have a podcast and my podcast last week, my guest was Jeff DeBoer. He is the CEO of the Real Estate Roundtable, probably the most powerful trade organization in commercial real estate and Brian Stoffers, who is the chairman of the Mortgage Bankers Association and the Global President, Debt & Structured Finance at CBRE. And as of a couple of weeks ago, the odds of another federal government bailout, pre-election, was pretty dim. Because things were looking better, then the disease was getting a little bit better. And a lot of the inflation hawks were saying we don't need it. Well, that's changed. We are now more likely to see some federal intervention probably before the end of July, before the August recess, and that's very good news. Because once again, if you just look at the objective data of shutdown and the disease, you're going to reach a much more pessimistic conclusion. And if you take a look at the scope and scale of the bailouts that have occurred, and we believe they're going to continue, which is why we stand behind our overall optimistic opinion.

But coming back to commercial real estate while we are optimistic., overall, and we believe that while GDP may be down 6% in 2020 and up 6% in 2021, we're not as optimistic about commercial real estate. We believe that it's going to take longer as a lagging indicator for the economy. And the way we broke it down, our forecast and commercial real estate is what we call a one-two-three scenario. One, those asset classes that are going to come back and that's going to be industrial and multifamily or apartments. In your two, is office and your three is retail and hotels.

Let me start from industrial and multifamily. Now there are shades of gray here by region and by sub-asset type but industrial is an asset class where we are so bullish that our forecast for the long-term strength of industrial is better today. As we're having this call and it was back in January and that is because of something that we call "acceleration of trend." That is a phrase you're going to hear throughout my conversation today. There are certain things where trends have been accelerated in commercial real estate for the positive in the case of industrial and some to the negative in many forms of retail. Some are arguing now about office, but because of the rise of e-commerce, now there are shades of gray. Not all industrial is a big box warehouse distribution center in the port of Baltimore bringing in cars to be shipped all over the US. Some of it is small bay industrial and a lot of that is in northern Virginia. And a lot of you have visited it and didn't even know it. Everybody that's on this call has a child or grandchild and has been to a jump house. Where do you think those are? Those are in light industrial and those aren't coming back anytime soon. So a lot of your small business constituents that are in the small industrial places need some help. And they're going to need it, just like retailers do, particularly if they are so-called experience type of users, like these jump houses.

Now multifamily is going to do better as well. And the key reasons why multifamily has done so well so far is because of unemployment insurance. Now unemployment insurance is scheduled to run out the end of July, but we believe it's going to probably be extended through the end of the year. And if that occurs, the bottom of multifamily probably won't happen too late this year when people stop paying rent because of job losses. But we also think that if you go into some of the sub-asset types within multifamily, which would include senior housing and student housing, those are clearly going to take longer still, partially due to the terrible tragedy of what's occurred in many senior housing facilities to older folks. But also because many schools are just not going to reopen in the fall and student housing will get it as well. By the way, I think somebody came off mute if you wouldn't mind muting yourself, that would be great. Thank you.

But the year two category is coming back as office and I'm going to come back to that last because that's what's going to take up the bulk of my conversation. The year three category is retail and hotels. Now retail and hotels, again, much like multifamily, industrial shades of gray by region. Shades of gray based upon the type of retail we're talking about. Now, again, that thing that I said before about the acceleration of trend, there are some trends that you see accelerated - secondary market malls, you've seen department stores. All of these things were hurting prior to the crisis and the acceleration of trend, unfortunately, push some of them off the edge into bankruptcy. And a lot of retail is doing fine. Grocery-anchored retail is doing fine, pharmacy-anchored retail, bank branches are doing fine. But a lot of other forms of retail - there's a new trend where experienced retail is getting hit hard, that is restaurants, gyms, bowling alleys.

Now let me give you a green shoot. A green shoot is this - it's called pent-up demand. And what pent-up demand is is that people want to go out and spend money, not just on restaurants but on the other goods. A friend of mine is Henry Chin. He runs my research department in Asia. And he lives in Hong Kong. He calls it 'revenge retail', people going out and wanting to spend. And we're seeing it there. Now, what we aren't seeing a lot of yet, and this goes to China, is we're not seeing a lot of durable goods purchased by consumers. We're not seeing a lot of home purchases. There has been actually an uptick in second-hand, used-car purchases in the US - still disproportionately.

A lot of people are afraid to make these major decisions. An interesting little side note, however, here: you know where we are seeing a lot of home purchases? Right outside the major metro areas. And why is that? Because people that live in the district or lived in New York City or lived in Boston have kids. The school year is up in the air. So Connecticut, Westchester County in New York, and some of the areas within suburban Washington, DC are seeing a big uptick in home sales when, in the wholesale market, was stagnant for a while. And what we call that in our business is the hub and spoke model.

Victor, if I'm going to give you anything to be on the tip of your tongue for the next six months, it isn't just ease of doing business. It isn't just our tech talent report. It is this hub and spoke model, which will be Fairfax County's best friend for the next 18 months at least. As a lot of people are going to want to put offices there in the beginning, it's going to be shorter term leases, a lot of them 1-, 2-, 3-year leases, but some of its going to be in co-working space. Some people say, people aren't going to be about the co-working. Wrong answer. People are going to go back to co-working, albeit co-working may change a bit. It may be less dense. You may see different types of furniture that are less susceptible to disease. You may see more demise space meaning space that's controlled by individual occupiers. But that trend will be a square benefit to Fairfax and places like it.

Now- hotels - I had a podcast today with the CEO and president of Host Hotels, the largest owner of hotels in the world. And the bottom line is this: hotels are going to take the longest to bounce back, particularly for those hotels that cater to international travelers and to business travelers. But those drive-to hotels are doing very well and I am exhibit A. I have been driving up and down the East Coast and staying in some of not-the-nicest hotels all of the time, but sometimes, pretty nice hotels. There's a lot of people in these places, and they're doing things to give you more confidence, including cleanliness, and other things. So hotels on the drive-to basis will bounce back but the international and the business hotels will take much longer.

Now, let me make one comment about international and why that's really important. It's really important in education. And one of the tragedies that's going to happen to colleges and universities this year is that international students, cutting right to the economic chase here, they pay full freight. A lot of domestic students do not. And so the loss of them is going to lose, not only the diversity benefits, it's going to lose the economic benefits of having people paying and so a lot of these schools are going to hurt for that reason.

But I am optimistic that international will come back, not just from a human standpoint of people coming here, but from a money standpoint. This is yet another area, I think, Victor, when I was in your office, I said to you, Victor, I'm opening up an office in the Middle East, in Korea, in Japan. Why, because two reasons. Number one, this was pre covid. The US right now is on sale. And why is it on sale? Because in order for an international investor from Europe or Asia to buy into the United States, most of them, not all but most of them, have to pay what's known as edging costs. And not to get real complicated about this, but back in November of 2018, for every $1 a European investor invested into the US, they had to pay three and a half percent per dollar per year to equalize the currency. That's now down by more than half. And it's a similar story for Asia. So number one, the safe haven aspect of the US but number two, the fact that we are on sale. We believe that once travel restrictions are modestly lifted, because it's important to have the ability to visit, the real estate international investors are going to be a hugely-important part of the US recovery.

Which brings me to the last portion of the conversation, which is office. I'm sure this is going to be the most spirited part of this debate. And the reason why this is going to be the most spirited part of this debate, because if you think I've gotten some pushback on my optimism. I've been out there and just a term I use, I've been slaying dragons for people who are against the future of office. There are a lot of people out there who would never get to go back to their office and it comes from the biggest CEOs. I can name some of the companies, you've heard it. And a lot of the employees say, I'm never going back to the office. Well, guess what. I disagree. And why do I disagree? Because for the last 10 years, most people didn't need to go to the office. They wanted to go. Why do people want to go to the office? Because it makes them happier, makes them more productive. You can attract and retain talent and it creates a company culture that you want to create. Very hard to create company culture from afar. Now, people say, well, you know, we don't need to do it. For the next 12 to 18 months, they're going to be right. And for the next 12 to 18 months, you're going to see a material slowdown in office leasing. Most of the leases, we have seen, have been short term in nature.

Kick the can down the road, to use a very technical term that a lot of people in my business use, rather than doing a long-term strategic lease. But over the long term, the most competitive companies are largely going to revert back to prior use patterns. Now, will there be more work from home. Yes, there will be. Will there be more of what we call, the “fluid workplace.” Yes, that’s working from your house, in the back of a Starbucks, from the back of a self-driving car when it comes in. To advertise once again, CBRE wrote a report on that called the 2030 Report, The Age of Responsive Real Estate, and I'm happy to give anybody a copy. It talks about the rise of the new workplace but people will go back. Because the most competitive companies are going to be able to attract and retain talent by having the best workplaces.

Look, there was a great study that came out on this in 2015 by Stanford University, that I'm also happy to send anybody. And what was the grand conclusion to that study? Yes, you can work efficiently from home. Some people are more productive, but for the soft skills you need to advance in your career, to be truly more productive, to be truly more collaborative, can't do it. As matter of fact, in that study, two-thirds of the people, who in the original part of the study, had elected to do work from home elected to go back to the office for all these other reasons. So I think the death of office has been, shall we say, overdone.

Now will you see changes to the office, of course. You're going to see less dense workplace - people not sitting right on top of one of them. You're going to see different types of furniture that are harder surfaces, are easier to clean and less susceptible to disease. You're going to see a rise of other forms of HVAC, air conditioning wellness. Some of that's for existing systems where they're going to zap the air with ultraviolet light. You're going to see more buildings that are going to use fresh air. Now here is the earmuffs moment for all my friends on this call on the sustainability side of the scale because sustainability is really, really important. But there's going to be times where sustainability and wellness may come into conflict - why to get a LEED certified building or to get an Energy Star rated building, you get a demerit if your windows are operable. That might represent a problem. So what you're going to need to see are changes to building design that will both keep them sustainable because green is good and green works. But they're also going to need to take this fresh air and other things that are not necessarily as energy efficient into us. I had the global head of Microsoft on my podcast a few weeks ago. We talked about this, we're going to find a way in the short term. This fresh air thing and sustainability will be in conflict. But over the long term, they will both move forward in lockstep.

The last reason why I'm optimistic on people going back to the office, even though there's a real fear factor today, which I'm not diminishing and this is unfortunately disproportionately impacting places like DC and New York and Boston that are heavily dependent on mass transit is the 9/11 camp. Because after 9/11, there were people that were afraid to go back into the big cities, they were afraid to go to DC and New York. They were afraid to go into tall buildings. What happened, they changed the security of these buildings. So people were more confident, they were more comfortable going in there. And so as security got better, people got more competent. People flocked back to the city because it’s really a wonderful live/work/play environment.

The same thing happened post Hurricane Sandy in New York where west of downtown New York was destroyed by flood. They made the buildings more resilient; people went back. Look, folks, I can go all the way back to 1911 when the terrible tragedy of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire happened in New York City where 146 primarily immigrant women were killed when their bosses locked the doors because they wanted to protect them. Ever since that incident, the workplace has gotten progressively safer, cleaner, healthier, more resilient and it will continue.

Are we going to see a real challenge over the next 12 to 18 months, particularly for identity markets? We will over the long term. The high density markets will still win because people want that type of live/work/play environment. That's where they're going to attract and retain talent. And the DC region and Fairfax are going to be disproportionate beneficiaries of this.

They're going to be disproportionate beneficiaries of it, not only because of its diversity of industry, because of the resiliency of its industry and it's not only the government contractors, it's the rise of tech. It's also because of one of the least appreciated pieces of infrastructure in your city - Amtrak - because it connects Baltimore, it connects Philadelphia, connects to New York. Your travel is going to be way down for a long time. Train travel is going to come back a lot sooner. And that's going to be another economic boon to your region in addition to the Silver Line and the other rail systems that you guys are building. Even though, in the short term, people are going to be concerned about the wellness aspect of commuter rail. That stuff's already bouncing back in Asia. It's already bouncing back in London. I was on the phone on Friday with my colleagues in Paris. They're all back in the office. Now there are many places where the US is a leader. There are many places we are lagging or clearly a laggard on Covid-19 treatment and moving forward, but we will move forward. It’ll be slower than the rest, and the DC/Fairfax County region is as well positioned as anywhere in America to do well over the long term. And so with that, let me stop and I'll take whatever questions you might have.

Chairman Lange: So, who has a question?

Vice Chairman Quigley: First of all, thank you. Spencer. Wow, that was a very detailed and inspiring overview. It's also great to hear how we're doing as a region - something I know our team is going to be actively anxious to promote.

I was curious about a couple things that you brought up. While at my own company, I'm CEO of a large technology firm that's headquartered here with offices throughout the world. And we have a major backing of a large PE firm who's asked all of the over 100 main platform companies that they own in the thousands of companies I've invested in to evaluate our real estate carefully. What we've seen is very similar to you is that after careful study, we're not going to abandon office. We've seen very few companies say that they're going to go completely remote. We do see that longer term though it's causing us to reconsider who's going to be in an office. So have you guys put any thought into or have you done any calculations on the complicated nature of maybe going back to increasing square foot per person, as well as offsetting that things like, maybe engineering. There's certain parts of organizations that I've been speaking to that are probably going to go more remote. Let's call it semi remote. They get together three times a year. But sales groups, especially junior sales groups, where there's a lot of collaboration needed or product groups, will probably stay in an office. There are certain parts of companies, I'm hearing that are probably more apt to think about remote. So I'm wondering, have you guys done any studies to go to that degree that as we start looking at organizations, understanding how a company, two years ago, how much space they might have taken versus how much space they may take in two years from now. Any thoughts on that.

Spencer Levy: Sure. Well, excellent question. I was on the phone this morning with, I don't know if it's the private equity firm that you affiliate with, doing exactly the same thing.

And we're helping them write the survey to do so, and I would know that CBRE just did a survey which we are now giving out to the public today. So we can send it to you guys and do the survey that we did have 300 of our clients, which tries to get to the essence of the question. Now the challenge of the survey is that this is opinion in the eye of the storm. And so I think a lot of these opinions are going to shift as the offices reopen. I also think there are some folks out there that are saying, out of the best of intentions, but once they realize that the financial implications long term aren't the benefits, do not outweigh the burden. The cost savings look great today but over the long term productivity wins. In fact, Harvard Business Review, I put a quote, a lot of my presentations. "Great companies focus on productivity, they do not focus on efficiency because productivity wins over the long term and productivity requires collaboration". What's your very question, James? We're trying to get to that number now and it's obviously going to differ based upon whether you're a client facing where the collaboration is required and what your industry is now. But you also should keep in mind that even for the most expensive office markets in the United States and the most expensive office markets in the US or San Francisco and New York. Even in those markets, the percentage of costs associated with real estate, as far as your total operations in those markets, it gets about 8 or 9%. In most other markets, including markets like DC, that's 5 or 6%. And then if you get even more tertiary 3 or 4%. Now I'm not going to suggest to you that 4, 5, or 6 % is not a significant part of your operating cost. It is, but it is outweighed over the long term by the productivity gains of having more traditional office building. So it's a long fancy way of saying this. Let me send you the study, James.

In fact, I'll send it to everybody that we just published today. I'm happy to talk to you more about that. I'll send you the study that we just did. I'll also send you the Stanford study done in 2015. And I think you'll see exactly what I'm saying is, yes, there's plenty of efficiency gains to be gotten from work from home. What you lose on these other factors which better companies will focus on a little longer.

James Quigley: Thank you. One last question - which is, we start looking at locations of where people live and maybe this is even better for us, longer term. I'm trying to gather up this myself to is you're saying is the housing market moves in that maybe people have a greater freedom. We're seeing that with our own employees, giving them greater freedom to consider moving out further. They don't mean the office as often, that we are starting to see this open up, but I've also heard a number of my team members and employees have been starting to look at this hub and spoke, similar idea that loans are. Even though interest rates are low, the availability of loans have gone way down because the US has been eating up all the debt. And so the debt market is making it very difficult. Have you seen anything there that would press back and maybe shut down people moving is often because the debt market is not as liberal, even though interest rates are low. It's just the availability of the caches and banks, giving out loans is reduced for at least single families and people moving.

Spencer Levy: Sure. So my guest last week, in addition to one of my guests on my podcast was the chairman of the Mortgage Bankers Association, which represents both commercial and single-family, residential borrowers and there has been a tightening of credit on the single family side. Wells Fargo just announced that if you didn't have a significant amount of cash in the bank, they weren't going to give you a new home loan. That's just one example of others. But nevertheless, it has gotten tighter, but I do expect that to get looser quickly. I don't agree with everything the government has done, but I'm generally a fan. Where I'm like, literally a jump on the table cheerleader, is what Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have been the best in this crisis in terms of dealing with it and they are going to handle of the liquidity issue as well. So, I think it's a short-term challenge, James. I'm not going to deny it, but I think that you will see by the end of this year loosening in the single family residential market that will permit people to move.

But another thing you should also keep in mind is that I use this term before called acceleration of trend. Covid did not create work from home, it accelerated work from home. And so we came out with a study about three years ago called Millennial Myths: Live, Work, Play. We studied millennials all over the world, probably 20 different markets. And we reached a radical conclusion in that study. It was that it wasn't age that mattered. It was life stage. And once millennials got to a different life stage with kids and having to pick schools, that's when they're going to move. And that's what's happening now and it was just accelerated by this. It wasn't created by this. So I would encourage you to read that study, as well. I would also throw a little love the way of Fannie and Freddie. Government doesn't always get love. They need love. You guys need love too because I know you’re government too but Fannie and Freddie really did a really nice job in this crisis. Awesome. Thanks.

Chairman Lange: What other questions? Spencer, I have a question for you. We have some fabulous malls here: Tyson's One, Tyson's Two. I mean, they're not only retail places, they’re entertainment places that people go there to the movies, to eat out, to family events and so on. What's the forecast for malls and what's going to happen?

Spencer Levy: Well, you should know when I say this as a matter of fact, my mother in law, my wife and my eleven-year-old daughter drive to Tysons Corner to go shopping from Baltimore. Why, because it is the premier shopping destination in this region, and that speaks to why it's going to be not only a survivor, but it's going to thrive over the long term. And so, yes, they are going to have to transform to some degree. So a good example of transformation, if you want to go a little bit further north is going to the Columbia Mall. So the Columbia mall what they transform is they added office and they're adding multifamily. And I think you're going to see the same exact thing around Tysons. They already had the office, they're probably going to add more multi family. It is that live/work/play environment that will guarantee the long-term survival of the mall. Our offices just moved in San Diego from a suburban office building across the street to be on the second floor of an old Westfield Mall. Let me tell you something, folks, even if you're not in the retail business, it's not a big surprise that on the second floor in the mall isn't exactly the place to be. But it's a great place to be if you're in the office space and also if you add multifamily around it, makes it even better. So I think that the acceleration of trend does not apply to that mall. It does apply to malls that are in second-tier markets and some of the second-tier department stores. Some of those departments, like Neiman Marcus, had to file for bankruptcy. It's not, it's not a flawed model it, [sic], they just had a capital markets too much debt.

Chairman Lange: That's good to know. What other questions.

Spencer Levy: Absolutely. Oh, yes, sir. Go ahead. Hey, thanks.

Mr. Mercado: One thing pops to mind because I probably joined late. I probably inherently took the opposite view. I work for AWS. I started remote working as a defense contractor about five years ago. And so I have a ton of experience remote working now. As comparison to being in an office space because a couple times I've gone back and forth between the two. And I was curious, sounds like you kind of believe in a 5% possible office space being left. Do you have any plans or thoughts about how office spaces will be repurposed even if the percentage is small?

Spencer Levy: Sure. Well, I didn't actually put a number on it. But if you want to put bands on it. The most pessimistic case, it was a big accounting firm that said that 1% of workers have to be in the office, 99% don't. Well, that's pretty pessimistic but if you go to the other end of the scale, people are debating what that number is. Is it 5%? Is it 10%? Some people are as high as 20%. I'm closer to that 10% number. In terms of how much reduction in number of people in the office., maybe they're working there four days a week versus five. Other things were in the ballpark and in sync around.

In terms of the repurposing of office. This is a very easy answer to give. But once you dig into the math, it's not such an easy solution. So if anybody here has been down into Wall Street in Manhattan anytime recently, I would just encourage you. Next time you're down there, just look up and look at all these beautiful buildings. All of them used to be office buildings. All of them are now apartment buildings or multifamily or condominium building. So clearly, you're going to see an acceleration of that trend which goes not dissimilar to Kathy's question respect the malls. You're going to see more multifamily uses in these types of places now.

This was not my moment for the soapbox but I'm jumping on anyways. I am, among other things, a big affordable housing advocate. And one of the major challenges for affordable housing is building in suburban areas. It is impossible. And you guys know what I'm talking about. And so maybe one of the silver linings to this situation with the death of some of these assets is maybe it'll be easier to build some more affordable housing in somebody's suburban areas. And I think that would be a great thing overall.

Chairman Lange: Something we need. So any final questions? Spencer, thank you so much for coming this evening. I hope you'll come back again soon.

Spencer Levy: I hope you'll have me.

Chairman Lange: Look forward to your reports. I can't wait to see them. So we're really looking forward to it.

Spencer Levy: I will send all my reports, number one. Number two, I will send a link to my podcast. So yeah, I'm advertising. And number three, if anybody wants to follow me on LinkedIn, please jump on board. I need new friends and you'll get all my stuff.

Chairman Lange: Thank you very much.

Spencer Levy: Thank you all.

Chairman Lange: Okay, that was great. So we're going to move into the next portion of our agenda, I will be very brief. This is the Chairman's Report. And I really have two items. The first item is that we will start to schedule one on ones with the board of supervisors, as individuals, which we've done in the past . We will target those meetings with their schedules in the August/September timeframe. So stay tuned, Commissioners, I'll be sending out a list, and we'll talk about who would like to go to which meetings. So we will be setting that up. And then the final matter I want to bring to your attention is that, based on the meeting that we had with Jeff McKay and the Board of Supervisors, we had five action items. And we have two that are outstanding. Actually, this one, having Spencer Levy today, was one of the action items so we satisfied that one. And then the last two one is an update on the research on the unemployed workers- minority, underserved workers - and how they're connecting to employers. So there's some research being done on that. It's not quite finished yet. And then we're also working on research on economic recovery by industry sector and Victor and the team are contracting that work out to be able to get that together. And I'm sure that will take several months to do, but I think it's an important report for us to be able to provide to the supervisors and others. So with that, I am going to turn the agenda over to our president for his CEO/President's Report.

President Hoskins: First of all, I'm saying Spencer Levy is one of the best in the business and he's really provided us with a lot of insights into our business. And it's been very helpful, particularly these last few months behind Covid-19. But what I would like to do is really let him know that but unfortunately he’s gone now. But he's really has been. I'm a big fan of his and you can see why. There's no one, he doesn't even have an equal in the industry.

So, today what I'm going to do is talk about our fiscal year performance for 2020. Some of this you may have heard the week we finally got our final results. I'll talk about our final results for the year performance. I'll also talk about collaboration, with the county, collaboration with the other economic development agencies, and also our response to Covid-19, which has been one of the more challenging things that we've done. Next slide please.

So the first thing that that I have to say is the economy is actually in, believe it or not, really a transformational moment. We have had some businesses here that have made decisions to be here, to grow here. Unlike before and the names of, you know, Microsoft Facebook AWS Amazon - I mean, these are the names and tech that you want to be growing in your environment. And we have been very fortunate in 2020. We have had wins in many of those categories and the great thing about it, it's produced a lot of jobs. We actually hit almost 11,000 jobs this year. Our target was actually 9,438 - that would have been meeting expectations. We’re actual [sic] is a five-year average. This was a really hard number to hit - 10,919. And the reason it was hard was because of Covid-19. I mean, it really was difficult. Just, as an example of Microsoft, which just was announced a few weeks ago, which is 400,000 square feet and 1,500 jobs, a $64 million investment that their r&d center (that they're putting in - innovation center that they decided to grow here.) We’re struggling to pull it here. We started the process in November. But we had some serious challenges from Atlanta, from North Carolina, and even within this region. And I know the decision finally fell, fortunately, in our direction. It's largely because of a lot of what Spencer Levy said, which is that we have an extraordinarily educated workforce and that workforce is what companies want these days.

Next slide please. In terms of square footage, back in February, we were at about 38%, at about 800,000 square feet. And one of the Commissioners asked me a question. Are you going to hit your numbers this year? And since I had only been on the job, six, seven months, I got a little uncomfortable. But, we managed to really readjust how we were working on our transactions. We started meeting every Friday. I started leading a dashboard meeting where we went through every deal and just trying to discover you know where people were having problems. What was holding the transaction up and when covid-19 hit, it really caused a pause on a lot of deals. However, we will manage to get through. Our goal for the year was just over 2 million square feet. That was the five-year average. And as you can see, we hit 2,457,000. We were 18%

above the mark, which is greatly exceeds. I'm so proud of the team. They really put their back into it. When you're 38% of your goal in the year and you're 66% through the year, that is a very uncomfortable moment. And most people will give up, but our team doubled down and we really did very well.

Next slide please. I wanted everyone to see this from a jail cell study that was recently done and it was on Q2 activity across the United States. And if you look at these bars, they basically represent the leasing square footage activity. They took place during that quarter. As you can see, all the way to the right from San Francisco, which is one of our primary competitors, because it's a tech center. Seattle is roughly in the middle, and in Sacramento, and then as you go up, our biggest competitor in New York is standing right next to us. Northern Virginia was leading the entire country in leasing for Q2. I'm right in the middle of Covid-19. That is phenomenal. And a lot of that has to do with the almost 800,000 square feet that was leased along the toll road so I am not overly optimistic. But I am optimistic that we have something special in this market that allows us to really play into that spoke and hub, a concept that Spencer talked about. He's not the only one that believes in this and actually you can see it in the numbers in New York City right now. What's going on in the suburbs in New Jersey and Connecticut as a result of Covid-19.

Next slide please. So this is my favorite number. I'm going to ask Alan to speak in just a moment. Let me tell you why this is my favorite number, for a couple of reasons. Number one, my first year I'm working in Arlington. We did $12 million in earned media and I felt like that was extraordinary. And we had about a $100,000 marketing budget. When you have $12 million in earned media, you're feeling really good about a bunch of numbers. And then I came here and Alan kind of blew the doors off the first year with $73 million in earned media. Alan can talk maybe a little bit about what our enemy is and then why it means so much to our work in terms of forming our identity and branding who we are. So Alan.

Alan Fogg: Thank you. You know, it's funny. It's also my favorite number now so I'm glad it's your favorite number too. So, good evening, everybody. Good evening, Commissioners, County Supervisors and others on the call.

Listen, I am really proud to report this number, the $73 million in earned media value. And for those of you don't know the concept in essence it's a way for us to quantify our PR effort by calculating the value of the content that we pushed out to media outlets compared to how much it would cost to buy that same kind of placement or prominence in paid advertising. This total comes from more than 2000, yes, I said 2000 separate placements of content, such as press releases in outlets all over the place. It's really the first year that we've measured this, but I can assure you that we have not had this level of activity in previous years. And so this number, this

$73 million really is forming a baseline number for us to measure against what we're going to do in the future, starting with the fiscal year that just began on July 1.

This number comes from a lot of hard work and getting interest from local outlets. But really, also from national and even international media outlets that frankly generate more media value. The farther away you get from where you are, the bigger the outlet generates more media value for us. And frankly, generates more awareness of Fairfax C. untie and Northern Virginia as a technology center. And that is the nub of the issue here and I'll get to that just a little bit more in just a minute. So you see, that $73 return on investment number 73:1, that is the ratio of earned media value against the approximately $1 million that we spent on marketing communications this past fiscal year. I'm really proud of all of this.

Next slide please. So important placements that we got in June really are great examples of the emphasis on building more awareness nationally and internationally of Fairfax County and Northern Virginia as a tech center. So I want you to notice the outlets that we got coverage in last month from left to right. Business Insider use the core data core site data center and Reston as an example of how the data center industry has handled employee safety during the pandemic. CNBC included the chief strategy officer from one of our companies, 1901 Group, based in Reston for a virtual panel discussion on the Internet of Things. We had a Swiss TV and radio network highlight the robots that are delivering food and other products at George Mason University and in the city of Fairfax. And this really is just the latest pickup of a story that truly has gone viral and I use that pun intentionally during the coronavirus pandemic. We've got a lot of hits on that one. And finally, the Times of Israel highlighted our marketing efforts in Israel and how that shifted during the pandemic.

What are the kinds of stories and the kinds of outlets that are going to get us better known as a tech center and really drive up our awareness levels, which we saw at not as high as we want them to be in that DCI Talent perception research that we got a couple of months ago? That is the thing we're going to be doing is driving up that awareness level now.

So I want to thank Victor for bringing really a laser focus on earned media value with him when he started with us last August and for working with me to build this media outreach effort that really will continue to improve this fiscal year, as we build on this year's results.
I also want to thank my colleagues at the EDA, on the communication side, on the market intelligence side, and on business investment sides. Our colleagues, of the Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance, which work with us on these placements too, and especially the team at DCI for working with us on this as a great team effort. And as Victor's always said, a bigger team is going to lead that's going to help us win and so that's what we're building now. So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Victor. Thank you very much.

President Hoskins: Thank you, Alan. Really appreciate that.

Next slide please. So one of the things that the Board of Supervisors and the Commissioners asked me to do when I came here was to build a more collaborative spirit in Northern Virginia. We were very fortunate that we put together the Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance, ten jurisdictions working together to develop a brand and to market regions.

Next slide please. And not only was that spirit extended to the other counties, but it was also extended within the county. I will talk in detail later in this presentation about some of the things that we're working on with the various departments in the county in and I really have to thank the Board of Supervisors and for the contribution that you made an investment in the talent initiatives. You're going to hear about more of that in just a moment, but that has really been the backbone of our work with the Northern Virginia collaborative. And the reason why we've been able to work with them so closely is that people live and work in many places in our region.

Next slide, please. The first thing that we did was we decided that we were going to do a brand together and the brand that we chose was really a modification of our pursuit of Amazon and a number of jurisdictions – Fairfax, Loudon and then Alexandria and Arlington worked together on attracting Amazon HQ and that process. We developed this real clear vision of what we wanted to look like and what the language that we wanted to convey on the region. So there's now a website that actually has content from all ten jurisdictions on it. And in addition to that, we actually went forward with the talent initiative that was funded by Fairfax County through this setup and I would like Mike Batt to take over and talk a little bit about the talent initiative.

Mike Batt: Thanks, Victor. Thanks everybody.

Next slide please. Just a little bit of background on where are we headed with the career fairs with Covid kicking in. And then also try to emphasize, that we're not just going to be in the in the career fair business. There's lots of other things we're doing, but just as a recap from the Career Fair first. Back in May, we took all of your input and advice and really set forth a strong, diverse set of companies and universities that we reached out to and it was just a huge success. A third of those 13 companies there on the left that range from eight, a minority business, to fortune five hundreds and on the right, working with Karen Smaw from the diversity team here reached out to almost 10 historically black colleges, universities and all the other universities here in the region and beyond and had almost 1000 students.

Next slide please. I'll just give you one example of the responses that are coming in. We're gathering the stats now because we're a little over a month after the event. So it's taken time for folks to have their interviews and make hires but this is just one service disabled, veteran-owned company here. They're actually almost 600 people strong but take a look at the quote that Stacy Redmond CEO said. This is one of the best career events, she's ever participated with and they have 75 candidates in their pipeline. These are recent college grads. People were saying, hey, we had five zoom interviews and two people are already on staff working, started July 1st. We'll continue to feed those stats to you as we build them from that career fair but I'll show you where we are now, with one that we're going to have tomorrow.

Next slide please. Now, what we're doing is focusing on mid-career, more seasoned employees. On the left side you can see we brought together seventeen amazing companies. You can see big name brands that we have in here that we continually talked about, but I'll just point out a couple that I'm excited about too. A micro health that's an aid, a service disabled-owned company that focuses on electronic healthcare with the electronic medical records, the one right above, and IPS and solar. When they reached out to us and said, we want to participate, they are a company here in Fairfax County that just won the contract to put solar panels on all the Fairfax County school buildings. They said, we need marketing. We need solar engineers. We need it. We need all kinds of people. You see all the big companies, just those seventeen are hiring 4,000 people right now. Every one of them are six figure jobs and above. And then you shift over to the right side, working with our entire team, the communications team DCI Karen with the diversity team all of the folks from the national and international teams and we were hoping Karen might chime in. It's like almost 20 HBCU's. Karen and I've been on all the way to Florida. Right now, we're up to almost 1,100 candidates that have registered for this event for tomorrow, which is amazing.

In reviewing a sampling of the resumes, I think we're reaching the right audience. We're working with women in technology, the Black Society of Engineers, and the Department of Veteran services through their transition offices, the military transition offices at The Pentagon, Fort Belvoir, Fort Myers - everybody in the region. So, what a great diversity of candidates in here. And so I'm seeing resumes from folks that have been displaced like sales directors of Westfield's Marriott, I've seen resumes from Norfolk State grads. So it should be a really great career fair tomorrow. And on top of that, we're partnering, back over there on the left, there are going to be almost Ed [sic] recruiters participating in this event. We're developing some great relationships. I'll just close with, in the middle on the right there. The Nova Hispanic American Chamber of Commerce. When we wrap this event tomorrow, we've already sponsored that one. So that's, that's another organization here that's having a diversity career fair on July 28th. We're going to go put all of our marketing efforts to help drive candidates to that event as well. So again, it's not just us doing career fairs. We're trying to make sure that we're doing our part and just connecting people with all these great companies we have here in the county. So I'll I think that's the last slide and I'll turn it back to you.

President Hoskins: Thank you, Mike, really appreciate that. What an incredible thing you've done. I mean, working collaboratively across our team and being able to pull all these companies in. I have to say, you know, to see from AWS, you know, to SOS. That's just amazing. Really, it is. And I appreciate the companies responding in kind and we really want to bring them the best talent. That's one of the reasons why the net has grown larger. We're looking now all the way up the eastern seaboard to the Boston Cambridge area and out to the west coast. This is virtual so we know we can reach people anywhere, anytime and it's so convenient. So I think that as we build our relationships with these universities and with these companies, as a result, I think that this is just going to grow greater. I want a Karen Smaw to chime in for a moment and talk a little bit about some of the things that we've done for small business. I want her to talk about our mentoring program in the help that we've provided supporting small businesses and also our relationships with the historically black colleges.

Karen Smaw: Sure, Victor. Hi, good evening, everyone. Thank you for the opportunity to share information about the HBCU outreach. For anyone who may not be familiar with the acronym, HBCU. It stands for historically black colleges and universities. These academic institutions were established after the Civil War, with the intention of primarily serving the African American community center of our nation's most distinctive leaders. Doctors, lawyers, scholars and business people are products of HBCU's. I like to list a few names of HBCU's which you may recognize. John Thompson, who's the former CEO of Semantic and now chairman of Microsoft; the late URL ratings founder and chairman of Black Enterprise; Oprah Winfrey, the Oprah Winfrey Network; David Stature, 16th US Surgeon General; Katherine Johnson, mathematician and NASA employee; Rosalyn Brewer, CEO of Sam's Club; L. Douglas Wilder, the 66 Governor of Virginia; and our very own Dr. Ronald Johnson, EDA Commissioner. The HBCU outreach was born out of the EDA talent initiative and conceived by Victor and Dr. Johnson. Companies, Fairfax County, and the region are currently struggling to fill positions. HBCU's represent an untapped market and workforce talent. There are currently 101 HBCU's in the United States. These institutions provide quality education. However, they very often get overlooked. This initiative is aimed at attracting, expanding, and diversifying talent recruitment for companies, and at the same time, maximizing the endpoint that potential for HBCU students and alumni.

The first career fair the EDA hosted included several HBCU's from around the region. The first level of outreach was to the career offices. And let me just tell you, they were so appreciative of the outreach and the partnership as this has added to their existing efforts to assist their students and identifying employment opportunities. As Mike mentioned, the second level of outreach for which we're currently engaged is to the alumni network. Working with the alumni network is a great way to, not only identify workforce talent, but also attract companies to the area. Many within the HBCU network are founders of women-, minority-, or veteran-owned companies and/or could possibly be C level executives of a majority of companies. And so we look forward to continuing this outreach up and down the eastern seaboard and throughout the entire US. All in all, I think it's a winning proposition for everyone.

Victor Hoskins: Could you just mentioned a little bit about the legal services that are now being provided to small businesses for Cobvid-19.

Karen Smaw: Oh, absolutely. So, as we all know, the small businesses have been seriously impacted by Covid-19. As such, the EDA received an overwhelming number of calls from companies looking for resources and assistance. All my colleagues and I were able to answer the vast majority of the questions and connect the companies to resources. Increasingly the number of questions were becoming more legal in scope. It was quite clear that we didn't have any training to address many of the issues for which the owners are dealing with. I contacted the Fairfax Bar Association and it just happened that they were looking to assist companies affected by the pandemic as well. Through a series of emails and phone calls, we made the connection to an organization up in New York called Start Small, Think Big and they were currently providing assistance to the underserved community and to a lot of minority-owned businesses.

I am over simplifying the genesis of the relationship and the partnership with the pro bono initiative but it is a network of top-tier law firms, corporations, and legal service providers who have come together through a coordinated effort to provide help to small businesses and nonprofits that have been impacted by Covid-19. This collaborative is providing remote legal and financial clinics and one-on-one counseling on the Covid-19 stimulus package and similar programs centered around legal or financial issues. That can include helping small businesses deal with their commercial lease and/or HR issues that seem to be a very popular topic. Small business owners can request a consultation with a volunteer attorney or financial professional. There's a screening process. It's a one-page application. The consultation can be for one or two hours. And if needed, they can come back for additional counseling via phone or video. It is an amazing service and it is free. We're all about bringing free resources to these small businesses that are in need. It is a great opportunity.

So the Covid-19 pro bono assistance, coupled with the score counseling services that we currently provide, have been a great way to assist these companies that have been affected by the pandemic. And I'll just say a few words about SCORE counseling. Since the inception of the minority business division, we have helped countless small women minority veteran companies in various stages grow. And in keeping with the needs of this important business segment, we want to connect these businesses to essential resources. One of the resources, again, is SCORE. And for those of you who may not be familiar with SCORE, it's a network of professional executives and they volunteer their time to counsel start-up companies on a variety of business issues. We have enjoyed a long-time relationship with SCORE. And over the last fiscal year, I'm proud to say that we went from one business counselor to five. So we currently have five SCORE counselors operating out of our office. However, with the onset of the pandemic, we were quickly able to pivot and schedule these counseling sessions remotely. We have one person in our office that's dedicated to making counseling appointments. With the mentors and services, the client interface and the success of the initiative can be measured by the number of repeat customers. Overwhelmingly and I probably say more than 50% of our clients are repeat customers. So I think that says a lot about the caliber of counselor that we have to take advantage of the free service. So that’s just another initiative to support our outreach efforts to small businesses in the county. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Victor Hoskins: Thank you, Karen, really appreciate that. Excellent.

Next slide please. I want to continue on this theme of collaboration. We've been very, very fortunate in that we have an incredible partner in the county, the County Executive Brian Hill his entire team, and the Board of Supervisors Chair, Jeff McKay, and his team. They have been fantastic partners with us and they really have delivered for the businesses of Fairfax County. Case in point, the $2.5 million loan program they immediately launched. Case in point the $25 million grant program that they followed up with. There were over 6,000 applicants for that $25 million program. The Board of Supervisors has lead in helping businesses and what we've tried to do is be a good partner to help them reach those businesses. We've connected with over 4,500 businesses ourselves through our workshops, in our seminars. All of our workshops and seminars are free and they often involve other jurisdictions in the region. So we're not fighting border wars and we are actually working together as a big team as Alan expressed it. One of the things about a big team is that it means you have a deep bench. So if somebody gets injured, you can put somebody out there to kind of take their place. And that's really what we've done. We've actually complemented each other's skill set. Rachel Flynn and Rebecca Moudry on the economic initiatives team. They have been fantastic partners. You know they've helped us get connected with the health department on issues. It's really been a fabulous relationship.
And we have some other things going on. We actually have a call every week where we coordinate our activities. But in addition to that, we have a Richmond Highway study.

Early on when I came on board, Supervisor Stork, Christina Morin, and I toured South County and we and looked at a lot of things along the Richmond Highway corridor. I felt the best way that we could help was by providing some strategic market information that wasn't available. And so we have that study underway now. At the end of this year, the recommendations will be out. I think that through that, we're going to be able to attract developers, capital, and tenants, which really means jobs for South County. And that's really what we want to do, deliver from the South County. We also have a friend, of course, in Supervisor Lusk who has reminded us that he's in South County too and that he hasn't forgotten all the resources that we have available. So we want to deliver there.

The second item that we're working on is place making. We were asked to see if we can help in a strategic way. And we're funding a strategy for the county, which is actually going to start probably within the next couple of weeks. The selection process is coming in now. And now we have an affordable housing effort that we're working on. I work very closely with Tom Fleetwood and Judith Cabelli and others on his team. We just concluded our last interview with universities. We met with The University of Virginia, Darden School of Business, George Mason University School of Business, and with the Dean of the School of Business for Virginia Tech, as well as the Dean of the architecture and engineering school of Hampton University, which is historically black college. From those universities, we're going to put together a team of graduate students and undergraduates that will help us take this plan for 5,000 units in fifteen years and try to compress it to do 5,000 units in five years. We know that it's not going to be easy, but we've already called them partners like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to be part of this process. So when we go to scale, we're going to be able to move it forward. But in any case, these are all very new activities for economic development, but we're doing them and I have to say that the partnerships really have been fantastic. And the collaboration has been second to none.

Next slide please. I'm going to wind up with just a few slides on our response to Covid-19. One of the things that we did immediately in the organization was to telework. We went from about 10% telework to 100% telework in 48 hours. And if you think that's easy, it was not easy. We instituted a weekly call every Monday morning with everyone in the organization, including our international representation. And, along with our folks here in the United State, we've been able to get, particularly from Korea and Germany, ideas on how we can get our businesses back in the business. As a matter of fact, they're the ones that came forth with the idea of putting together companies that were hiring with those that were laying off. That came out of the Germany office and was one of the original initiatives that we implemented. I'll talk about that later on. We also created a small home allowance for equipment for home use because people were working from home, but didn't have the appropriate chair or didn't have the appropriate stands for their computer. So Donna Hurwitt and our team put together a little allowance for that. And it's really worked out for our team because we want them to be healthy, even when they're not working in the office. I have to say that the dashboard calls we instituted on Fridays, and that has been what's kept us on track and really made us keep focused on the prize.

Next slide please. One of the main things we started in the beginning was delivering these resources to companies. We need these companies to get back in business because they actually occupy the commercial office space, which provide the revenue which support all the services in the county. If they don't go back into business and the leases fall off, the value drops and revenue drops. So this was a very clear focus on what we did initially in connecting businesses that were hiring like Walmart Labs and Walmart with businesses that were laying off, like Marriott and other hospitality companies. A recovery strategy is one of the things that we've been working on.

Next slide please. And as I mentioned, we've met with over 4,500 companies through this process, these webinars. It's such a great and efficient technology. It's a little wearing. Sometimes I don't know about you guys, but doing five to seven zoom meetings, a day, I get zoomed out sometimes. We've also launched surveys to small business to find out what their challenges were and Stephen Tarditi and this team did an excellent job. And we've made those results available to the other jurisdictions in Northern Virginia and it's been helpful to them in designing programs to help business. We've continued to market the program to the county from their grant program to the loan program, and all are oversubscribed. This shows you we're hitting the market. And then, of course, I mentioned the mentoring and the legal assistance that Karen Smaw just went over. I'd like to end with saying I'm so thankful and grateful to be part of this team. I've been here 11 months and it seems like I've been here 11 weeks. It just went so fast. We've been able to do a lot of things that we set out to accomplish and everyone that I've worked with seems to be putting their whole heart in the game. There's this expression in football, that says, "leave it all on the field." And that means if you're ever left on the field, that means you're taking them back into the locker room. You don't win championships like that. You got to put it all on the field. You've got to leave it all out there. You got to push your hardest. And our people have been doing that. And I'm very proud of them and really just proud of being part of this team.

The Commission has been tremendously supportive of all of my work I have to thank Cathy Lange and James Quigley for their tremendous support, but also on an individual basis, you know, Ron Johnson, Linnie, Rocky, Stephen and Christian - they all have just been fabulous support on very specific things that we needed. Every time we asked for something, they responded. So I just want to say thank you to you all. It was a great year. We will have a readjustment for next year sometime in August. And at that point, I'll be able to provide you with some new ideas that we have on the horizon. Thank you very much.

Chairman Lange: Thank you. Thank you very much. Victor and I were just looking back down memory lane, and it was only eleven months ago. I just remembered that we were looking for collaboration; we were looking for innovation. We were looking for boldness, and we were looking for execution. I'm really almost speechless because you have brought this organization to perform in all those areas. And it's very, very exciting to see. So I want to thank you and I want to thank the team for overcoming obstacles but also being excited about the future and not letting obstacles get in the way. So you've done an amazing job in your eleven months. We've got more obstacles to overcome. But I have total confidence that you and this team are going to be able to continue to bring great success to the region, to the county, and beyond. So thank you for everything. And I just want to see if any of the Commissioners would like to say anything in appreciation for this year.

Linnie Haynesworth: Absolutely, just tremendous work and tremendous teamwork and a willingness to listen and to seek additional help has been great so that results speak for themselves. And I just want to thank everybody for the effort and results.

James Quigley: Thank you, Victor. You stepped into a big job, I know, when you started. I think you showed up by following your own path reorganizing the team, along this vision and mission and in eleven months, we took the success we had built on, in new and exciting ways. I'm really excited, not only for your leadership, but seeing the team flourish under you. We've seen team members just come alive in so many new and exciting ways and try new things. I'm really excited. Thank God we had those amazing results to come into Covid-19. And some of the great things that we heard from Spencer about are the unique position we're going to be in, even with Covid-19. There are a lot of cities who are in far more desperate straits than we are right now and this is going to be challenging, but the team's hard work has put us in a really amazing position to execute. And thank God, we were in that position and we certainly owe it to your leadership and everything that team has done in the last 12 months. Thanks team.

Chairman Lange: Anybody else. Oh, great. I think that's going to wrap up our meeting for this evening. So I would like a motion to close.

Steve Partridge: So moved. Commissioner Partridge.

Chairman Lange: Okay. Do I have a second. Commissioner Johnson? Okay, great. All in favor will just say Aye. Thank you very much, everyone. I'm going to turn it over to Andrew, he has some final comments.

Andrew Taherzadeh: Thank you, Chairman Lange. So this concludes the July meeting of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority Commission. I'd like to thank all the members of the Commission and others who have been on this call. If any member of the public has not asked the question, please email Cheryl Martelli of the FCEDA and for more information about the work of the EDA, please visit www.fairfaxcountyeda.org. Thank you. Stay safe and be well. Good night.