

**Campbell County
Economic Development Commission**

October 28, 2010

The regular meeting of the Campbell County Economic Development Commission was held on Thursday, October 28, 2010 in the Campbell County Board Level Multi-use Room, Haberer Building, Rustburg, Virginia.

Members Present:

Lester Wooldridge, Chairman
William Calohan, III, Vice Chairman
Gary Cantwell
Richard Carroll
G. Michael Damron
D. Vance Driskill
William Overacre
Kyle Rosser

Also Present:

R. David Laurrell, County Administrator
Brandon S. Turner, Program Manager
Brian P. Gleason, Administrative support

Member Absent:

William Anderson
Herbert W. Guthrie
William R. Reeves, Jr.
Scott Tweedy

// Chairman Wooldridge called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

// The January 21, 2010 minutes were presented for approval. Hearing no changes or corrections, upon a motion by Mr. Driskill, seconded by Mr. Damron, and duly adopted by unanimous vote of the members present, the January 21, 2010 Economic Development Commission meeting minutes were approved as presented.

Matters from the Economic Development Director

Project Updates

// Mr. Turner informed the Commission of recent leads for industrial prospect activity and marketing. He stated that both the Virginia Economic Development Partnership at the state level and private consultant World Economic Development Alliance have provided leads for the County.

// Mr. Turner next informed the Commission of Mike Davidson's attendance at a Site Selection Conference in Ohio.

// Mr. Turner then noted two (2) announcements, one for new business attraction and another for an existing business expansion. The new business attraction, Intersections, Inc., has located in

Altavista, and plans to create up to 250 new jobs by May 2011. The existing business expansion, Abbott Nutrition, will invest \$8.7MM in capital expenditures and create 13 new jobs.

// On the marketing front, Mr. Turner informed the Commission of the recent "e-blast" email marketing campaign organized through WEDA. Over 4,000 marketing emails were sent, generating 500 visits to the County's economic development website, and 24 visits to the website's site selection page.

// Mr. Turner provided an update on providing sewer service to the Seneca Commerce Park. He noted that there have been challenges obtaining easements from property owners and getting Army Corps of Engineers permits. One property owner continues to refuse an easement agreement, and that property will likely be taken by condemnation.

// Mr. Turner next informed the Commission that the County Board of Supervisors has approved participation in a regional tourism alliance through Discover Lynchburg. He explained that the regional alliance provides opportunities for savings, and utilizing the considerable expertise of Discover Lynchburg staff. Mr. Turner also mentioned the Fish Virginia First initiative, which has already brought several Bass Pro tournaments to the region.

// Mr. Turner then discussed the \$500,000 Tobacco Commission grant for Commodity Storage, aiding farmers in participating localities with the cost of grain and hay storage bins. He noted that a second-round of the initiative will be attempted.

// Mr. Turner provided unemployment rates as of August 2010; the County stood at 7.4%, the state at 7.0% and the nation at 9.5%. Regarding the employment figures, Mr. Laurell mentioned a confidential expansion that will likely occur and be announced in the near future.

// The Commission then discussed the projects of Mr. Oliver Kuttner, including discussion of his intention to purchase the former Archer Creek Foundry and his application for a three-year \$5MM-per-year Tobacco Commission research and development grant. In regard to the foundry, the discussion turned to the topic of brownfields, the challenges they pose, and the availability of federal and state funding to mitigate the costs of brownfield cleanup.

// Mr. Laurell also mentioned the approval of a Special Use Permit for Cycle Systems, and their project to install a recycling machine that will produce diesel fuel from scrap oils, plastics and polymers. A brief discussion ensued regarding this project.

// Mr. Calohan inquired about a profile of prospects interested in lots at Seneca Commerce Park. Mr. Turner referred him to Mr. Davidson, but noted that there has not been a consistent type of prospect making inquiries.

// Mr. Turner noted that the Liberty University School of Engineering has provided two leads for new business attraction within the green technology field. He stated that the companies were interested in the area in part because of the opportunity to partner with LU Engineering.

// Mr. Cantwell asked Mr. Laurell about the announcement that Delta Airlines will be cancelling its service at the Lynchburg Regional Airport. Mr. Laurell stated that area leadership was aware that Delta was struggling at the airport, but was not aware that they were planning on cancelling service as of January 2011. Mr. Laurell noted the challenges Delta faced in competing with U.S. Airways, as well as other issues that have led to the cancellation. This discussion led Mr. Laurell onto the subject of development of a Regional Airport Authority. He briefly cited issues with that, and

noted that the City of Lynchburg continues to lack interest in a regional authority. Mr. Laurrell also mentioned the possibility of an air show at the regional airport in 2011, with the possibility of bringing in the Blue Angels in 2012.

// Mr. Turner then turned the discussion to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy process. He also discussed the County's CEDS process, noting that it is temporarily postponed until results of the regional effort come out.

// Mr. Turner informed the Commission of the new office location of the Economic Development department, and staff changes due to the amicable separation of Administrative Assistant Brian Gleason.

Matters from the County Administrator

// Mr. Laurrell informed the Commission that the Board of Supervisors is reviewing the concept of bringing the Utilities and Services Authority back into the County, instead of it remaining an independent entity. He explained that the move would be intended to maximize coordination and cooperation and increase the efficiency of resources. Mr. Damron stated that such a move would not impact the core mission of the authority, which is to deliver sewer and water services. Mr. Laurrell provided background on the creation of the authority and reiterated the goal of increasing efficiency and avoiding duplicative work such as administrative and payroll functions. Mr. Damron explained how the process would work to dissolve the authority and its Board of Directors. Mr. Overacre inquired about any potential problems, and Mr. Laurrell and Mr. Damron agreed that it would simply be a process. Mr. Damron continued by explaining the benefit to coordination of services, equipment and procedures on a regional level, and Mr. Laurrell noted the benefit of such coordination to businesses and citizens for commodity-based services.

// This issue raised a discussion of the value of regionalism in general. After brief discussion, the members seemed to agree that regional efforts are the most efficient; however, it seems to be difficult to convince other localities to participate.

Matters from Commission Members

// Mr. Driskill asked if there is anything the EDC can do to further publicize new business attractions and existing business expansions. In the ensuing discussion, it was noted how negative news of job losses attracts more attention than news of job creation. It was agreed that something should be done to further publicize and maintain the momentum of positive news of job creation.

// Mr. Carroll noted a conversation with David Moore regarding the state of the economy; a brief discussion followed regarding the state of the overall economy and its recovery.

// Mr. Damron inquired about uranium mining in Pittsylvania County, and whether or not mining companies or other ancillary mining service companies have started any activity in the area. It was determined that those businesses are likely waiting for the results of the ongoing impact study and the effect of local opposition to the mining.

// Finally, Mr. Turner discussed the Commission's 2011 meeting schedule.

// Following a general discussion of the aforementioned matters and with no other items presented for consideration, upon a motion by Mr. Overacre and seconded by Mr. Damron, the meeting adjourned at 1:12 p.m.