

**CURRITUCK COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**

SPECIAL MEETING

December 4, 7:00 pm

Historic Courthouse, Currituck NC

Attendance: Bob Collins, Kevin Burwell, Brian Innes, Fannie Newbern, Mike Painter, Tameron Kugler, David Palmer, Peter Bishop, HD Newbern, Barry Nelms

Guests: John Rorer, Debbie Rorer, John Snowden, Diane Nordstrom, John Prince, Margie Johnson, Carol Norris.

Item I. Call to Order

Chairman Burwell called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Item II. Approval of Agenda

Chairman Burwell entertained a motion for approval of the agenda. Director noted a typo, that minutes to be reviewed were from October 23, not September 30 as written. Ms. Newbern moved for approval with change made; Mr. Collins seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Item III. Public Comment

Mr. John Rorer, commissioner from District 2, briefly discussed the newly formed "Currituck First" initiative, which will promote local business and encourage shopping for goods and services locally. The initiative will be a partnership between Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, and Economic Development to develop a strategy and carry it out.

Mr. David Palmer mentioned the Chamber of Commerce's Certi-Check program for use at any member business in the county

Item IV. Approval of October 23, 2008 Minutes

Chairman Burwell entertained a motion for approval of the October 23, 2008 minutes. Mr. Collins moved for approval; Ms. Newbern seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Item V. Presentation by Lawrence Park on Final Marketing Action Plan

Director Burwell introduced Lawrence Park to the board. Project leader Mr. John Prince introduced his partners, Mrs. Carol Norris and Mrs. Margie Johnson.

Mr. Prince described the project and RFP process as a hybrid report: part research and competitive analysis, part action plan and implementation. The research will tell us where to invest and target, the action plan tells us how to attract companies and market.

Some key points made by the LP team were the following:

John Prince:

- Two primary challenges to economic development: 1) lack of serviced, market priced land; 2) general county appearance along NC 168 / US 158
- Marketing audience ranges from large-mid-small, mostly real estate professionals and CEO's / Owners. Audience is also the media & news – need exposure for positive events
- ED efforts should target mainland, as Corolla / Carova property is scarce and expensive
- Within audience, targets should mirror Hampton Roads strong industries: Defense contractors in Aerospace & Weapons; and Port related industries (logistics, distribution, light manufacturing)
- Ancillary businesses will come with population increase and other job increases
- Marketing efforts in down economic situations are a *must* to be successful and obtain maximum value per lead generated

Margie Johnson & Carol Norris:

- Described community forums and input received from residents on the county
- Findings showed strong entrepreneurial spirit and desire to make Currituck an excellent place for generations to come
- The branded message must be communicated verbally and graphically in a singular, consistent way between the Chamber & County departments
- Currituck, North Carolina should be the message (Drop "county")

- Work off of strong brand investments in Tourism and leverage those for our own brand and identity
- Community forums process identifies core values, developed county unique selling proposition:

USP: North Carolina's Currituck is the cost-effective and balanced choice for business providing a relaxed coastal lifestyle with the resources and services of nearby metropolitan Hampton Roads.

- Specific logo development can be done in-house by stakeholders
- Marketing strategies broken into primary and secondary, for budgetary concerns and roll-out synergies
- Website and web-based marketing is crucial to promoting the county and product; Most important
- Development of prospect folder and initial hand-out/electronic publications immediately
- Marketing strategy combines public relations with web and advertising campaign – targeted audiences and ramp up / roll outs.
- Director currently has insufficient time and resources to accomplish goals. Investments in ED Marketing and in stages of this plan must include additional staff

Chairman Burwell and Director Bishop thanked the group for their presentation. Comments and questions for the LP group followed from the audience. General discussion focused on logo development and phasing for the marketing plan as the County moves forward.

Item VII. 2009 Task Discussion & Projects

Director discussed the need for board to reflect on the Lawrence-Park report and their individual and collective experiences of 2008. To this end, Director will provide a small package highlighting areas for comment and improvement for 2008. This includes strong input on the Lawrence-Park study and the top priorities and tasks for the Department and Board in 2009.

Item VIII. Other Business & Announcements

Mrs. Kugler took a moment to thank the Director and Chairman for their hard work and accomplishments in 2008.

Item XI. Adjourn

Ms. Newbern moved to adjourn. Mr. Collins seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.