

Wednesday, August 26, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Economic Development Committee – Joint Workgroup Meeting

EDC Members Present: Ed Morrell, Sheree Hedrick, Connie Jones, Keisha King, Don Brown, Lesia McKensie

EDC Members Absent: Ginny Porter, Paul White, Berry Perry

Staff Present: David Bergmark, Allison Rice, Patrick Reidy

Guests: Commissioner Gina Gray

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David Bergmark opened the meeting at 5:45.

Sheree Hedrick made a motion to approve the minutes from the July meeting. Ed Morrell seconded the motion.

Mr. Bergmark suggested visiting Downtown Apex as a group. Sheree Hedrick said she knew the people who owned Lola and Moon. She said she'd talk to them about a tour. Mr. Bergmark suggesting having the Town's Economic Development person speak with the group after the tour. He asked if the EDC wanted to have the tour in place of the monthly EDC meeting, and the EDC agreed. Everyone said they would rather go in the morning or at lunch on September 23rd.

Mr. Bergmark said Wake County had an Economic Development newsletter. He said he had asked Mr. Morrell to put together a paragraph about his business for the newsletter. He asked everyone to let him know about any events, trainings, etc. that he could pass on to Wake County for the newsletter.

Patrick Reidy went over Item 5A from the agenda – Discussion of available properties and business prospects. He had made a list of all available commercial properties in Wendell and went over that with the group.

Ms. Hedrick said 15 W Third Street was fixed and ready to be rented. She said Phyllis Parrish was the contact person for that space. Ms. Hedrick told the group about Honeycutt Dry-cleaning, which was starting to do valet dry-cleaning out of her business. She said this would hopefully convince them that there was demand for their service, and they would set up a shop in Wendell. She said everyone should be looking into doing incubator businesses like that, to encourages businesses to come to town. Ms. Hedrick then talked about the building at 7 E. Third Street and their process for buying it.

Mr. Bergmark asked if anyone had thought about the types of businesses they would like to see in Wendell. Ms. Hedrick said 2 representatives from Wine101 had come to a Beer Society meeting and were impressed. Mr. Reidy said it sounded like they were focused on moving to their new business in Wake Forest. Mr. Bergmark said that the Town Manager had suggested Beefmasters but that they would need a bigger space. Commissioner Gray said she was trying to get Prime Barbeque to do a BBQ class in Wendell. Ms. Hedrick said she had a White House Black Angus contact and they were looking for a spot. Ms. Rice suggested Tony Gerardi's space. Ms. Hedrick said she'd call and set that up.

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Mr. Morrell said he made a list of business types that he thought the Town needed. He asked what the group should do with the list. He suggested the group go through yellow pages and send a letter to everyone in that business. He suggested they included a copy of the East Wake News article about Wendell Falls.

Mr. Morrell said he would like a billboard on the highway saying that Wendell was “open for business”. He said our buildings weren’t large but that they were great for starter businesses. Mr. Bergmark said we could prepare a template for a letter. He said we needed to decide who we needed to focus on. He said his concern was money, since the EDC didn’t have any budgeted to them. He said he’d email the template out to the group. Commissioner Gray said the problem was that most people had their businesses out of their homes. She said that most people didn’t think the overhead was worth it.

Ms. McKenzie said that none of the businesses do any kind of advertising or social media.

Commissioner Gray asked if the EDC could put together a sheet explaining how businesses could set up yelp, twitter, etc. accounts. Mr. Brown asked if that was more of a Chamber of Commerce function.

Mr. Brown suggested that the EDC conduct their meetings at different businesses in Town.

Ms. McKenzie talked about her staging project for different store fronts. She said she had worked on her own space with the help from Cousins.

The meeting was adjourned.