

FRANKLIN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Thursday, January 9, 2014

Minutes

The Franklin County Economic Development Commission was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Commissioner Keith Smith on January 9, 2014 in the Louisburg Training Center.

In attendance were: Keith Smith, Michael Schriver, Bob Sykes, Mark Warren (Town Administrator-Louisburg), Angela Harris (County Manager), Charles Mitchell (County Extension Director-Cooperative Extension), Stelfanie Williams (President-VGCC), Patricia Yarborough (Mgr.-Division of Workforce Solutions), Blake Perry (Legislative Assistant-Senator Chad Barefoot), David Dickerson (First Citizens Bank), Ronnie Goswick (Director-Franklin County EDC), Richie Duncan (Existing Industry Coordinator-Franklin County EDC), Lori Duke (Admin. Support Specialist-Franklin County EDC), and Gary Cunard (Franklin Times). Absent from the meeting were: Mark McArn, Matthew Winslow, Larry Woodlief, Robert Lee Swanson, Shane Mitchell (County Commissioner), Scott Hammerbacher (Director-Planning & Inspections), Don Lancaster (County Commissioner), Fred Keller (Committee of 100), Steve Merritt (Airport Manager-Triangle North Executive Airport), Bryce Mendenhall (Public Utilities Director), Elic Senter (Mayor-Town of Franklinton), Margaret Nelms (Mayor of Centerville), Marsha Strawbridge (Mayor of Bunn), Fonzie Flowers (Mayor of Youngsville), Bobbie Richardson (NC House Rep.), and Jeff Collins (NC House Rep.)

The second item on the agenda was the review and approval of the minutes from the November 7, 2013 meeting. Due to no quorum being present, this agenda item was deferred.

The third item on the agenda was the economic development update by Ronnie Goswick and Richie Duncan. Mr. Goswick said we have a company looking to expand and relocate to a larger building, and they are interested in the shell building at Triangle North Franklin. They currently have 8 employees and plans are to increase to 23 total employees in two years. We are seeking an IDF (Industrial Development Fund) grant in the amount of \$500,000, which will supplement a \$1,100,000 contribution by the County for a total project cost of \$1,600,000. These funds will allow us to extend sewer from the existing sewer line located at the shell building and to open up additional land for development, as well as extend sewer to the airport and other businesses located there. We also have an opportunity to apply for a CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) building reuse grant. Mr. Goswick said he has informed the County Commissioners about the project, as well. The consensus from the Board was that Mr. Goswick move forward with applying for the grants.

Richie Duncan passed out the 2014 calendar for the upcoming lunch and learn schedule. The next one is scheduled for January 29th at VGCC-Franklin Campus. If you haven't received an email about the event and you'd like to attend, please let Lori Duke know.

Mrs. Duncan said a hiring event was held on December 18th at Wake EMC for Piper Technologies. They were hoping to walk away with about five people, but ended up hiring about 21.

Mark Warren said that Bobbees Bottling has relocated in the former Boston Gear building and is at full production now. They have about 25 employees.

Mr. Warren said Implus Corporation, which is a manufacturer of footwear, is in the process of remodeling the former Sunbeam warehouse located on Gayline Drive. They will be bringing about 25 jobs, with the potential of growing to 100 in the future.

Mr. Warren said the building, which was the former Roma Italian restaurant, has been purchased by a local investor. The investor hasn't decided if he will remodel or tear it down completely.

Ronnie Goswick said he serves on the NCEDA Legislative Committee, and one of the things the Governor, House and Senate wants to do is reduce regulations on businesses, which may prevent them from growing. Mr. Goswick said if anyone is aware of any regulations, which may be hindering a business' growth, please let him know.

Mr. Goswick encouraged everyone to spread the word about the lunch and learn in February, which will be about the NCWorks Online website. This is a great tool for businesses to find employees, as well as for citizens to find employers.

Commissioner Smith said that we now have a quorum present and asked for approval of the November 7th minutes. Commissioner Schriver made a motion to approve the minutes, with Commissioner Sykes seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

In other business:

- Ronnie Goswick said the Emerging Issues Forum is scheduled for February 10th and 11th. The topic will be "Teachers and the Great Economic Debate".
- Stelfanie Williams said we have been very fortunate to have established a grants office with the college in July. Since then, we have received several grants. Dr. Williams also announced that Eddie Ferguson would be taking a position in the Endowment department.
- Ronnie Goswick said he's been working with NCEDA Education Ambassadors to make sure we have workers who are prepared for a job when they graduate. He said they hope to have a meeting set up sometime this month with the Governor's education committee.
- Blake Perry (Legislative Asst. to Senator Barefoot) said if there is anything he needs to share with Senator Barefoot, please let him know.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 a.m.