

CURRITUCK COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD

May 22, 2008, 7:00 pm

Bank of Currituck, Grandy

Attendance: Kevin Burwell, Brian Innes, HD Newbern, Fannie Newbern, David Palmer, Matt Converse

Absent: Bob Collins, Barry Nelms, Tameron Kugler

Item I. Call to Order

Chairman Burwell called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

Item II. Approval of Agenda

Chairman Burwell requested a motion to approve. Mr. Converse asked that an item be added under Other Business to discuss the Horse Farm and NC Coastal Federation. A motion was made by Ms. Newbern and seconded by Mr. Innes for approval of agenda as amended. Motion passed.

Item III. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Item IV. Approval of April 24, 2008 Minutes

Mr. Burwell tabled this at request of Mr. Converse to amend minutes to reflect Mr. Converse's absence was a result of his attendance at a site visit for the UNC study and to clarify new meeting locations. It was also noted that Ms. Newbern was mistakenly listed as absent.

Item V. Discussion on marketing RFP responses

The board reviewed and discussed the RFP responses provided by marketing firms Lawrence-Park, 919 Marketing, and Howell Creative Group.

Responses tended to vary some in economic development-related experience, public versus private client group experience, and familiarity with Currituck County. Quoted costs for services range from \$23,000 to \$50,000. Members observed that several firms may not be aware of the breadth and depth of the UNC study and how that research could cut into quoted research costs. Also,

the board requested that references be contacted with a consistent set of questions regarding each respondent.

During the conversation on the responses, Mr. Palmer felt a broader discussion on ED vision was appropriate in conjunction with this decision. Mr. Converse stated he would discuss vision in his UNC update report. The director and Chairman Burwell agreed that discussion on Vision would be items for discussion prior to any marketing plan implementation.

The discussion on ED vision would and will include topics like industry recruitment, prospective employment base, locations for development, affordable housing for employees, corridor beautification, infrastructure investments, impacts of rising fuel costs, etc.

It was suggested collectively that the board consider hosting presentations for the respondents, similar to what had occurred when he was on the Tourism Advisory Board, according to Mr. Palmer. The board agreed with the proposal, and advised the director to work with Chairman Burwell and schedule a special meeting for presentations.

Item VI. Discussion and action on meeting location policy

ED Board policy requires that the board review a request for change of regular meeting place and vote on the request at the subsequent meeting. Pursuant to the desires of the board membership, Director supplied a draft proposal to members for the official changing for regular meeting location. Chairman Burwell read the proposal into the record. The proposal was reviewed and will be voted on in the June meeting. Please see attachment A in these minutes for the actual proposal as read.

Item VII. UNC Visit report – Matt Converse

Board member Matt Converse attended a ‘comparable communities’ visit in Beaufort County, South Carolina (Hilton Head area) with Bill Williams, a consultant working with Brent Lane on the UNC study.

Mr. Converse and Mr. Williams met with local officials and firms, including CareCore, a healthcare services company; Low-Country Resort Islands Tourism Commission; Greater Beaufort-Hilton Head Economic Partnership; Kigre Industries, a laser manufacturer; Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce; Bluffton-Hilton Head Chamber of Commerce; Outside Hilton Head, an excursions company; and Beaufort County Government.

Mr. Converse stated that the message from everyone interviewed was consistent – the area government made a conscious decision many years ago on what their future vision was, and made appropriate regulations and controls to ensure that vision was secured. According to Mr. Converse, that vision was for a clean, beautiful area that protected natural resources with separated commercial, industrial, residential and resort areas. Both signs and trees (cannot cut down without permit) are heavily regulated and protected.

Economic development activities are restricted to a single industrial park (100+ acres) in the greater Beaufort Area, not near tourist attractions, Hilton Head or sensitive areas. While this decision to restrict industrial activity to a select area has angered some property owners, it has allowed Beaufort to control where and how industry develops.

Concerning marketing, Beaufort County officials and other interviewees drew heavily on Ohio businesses and travelers, wooing them to South Carolina with a high quality of life and cost-savings. Marketing campaigns have targeted Ohio and recently Ontario & Montreal, Canada. Furthermore, the regional power cooperative operated as the major economic development engine, similar to Camden County, GA, the Director added.

Incentive-wise, Beaufort County would calculate future tax benefits of a project and allow a company to use that money up-front for infrastructure costs within the business park.

Item VIII. Director's Report

A) Project Updates

Marine Maintenance Park – Louis Davis, owner of Coinjock Marina, held a meeting among interested maintenance (travel-lift) and dry-stack storage business owners concerning a possible maintenance yard along the Coinjock canal. There is currently no full-service marine outpost between Wanchese and Portsmouth.

Kogok Steel – Director described a steel fabrication business interested in locating in the Moyock area. Director has sent a package to DOT for Industrial Access Funds to get state assistance in paving Inventor's Way in Moyock. Director is awaiting response from DOT on estimate.

Moyock Wastewater – Director reported that County Engineer and Director have been working on an update memo and letter for possible presentation in the end of July / early August. Design of force main is moving forward, as is the Environmental Assessment work for the plant and a Master Plan document which

will fully account for future service needs, connection / tap fees, and monthly rate studies. Mr. Innes reiterated the importance of this project for economic growth in Moyock. Director stated that planning director Ben Woody was in an update meeting and staff has discussed having public meetings concerning the project.

Chesapeake Lakes: This project has not gone before Chesapeake City Council as of yet. The group apparently is having trouble getting property owners to sign off on proffers for the project.

Item IX. Committee Reports

Marketing: Ms. Newbern (for Tameron Kugler): Marketing committee met on May 20th and discussed how best to get the county marketing message across and how to best handle clients in town. Committee suggested partnering with Currituck Rotary and Chamber on these efforts. Also, the group suggested researching radio and television advertising and flyers at local farmers markets. A CD talking about area attractions that could be picked up at our Visitor Center would showcase local businesses and recreation opportunities.

Strategic Planning: Chairman Burwell: Reviewed earlier plan with committee and they are trying to utilize those ideas with new ideas from this committee. Earlier sessions were very fruitful. A draft plan is together and will need additional work to get to a presentable format.

Item X. Other Business and Announcements

North Carolina Coastal Federation – Horse Farm

Mr. Converse sits on the NC Coastal Federation Board. There is an office opening in Manteo with 3 staff. The group has a large amount of land under conservation easements and staff that can write grants successfully for educational uses of land or obtaining conservation land. The regional chair for the advisory board is Ginger Webster. Mr. Converse and she conversed several times about preserving the wetlands at the Horse Farm and perhaps exploring other grant funds available for educational and recreation opportunities.

Director interjected that he had met recently with Rodney Sawyer of the NC Cooperative Extension office regarding an NC Rural Center Equine Industry study and how the Horse Farm property fits into those discussions.

Mr. Converse suggested that the board explore conservation easements and other grant opportunities regarding the property. The board members expressed some logistical concerns common to the property, such as access and utilities, but overall voiced support of developing a proposal for the property based on

what Mr. Converse suggested. It was also suggested by Chairman Burwell that the group consider re-branding or naming the site to avoid negative political connotations.

Brent Lane / UNC presentation

Chairman Burwell asked the board to discuss the location for Brent Lane's presentation and the need for a special meeting to accommodate the board's request for an update. The Director will set up the meeting as the board desires.

Item XI. Adjourn

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

ATTACHMENT A



Proposed Amendment to Currituck County Economic Development Board

Submitted by: Peter Bishop, Director, on behalf of board membership

As outlined in Article 9 of the Currituck County Economic Development Board *Rules of Procedure* (adopted at the February 28, 2008 meeting): “These rules of procedure may be amended by a majority vote of the board provided that the proposed change shall have been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting of the board.”

Pursuant to this article, it is my intention to serve the Board’s wishes in amending the *Rules of Procedure* Article 5(a) “Regular Meeting Location” concerning the location of the regular monthly meeting.

The Board’s reasoning for the regular meeting change is two-fold: the Bank of Currituck provides a more intimate, less formal, discussion-oriented venue; and, the physical location in Grandy is more central to members living in Corolla and Southern Currituck. The Board voted unanimously for the director to prepare these changes at the April 24, 2008 meeting.

Thus, the following changes have been proposed:

Article 5(a), which states:

“The regular monthly meeting shall be held at the Historic Currituck County Courthouse on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. In the event of a conflict with a holiday or other events, a meeting may be suspended by the chairman.”

Shall be changed to state:

“The regular monthly meeting shall be held at the Bank of Currituck, Grandy, on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. In the event of a conflict with a holiday or other events, a meeting may be suspended by the chairman.”

As the *Rules of Procedure* further dictate, this proposal must be brought before the board and considered at a meeting prior to its adoption at the meeting thereafter.

Bear in mind that, given proper public notice and advertisement, the meeting location can be changed at any time to reflect the wishes of the board and accommodate special requests. This action simply changes the official *regular* meeting location from the Historic Courthouse to the Bank of Currituck, Grandy.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter F. Bishop
Director, Economic Development
Currituck County