

**CURRITUCK COUNTY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**

**January 22, 2009 7:00 pm**

**Bank of Currituck, Grandy NC**

Attendance: John Rorer, Kevin Burwell, Brian Innes, Matt Converse, Mike Painter, Tameron Kugler, Peter Bishop, Elizabeth White

Guests: John Snowden, David Palmer, Stephanie Burwell

**Election of Officers**

Chairman:

Mrs. Kugler nominated Kevin Burwell for Chairman. Mr. Innes seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Board moved unanimously to appoint Mr. Burwell as Chairman.

Vice Chairman:

Mrs. Kugler nominated Matt Converse for Vice Chairman. Mr. Innes seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Board moved unanimously to appoint Mr. Converse as Vice Chairman.

**Item I. Call to Order, Welcome, & Member Recognition.**

Chairman Burwell called the meeting to order at 7:11 pm. He welcomed the new members of the board present, Mrs. Elizabeth White (District 1, Carova) & Commissioner John Rorer (District 2, Grandy).

Director noted a letter of recognition regarding former board member Mr. Bob Collins, and the Chairman read a resolution he prepared on behalf of the board that also recognizes his assistance. Chairman Burwell entertained a motion in support of the resolution. Mr. Converse moved to approve the resolution; Mrs. Kugler seconded the motion. Motion carried.

## **Item II. Approval of Agenda**

Chairman Burwell entertained a motion for approval of the agenda, with items VI & VII swapped in order. Mr. Converse moved for approval with change made; Mrs. Kugler seconded the motion. Motion carried.

## **Item III. Public Comment**

Mr. John Snowden, publisher of the Independent, wished to speak about supporting local businesses through policy and resolution.

Specifically, Mr. Snowden would like the county to focus spending, where appropriate, with local companies. This would provide the leadership to a greater community “buy local” campaign. Mr. Snowden will make a similar pitch to the school board.

Mr. Snowden’s request is for the EDAB to consider, write and pass a resolution on this item stating that the county would at every option look to source needs locally.

Mr. Snowden also discussed a coupon program his business is rolling out to help other local businesses with.

## **Item IV. Approval of December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Special Meeting Minutes**

Chairman Burwell entertained a motion for approval of the December 4, 2008 Special Meeting minutes. Mr. Converse noted a typo on page 2 of the minutes, which will be amended. Mr. Converse moved for approval; Mrs. Kugler seconded the motion. Motion carried.

## **Item V. Presentation by John Snowden on proposed Business Consulting Services**

Director Burwell introduced Mr. Snowden to the board for his presentation on business consulting services, fka “Currituck Consulting Group.”

Mr. Snowden is proposing that the county contract with him as a consultant to develop a business directory, which will combine public and proprietary data to provide a comprehensive, inclusive list of all businesses currently in Currituck County. The county, especially the tax and economic development departments, could benefit from such a list for various government and business development purposes. As of today, no such comprehensive list exists.

Mr. Snowden believes that the list would allow for better tracking of existing businesses and the development of targets based on what services are or are

not currently provided in the area. Also, the list would provide a set of contacts for enews, email communication and programming.

Mr. Snowden would assemble all public information with his and other proprietary data and provide for profiles, contact persons, number of employees, etc. The proposal from Mr. Snowden would also include maintenance of the business list in the future. The proposed cost for this venture would be around \$30,000, Mr. Snowden estimated, although that number was not firm. Delivery time would be within three months of contract, with incremental (quarterly, annually) updates. The final database would be a public document.

EDAB members Mr. Rorer, Mr. Converse and Chairman Burwell discussed the merits of the proposal with Mr. Snowden. All members agreed that the idea should be considered for implementation in some format, but there were concerns about budget and methodology. Mr. Snowden suggested that occupancy tax dollars could be spent on the venture, insofar as it bolsters the Tourism department's visitor-related business database and marketing efforts.

EDAB consensus is to review and analyze existing business list and data assets. EDAB requested that Mr. Snowden provide a detailed breakdown of methodology, work to be provided with associated costs, so that the EDAB and director can view options. Director to look into budget planning for 2010-11 for possible funding as a contracted service line item.

#### **Item VI. Discussion & Action on Mission & Vision Statements**

Chairman Burwell introduced two sample Mission & Vision statements based on the EDAB's efforts over the previous 6-12 months. Mr. Burwell described the statements as dynamic, yet important in stating the values and goals of the department and Board.

Members discussed elements of the draft statements, including quality of life, natural resources, different county geography, and tourism. While the draft statements encompass these ideas and ideals, more work could be done to enhance it.

Chair closed discussion to entertain a motion to accept the statements or table the statements. Mrs. Kugler moved to accept the statements with a review in three months. Mrs. White seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Statements will be placed on the website and listed as draft, with a solicitation for comment from the general public.

#### **Item VII. Discussion & Action on a resolution in opposition of the OLF**

The EDAB has not formally discussed or studied this issue, thus Chairman Burwell brought a draft resolution stating opposition to the OLF.

Discussion among members of the group focused on the possible impacts of quality of life, tourism and economic development. Further, the appropriateness of the resolution and recommendation came into question, as the Board of Commissioners has already acted on it in opposition.

Chairman Burwell entertained action on the resolution. Mr. Innes moved to table the resolution. Mrs. Kugler seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Item VIII. Discussion on Lawrence-Park Study Recommendations**

Director is seeking feedback and direction regarding the priority items in this report, specifically the action items for the tactical marketing plan, so that a strategy can be formed to execute aspects of the marketing study and recommendations.

These include, but are not limited to, creating an independent website, compiling a fresh digital recruitment package with new images, updated data and information, and creating a "Currituck Pride" campaign to promote culture, history and the efforts of existing and long-time businesses.

Members, some of them new, would like additional time to flesh out recommendations and how they fit in the current local and national economic context. Further, a greater discussion of countywide economic development vision and strategy would be prudent prior to making marketing decisions.

### **Item IX. Director's Report: 2009 Plan of Work, Budget, Projects**

Director is making a presentation before the Board of Commissioners for their retreat on 1/30/09. As part of this presentation, director would like to present the ideas and philosophy of the EDAB and department, with links to specific actionable items, for the 2009 calendar year.

For this exercise, the director would like a distilled list of items considered most important from each board member going into the presentation. These thoughts will formulate a position and a presentation that will be given to the board.

Director reported that the 08-09 budget was \$166,762, and that some increases for contracted services and future positions may be requested, but are certainly not guaranteed in light of the budget woes and revenue decreases the County expects. First drafts of budgets are due by 2/13/08.

## **Item X. Other Business & Announcements**

Director shared with the board the recent award of an Economic Infrastructure grant of \$780,000 to assist with the construction of the Moyock wastewater system.

Director briefly discussed the Extension “going green” effort in Currituck County and the role that economic development, specifically projects that have an opportunity to be “green”, will play. Director will be at a table for the kickoff event on January 31.

Director announced the creation of a local business incubator in Powells Point.

In addition, the Maple Commerce Park site is officially certified, per a letter from NC Commerce.

Chairman Burwell announced that member Fannie Newbern’s mother has passed. The EDAB voiced their condolences.

Chairman Burwell would like to consider options to shorten meeting length and tighten discussion, with actionable items and less floating agenda issues. Also, the Chairman made a request to others to provide input on the agenda for the board.

Finally, Chairman asked the EDAB to consider dates for a meeting in Corolla.

## **Item XI. Adjourn**

Mrs. Newbern moved to adjourn. Mr. Converse seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.