

**MINUTES
BREVARD CITY COUNCIL
Special Called Meeting
April 30, 2012 – 5:30 PM**

Economic Development Workshop

The City Council of the City of Brevard met in special session on Monday, April 30, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall with Mayor Jimmy Harris presiding.

The following were present: Mayor Jimmy Harris, Mayor Pro Tem Mac Morrow, Council Members Rodney Locks, Charlie Landreth, Maurice Jones and Wes Dickson.

Staff present: City Manager Joe Moore, Planner Aaron Bland, Fire Chief Craig Budzinski, Planning Dir. Josh Freeman, Police Chief Phil Harris, Public Service Dir. David Lutz, Planning Services Mgr. Janice Pinson, and City Clerk Desiree Perry.

Press: Derek McKissock, Transylvania Times

Welcome - Mayor Pro Tem Mac Morrow welcomed all present, opened the economic development workshop, and explained Mayor Harris was just called away and will soon return and join the workshop in progress.

Quorum and Agenda - A quorum was present and the Agenda was accepted as presented.

Introduction – Mr. Moore shared the purpose of the workshop is to provide Council with a working understanding of economic development, agencies and people, and approaches. Workshop goals include: (1) Knowledge - Recognizing the City is a better partner when an informed partner, what role do cities typically play in economic development, and what role can Brevard play in community-wide economic development. (2) Planning - Our approach to economic development will inform future plans like water and sewer capacity, and land use, transportation and recreation planning. A copy of the power point slides and information shared are on file with the agenda materials.

Facilitator - Workshop facilitator Ms. Angela Owen, TBL Leadership Partners, shared Council will hear from presenters on different approaches to economic development, and, encouraged them to consider the following: What role should the City play? Once identified, Council can then begin to look specifically to the role the City will play, including, matters like what kind of decisions will need to be considered with respect to water and sewer connections, etc.

Economic Development Guest Speakers

Director Mark Burrows, Transylvania County Planning and Economic Development - Mr. Burrows provided an historical outline of local economic development practices:

- 1980's - City/County funded Economic Development Commission;
- 1990 - Artie Wilson was hired as Economic Development Director, he (M. Burrows) served as County Planning Director.
- Operational industrial plants (DuPont and Ecusta) provided employment for many City and County residents with wages being some of the highest in NC;
- Early 1990's City extended utilities to Pisgah Forest and the coming of big-box stores (Wal Mart and K-Mart). Downtown Brevard business felt threatened by what these changes could mean for the downtown district;
- City became more closely aligned with the Heart of Brevard and Chamber of Commerce;
- Late 1990's significant changes began to take place as plants began to slow down hiring and both DuPont and Ecusta were experiencing changing technologies.

- Changes in technologies resulted in the County Economic Development office working with both DuPont and Ecusta/Gladfelter in efforts to bring about production of other products, with little success;
- Early 2000 - With the close of the plants there began to be a sense of emergency as 2,200 manufacturing jobs were lost;
- 2002 - Unemployment rate went up to 14%;
- County brought together most of the players for the first Economic Development Strategic Plan, adopted by Commissioners. Economic Development Advisory Board began to implement the 2005, 2006 and 2009 Plans.

Three handouts were provided to Council: Business Newsletter, 2010-2012 Transylvania County Economic Development Strategic Plan Year End Report, and, Monthly Report and Strategies. 2010 Plan calls for five goals:

1. Support existing businesses.
2. Attract and support new diversified businesses.
3. Share the Message - Inform elected officials, other community leaders and the public about the County's economic development status and efforts.
4. Enhance Transylvania County's exceptional quality of life.
5. Promote education and workforce development opportunities.

Mr. Burrows shared one of the easiest ways to foster economic development is to extend utility services (water and sewer), and road improvements. Suggested improvement to the City's UDO (a) provide for more industrial zoning of 25 to 50 acre parcels that would support smaller industries that are knowledge based manufacturers, and, (2) continue to improve the UDO to make it more consumer and customer friendly/oriented.

Discussion: In 2006 with the adoption of the UDO and accompanying zoning map brought parcels more closely in alignment with the City's Land Use Plan, and, the listing of permitted uses were expanded to allow light manufacturing within commercial districts. There are few 25 to 50 acre vacant parcels in the City's jurisdiction to consider for industrial zoning, and parcels zoned for industrial have been developed for uses other than industrial, an example being the Morris Road property developed by the County for the new jail. Statements that the UDO should be changed to be more "customer friendly" but lack specifics are not productive. The City's requests for specifics to identify what particular standard(s) a consumer feels needs to be reviewed, have been met with little reply. When problems have been identified the City has been willing to review, discuss and has in some instances addressed by amending the ordinance.

Mr. Tom Johnson, Advantage West Economic Development Group - Mr. Johnson shared his role with Advantage West is to advance manufacturing projects throughout the region, and, that it is important to keep in mind economic development is a process - a long process - and not an event. He described a few examples such as the 5-year time period to land the "facebook" project. Advantage West is in 23 counties encompassing a tremendous amount of geographic diversity from mountain area to flat land. In their search for manufacturing prospects, they utilize allies like the Dept. of Commerce, Duke Energy, PSNC, Norfolk Southern, to name a few. Upon hearing of a prospect, he sends out a message to each county describing what the particular company is looking for and he usually hears back from counties in about 72 hours. The elimination then begins, such as, the company requires to be within 5 miles from an interstate, requires water and sewer, wants to know what incentives will be offered to them, if the area has sufficient "product" (75% are seeking acreage with certain sized buildings already on site) and, more and more frequently they desire/require to locate within an area that has zoning to allow and protect their intended use, as they don't want to make such an investment and then have conflict because a school or other non-manufacturing use is later constructed close to them.

When a manufacturing prospect chooses to not locate in a particular area, Advantage West seeks to find out what factors played into their decision to in turn

share with the counties that were being looked at; however, frequently the prospective manufactures/companies do not share, or share little, of this information.

Discussion: Corporations usually have metrics to measure parts of a successful organization - does Advantage West, or another, have metrics to allow cities and counties to self evaluate? How do we know if we are competitive with other communities in order to entice businesses? To attract businesses, we need to know specifics as to where our shortfalls are. Based upon the described product and transportation criteria, Brevard including ETJ would have few, if any, sites to meet such criteria. City is frequently not aware of a prospect early on; therefore, value in having an extra set of City eyes to assist Mr. Burrows, as a City representative may know of and offer information that he's not aware of.

~~ Mayor Harris called for a break from 7:15 to 7:30 p.m. ~~

Mr. Clark Gillespy, V.P. Economic Development, Business Development and Territorial Strategy, Duke Energy Carolinas - Mr. Gillespy shared information on business recruitment and site consultant process. Frequently process is started by a site consultant, representing a company looking to establish a business, who goes onto the internet, utilizes maps and information available, checks to see what an area or community is known for, what are its characteristics, and, what does it have to offer - especially in natural resources. Therefore, consider having information on your website that is specific to your community, promotes who you are, and is information that is not found on the bureau of statistics website.

Earlier in the workshop the importance of "quality of life" was mentioned. However, that is dependent upon the person, not upon the City or community; therefore, promotion of "quality of place" should be the focus. Important to market yourself. "Product" can be something different than land and buildings. Give thought as to what type of businesses you can reasonably provide for. Perhaps 50% are located close by an interstate; however, if that's not Brevard's strength, not an issue. Play to your strengths, decide what you (City) want to be and commit yourself and your team, promote your own "product", be intentional, focused and relentless. Keep in mind the client is the one who selects the site, not the consultant.

As an example, one for Brevard could be, water. Would Brevard be a good fit for water process plant? Are there any Class 3 or 4 waters here? If so, would Kayak construction or related recreational industry or business be a good fit? Another example could be, woods/forest and camps. Would Brevard be a good fit for a company that makes mountain bikes or parts, equipment, apparel, etc? If so, check out where other bike places are and find out why they choose the place that they did..what drew them...check out what were the drivers, was it labor, utility rates, transportation costs, etc. As for incentives, those would need to be scripted or molded specific for the project you are trying to accomplish.

Recommended when a site consultant comes, take the opportunity to let them experience the City of Brevard and what it has to uniquely offer - an active downtown, one that is rich in art, and then take them to see that in a matter of a few minutes from downtown they are standing at the base of one of the many beautiful waterfalls while also showing them forest used to film movies they've likely seen - and then suit up and take them down Sliding Rock. Come evening, rather than dining at the local Country Club, take them to eat at a well known and popular restaurant that offers them another feel specific to Brevard, be it barbeque or whatever is popular among the local folks. Make their experience in your City one they won't soon forget.

Discussed: We do have a product, just need to identify it - if we're outdoor recreation, arts and music, how do we promote our product? How do we identify tactics? There is much energy in our community for economic development; however, all are not on the same circuit - we need to put our stories together so that we are delivering one message. Danger if not aligned will be splintered and going in all different directions. Needs to happen before we try and extend utilities.

Council thanked the speakers for the valuable information they each presented.

Next Steps

1. Council members were encouraged to attend the joint County, Chamber and Board of Education meeting on economic development scheduled for May 17th; and,
2. When asked if they desire to stop to wait and see the results of the meeting on the 17th, they affirmed they do not want to stop but rather they desire to continue in the process they have started.

Mr. Moore shared Council already has within their regular meeting calendar dates established to hold additional work sessions.

Adjourn - There being no further business, Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Mr. Landreth, the workshop be adjourned. Motion carried unanimously. The workshop was adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

s/Jimmy Harris, Mayor

s/Mac Morrow, Mayor Pro Tem

s/Desiree D. Perry
City Clerk

Minutes Approved: June 18, 2012