

FRANKLIN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Thursday, January 12, 2012

Minutes

The Franklin County Economic Development Commission was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chairman Mark McArn on January 12, 2012 in the 2nd Floor Board Room at Wake Electric in Youngsville.

In attendance were: Mark McArn, Bob Sykes, Ronnie Goswick (Director-Franklin County EDC), Richie Duncan (Existing Industry Coordinator-Franklin County EDC), Lori Duke (Administrative Support Specialist-Franklin County EDC), Matthew Winslow, Angela Harris (County Manager), Bryce Mendenhall (Public Utilities Director), Meg Wyatt (Cooperative Extension), Elic Senter (Mayor of Franklinton), Angela Ballentine (Interim President-VGCC), Gary Cunard (The Franklin Times), David Dickerson (First Citizens Bank), Darrell Smith (Franklin Co. Chamber/First Citizens Bank), Mike Brown (NC Div. of Employment Security), Fred Shaw (NC Div. of Employment Security) and Joe Jones (Covenant Trucking Co.) Absent from the meeting were: Mike Leonard, Leelan Woodlief, Larry Woodlief, Scott Hammerbacher (Director-Planning & Inspections), Karl Pernell (Mayor of Louisburg), Don Lancaster (County Commissioner), Shane Mitchell (County Commissioner), Michael Schriver, Margaret Nelms (Mayor of Centerville), Marsha Strawbridge (Mayor of Bunn), Steve Merritt (Airport Mgr.-Triangle North Executive Airport), Glen Bradley (NC House Representative), and Doug Berger (NC Senator).

The second item on the agenda was the review and approval of the minutes from the December 15, 2011 meeting. Angela Ballentine made a motion to approve the minutes, with Commissioner Bob Sykes seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

The third item on the agenda was an update on the "401 Citizens Action Committee" given by Gary Cunard. Mr. Cunard said there is not much to update everyone on. The Committee was on hiatus over the holidays, but we are going to gear back up shortly. Mr. Cunard said his plea is that everyone keeps an eye on the Legislature because there has been much talk about cutting the fuel tax. If that happens, Section C is history. Mr. Cunard said North Carolina is several billion dollars behind in infrastructure maintenance, and the interstate system across the State is rapidly becoming a crisis. Right now, there is no money available for Section C – although it is technically committed to be done, and there is definitely no money for Section D. Mr. Cunard said we need your help.

The fourth item on the agenda was the economic development update by Ronnie Goswick and Richie Duncan. Mr. Goswick said at the January 3rd County Commissioners meeting, the purchase of 62 acres was approved at Triangle North Executive Airport, which will help with the construction of new hangars and be used for other uses at the airport, as well. This will also create growth around the airport. Mr. Goswick said he has a company looking for a 100,000 square foot building, and he is meeting with a company representative next week in reference to the USGD building. If a company should locate in that building, this would give us an opportunity to get sewer out there and open that area up for even more growth.

Richie Duncan said in regards to the access road at Triangle North Franklin, we are now at the point where there is equipment out there and they will start clearing and grubbing on Monday. There will

also be a substantial amount of burning done, and all relevant entities have been alerted about this. Also, on Monday, they will be starting the basins for erosion control. We are having weekly meetings with the various entities involved, so everyone stays on track as to what is going on. Traffic control measures will not begin off of US 401 yet, but eventually you will be seeing some of this.

Ms. Duncan said the Greater Franklin County Chamber of Commerce has now printed their 2011-2012 member directory. Joe Jones, who is the 2012 Chairman of the Chamber, said these directories will be on hand at the annual banquet and meeting, which is being held on January 19th, at 6:00 p.m. at the Greenhill Club. Tickets are \$25 per person, and we will recognize the Citizen of the Year, Small Business Award and Helping Hands Award. Also, we are starting something new this year. We are going to offer business training workshops for our members, with the first one being held on January 31st. This first workshop will be 2 ½ hours and the topic will be “Growing Your Business in a Down Economy”. It will be held at the Louisburg Training Center, beginning at 5:30 p.m. Michael Washington, who is a business coach, motivational speaker, entrepreneur and mentor, will be the guest speaker. After this first workshop, we will follow-up with four (4) lunch and learns throughout the year, which will be 1 ½ hours each. Mr. Jones said the next “Business After Hours” will be held on February 9th at Union Bank in Youngsville from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Ms. Duncan said WRAL will be airing a feature on the Biotech program taught at Franklinton High School, which will air on Monday, January 16th. Ms. Duncan said she would send out an email to everyone as soon as she had the exact time of when it would air. Students, as well as the teacher (Mr. Clayton), and Adam Monroe (President of Novozymes) were interviewed for the segment.

Ms. Duncan complimented Gary Cunard on his article in the January 7th issue of the Franklin Times. It was an update on some of the good things going on with some of the businesses in the County.

Mike Brown announced he would be retiring from the Division of Employment Security at the end of this month, and he’s enjoyed being a part of these meetings.

Ronnie Goswick said on February 9th, Franklin County Schools, in partnership with UNC-TV, is participating in the “2012 National STEM Video Game Challenge”. (STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.) The event will be held at Franklinton High School beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium. Mr. Goswick said we are working with Laureen Jones, and we hope to have some of the companies involved in the video gaming business to come to the event. The guest speaker will be Brian Alspach of E-Line Media, a publisher of game-based learning products and implementing partner of the “National STEM Video Game Challenge”.

Chairman McArn said he has been working with a company called Custom Dynamics, who are currently located in Wake Forest, but they are acquiring some land off Bert Winston Rd. in Youngsville to construct a building for their company. We look forward to having them in Franklin County.

Angela Harris said she was pleased to announce that Commissioner Robert Lee Swanson will be receiving the “The Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award” on February 6th at the Cooperative Extension annex at 5:00 p.m. More details will be forthcoming.

Elic Senter said if you’ve driven through downtown Franklinton lately, you may have noticed that where the City Service Station used to be, there is some renovation and construction going on there. The space has been purchased by a local couple, who are in the process of converting the old gas

station into a bar and grill. Their intent is to redo the first floor completely for the bar/grill area, and they are going to purchase the space next door and have that area for outdoor seating. The 2nd floor of the building is planned for renting out to private parties and formal dining. Mayor Senter said we are looking into possibly getting a building reuse grant from the Rural Center, also.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.