

**Brunswick County Economic Development Advisory Commission Meeting
January 12, 2016, 8:30 A.M. Brunswick Community College Leland Center**

In Attendance:

Commission members:

1. Allen Bryant
2. Gary Lesh
3. Jerry Helms
4. Richard Kopp
5. Shelbourn Stevens
6. Jerry Pierce
7. Shannon Viera
8. Claude Pope
9. Dana Fisher
10. Les Tubb
11. Cynthia Cumbie
12. Kimberly Gamlin
13. Ann Hardy
14. Michael DiTullo

Others:

1. Sherry Hardison
2. Jessica Swencki
3. Tyler Newman
4. Adrian Cox
5. Velva Jenkins
6. Frank Williams

Quest Presenters:

1. Representative Susi Hamilton
2. Representative Frank Iler

Chairman Richard Kopp welcomed all and called the meeting to order at 8:38 AM. After self-introductions by all in attendance, a motion was made by Jerry Helms and seconded by Gary Lesh to approve minutes of December 8, 2015 meeting. Motion was approved with unanimous vote. Mr. Kopp then asked Michael DiTullo to preview agenda and facilitate remainder of program.

Mr. DiTullo thanked our host, BCC, and introduced Velva Jenkins, VP of Continuing Education and Kimberly Gamlin, Small Business Center Director at BCC Leland Center. Velva Jenkins provided background history regarding the establishment of the BCC Leland Center in 1992. It was first established as a manufacturing/workforce and economic development campus. In the late 1990s a \$400,000 renovation was completed with focus on advance manufacturing skills, technology and other workforce requirements soon after the Small Business Center (SBC) was established. Kimberley Gamlin presented overview of the three major economic development programs at the SBC; 1- customized training with concentration on manufacturing, distribution and technical skills; 2- Sustainability initiatives such as solar and renewable energy; 3- Small business seminars , market research and business plan assistance for start- ups. The center has about 75 clients and accelerated 9 new businesses in 2015. Will soon open new early stage business incubator at the Leland Center with focus on advance manufacturing. County Manager Ann Hardy expressed appreciation for the work of BCC Leland Center, in particular the workforce/customized training for existing industries as well as new firms locating to Brunswick County.

The Incubator will have official opening and ribbon cutting event, January 26 at 3PM. All were invited to attend.

Next item on agenda was Economic Development Director report. Michael DiTullo thanked all for their assistance and advice through his first 9 weeks in Brunswick County. He informed all that Kelly Stuart has resigned, that job description was redefined as Marketing Specialist. Opening is posted on County website and facilitated through county HR Department. He described some of the job description changes and stated about 40 resumes have been submitted so far, short list soon to be determined and interviews commence end of next week. Mr. DiTullo reviewed recent existing industry visits...some with expansion plans, active attraction projects that have short listed Brunswick County for investment and recent meeting with Wilmington Ports to discuss potential public/private partnership to development spec distribution/flex "At Port" space in Brunswick County to serve the port. He underscored the importance of available contemporary product for customer occupancy requirements. He also discussed additional meetings with residential community developers and plans for more commercial/medical office/ flex space construction at the sites. He mentioned Compass Pointe, Brunswick Forest, St. James and others...now adding commercial product to their sites. Marketing/outreach plans over the next 4 months were outlined with emphasis on regional collaborations with NCSE and Micro-Region (Brunswick, New Hanover, and Pender) initiatives.

Next Michael DiTullo introduced State Representatives Susi Hamilton and Frank Iller to discuss their economic development priorities and platform. Rep. Hamilton discussed her background as a planner and work with Wilmington Downtown prior to elective office. She mentioned her involvement with the regional partnerships, BCC and community college system, workforce development funding and support for incentives. Rep. Iller stated he is member of BCC Board and is active on items such as; tax relief--- reductions in corporate and individual state rates, funding for Wilmington Port infrastructure investments, community college funding, infrastructure (rail and highways)and reorganization of the county tier system to enable funding incentives based on census tracts rather than one tier for entire county. Discussions regarding state economic development incentive policy, MSA designation for Brunswick County, proposed Skyway Bridge project over Cape Fear River, film/TV tax credit policy, infrastructure bond proposal on ballot, and other potential legislation effecting economic development followed.

With no further new business, a motion was made and approved to adjourn meeting at 9:48 AM

Next meeting of EDAC is scheduled for Tuesday, February 9, 8:30 AM at Novant Health Brunswick Medical Center, 240 Hospital Drive, NE, Bolivia, NC.