

Wednesday, August 23, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Economic Development Committee – Joint Workgroup Meeting

EDC Members Present: Paul White, Stacey Piesche, Bryan Green, and Lee Mabry

EDC Members Absent: Ed Morrell, Valerie DeLoach, Gene Braddy, and Niki Jones

Staff Present: David Bergmark, Patrick Reidy

Guests: none

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The meeting was held in the Conference Room at Town Hall, 15 E. Fourth Street. The meeting was called to order at 5:34 P.M. David Bergmark welcomed all present, including the Mayor. Mr. Bergmark said there were no members of the public present to comment.

David Bergmark said the EDC needed to elect new officers, a Chair and Vice-Chair, and then opened the floor for nominations. Bryan Green made a motion for Paul White to continue as Chairman; Stacey Piesche seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Edward Morrell made a motion for Stacey Piesche to serve as Vice Chairperson; Gene Braddy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bergmark asked if there were any comments on the July 26, 2017 meeting minutes. No comments were made. Mr. Bergmark asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Bryan Green made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 26, 2017 meeting. Stacey Piesche seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Patrick Reidy provided a summary of material which was covered at the ‘Basics in Economic Development’ course he attended with the UNC School of Government. Topics covered included economic development staffing, a business ethics certification course, revolving loan funds, and providing more upfront funds for large business economic development incentive policies. Lee Mabry said the revolving loan fund sounded like a micro-loan. Patrick Reidy said the Town had also discussed the option of hiring a full-time main street coordinator.

Patrick Reidy said the Town Board was scheduled to receive a presentation by Capital Area Workforce in September. He said the EDC members and Chamber would be invited to attend. Bryan Green asked if Capital Area Workforce were proposing something specific to the Town Board. Mr. Reidy said it was more of a general presentation about services offered.

David Bergmark said it might be good to have someone from Fuquay Varina who is involved with their revolving loan fund to come and speak to the EDC. Bryan Green said the Town would not be bound by all of the regulations that banks are. He said he thought it would be good to learn more about it, but the Town would need to be careful to mitigate risk. Lee Mabry said you would still want to set parameters on how you give out funds, and to whom. Paul White said the Town had expressed a strong desire for more restaurants, but restaurants were one of the businesses most likely to fail within a few years.

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David Bergmark said he had been asked to look into economic development messaging to be placed on the existing electronic message board, as well as the future electronic billboard. He said he spoke with the Town Manager, and he thought it was important to have a positive and useful message without coming off as being desperate in any way. He said the Town would have access to the billboard, but there was not an established agreement yet. Mayor Gray said the Town needed to be very careful about what messages were included on either message board.

Paul White said the new ABC store will be having an open house once completed, and that he thought it was important for EDC members to attend if possible.

David Bergmark asked Patrick Reidy to give an update on the Christmas Craft Market. Patrick Reidy said they were 95% sure it would be moved to the Universal Chevrolet Service building at the corner of Fourth and Main. He said they could use the service bays, as well as some interior space. Mr. Reidy said the Town planned on having a food truck and music in that area as well, to try to help draw people further up Main Street. David Bergmark said staff would be reaching out to craft vendors soon, using the list of past participants. Bryan Green said the Chamber had to turn away people who were interested in the Harvest Festival because they received so many requests. Patrick Reidy asked Bryan if he could forward their list of vendors to see if any might be appropriate and interested in the craft market.

David Bergmark displayed the proposed site plan expansion for the existing Kioti Tractor facility. Lee Mabry said the Town needed Kioti to get in touch with the high school to see if any job placements could be filled with graduates.

Patrick Reidy provided an update on business and development changes. He said the Walkers have the old Martial Arts building on Third Street under contract. He said they were still in communications with Kannon's. Paul White said Wynn wanted to sell the flower shop space. Patrick Reidy said the Town should consider putting a new dumpster downtown somewhere to support additional businesses. Mr. Reidy said Wendell Falls was working on a new fancy daycare. He said Newland had submitted the final plat for the gateway medical site as well.

Paul White said the group out of Arizona which was interested in the land just north of the ABC site were still in negotiations with the property owners.

David Bergmark asked if there was any additional business to discuss. Seeing none, he asked for a motion to adjourn. Stacey Piesche made a motion to adjourn. Lee Mabry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The EDC meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.