

**Campbell County
Economic Commission
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee**

October 16, 2008

The regular meeting of the Campbell County Economic Development Commission was held on Thursday, October 16, 2008 in the Campbell County Historic Courthouse Conference Room, Rustburg, Virginia.

Members Present:

William Overacre
William R. Reeves, Jr.
Kyle Rosser
Richard Carroll
G. Michael Damron
D. Vance Driskill
William Calohan, Vice-Chairman

Also Present:

R. David Laurrell, County Administrator
J. Michael Davidson, Director, Economic Development
Rebecca Schwarz, Economic Development Administrative Assistant

Members Absent:

Lester Wooldridge, Chairman
Herbert Guthrie
Gary Cantwell
Scott Tweedy
William Anderson

Due to the absence of Chairman Wooldridge, Vice-Chairman Calohan presided over the meeting. Mr. Calohan called the meeting to order at 12:09 pm.

// Mr. Calohan asked if there were any additions or corrections to the July 17, 2008 meeting minutes. With no changes or corrections recommended, upon a motion by Mr. Overacre, seconded by Mr. Damron, and duly adopted by unanimous vote, the July 17, 2008 Economic Development Commission meeting minutes were approved as read. Mr. Calohan then turned the meeting over to Mr. Davidson.

Matters from the Director:

// Mr. Davidson addressed his first item on the agenda, the Project Updates. He said that he had a few new updates to the Project Updates he sent out in the meeting packets. He advised the committee that there are currently 9 active projects being worked on by the Department of Economic Development.

Graham Packaging's expansion has finally been announced. In the announcement, it only talked about the creation of ten jobs. However, Graham anticipates greater job creation. Because of the performance agreement's provision of clawbacks if the company doesn't meet its projection thresholds, Graham dropped back its projections to ten positions created. Originally the company

projected the creation of twenty new positions, and its very likely they will create this many new jobs.

On October 2nd, when the Project Updates were written, the County was in the midst of trying to predict what would happen with Crossroads Colonnades given AIG's bankruptcy. From a corporate perspective, AIG is connected to the entity that will develop Crossroads Colonnades. However, the entity that will be developing Crossroads Colonnades is a separate entity that is not impacted by the AIG Baker bankruptcy. A high-level meeting was held last week with Liberty University officials. Baker is still very interested in the project and committed to it, though they want some extensions given the state of the economy. Mr. Davidson said that he does not believe that anybody at this point in time would be willing to put up the amount of money Baker will be investing for this retail shopping center given the economy at present. Mr. Davidson said that he does not know what time frame we are looking at for the project to begin, whether it is 12 months away or two and a half years away. Mr. Davidson said that the economy needs to start rebounding before Baker will be able to move forward with the project. Mr. Calohan asked if the project was slated to be underway already. Mr. Davidson said that construction was slated to begin mid-2009 and to open sometime in 2010. The whole project will be approximately a two year development process.

Mr. Laurell asked if Liberty will still finish the road. Mr. Davidson said that Liberty is still committed to getting the railroad track bridge built. The road that will connect to the bridge through to Liberty Mountain Drive will be a temporary gravel road, waiting to be constructed and paved with the development of the shopping center. General discussion of the development of Crossroads Colonnades followed.

Mr. Davidson said that one other thing he would like to highlight on the Project Updates is the branding session in Altavista, held by Altavista on Track and the Altavista Chamber of Commerce. This project is somewhat tied in with the Main Street Program. Mr. Davidson said he was very impressed with the results of the branding session and thinks they came up with some good ideas. He feels the consultants did a very good job.

Mr. Davidson asked for any other questions on the Project Updates.

Mr. Carroll asked if the Concord water tank is up yet. Mr. Damron said that only the pedestal of the tank is up. The installation of the tank is behind schedule. They are trying to get the tank going as soon as they can. The tank will be 40 feet high in addition to the pedestal. It is cylindrical with a 3 ½ foot overhang on each side of the pedestal. The tank will serve the entire Concord community, and it is sized to provide water to Appomattox. General discussion of the water tank followed.

// Mr. Davidson moved to the next item on the agenda, the Tourism Brochure. Copies of the brochure went out with the meeting packets. He said that two meetings ago the brochure was on the EDC agenda as a discussion item. Mr. Davidson said he had hoped to have the Commission's input on the brochure. Due to other discussion items taking longer than anticipated, however, the EDC unfortunately did not have time to discuss the brochure. Mr. Davidson said that the brochure has been finalized. It was designed as a regional piece to be distributed only in Region 2000. Economic Development will distribute the brochure to local chambers of commerce, visitor centers, the Campbell County Recreation Department, public libraries, hotel kiosks, and student centers at colleges. The goal of the brochure is to attract people already visiting in the area to visit Campbell County's tourist sites. The Appomattox Courthouse receives approximately 600,000 visitors a year, so if Campbell County can get 1-10% of those visitors to come into the County,

the County would be enormously successful from a tourism perspective. There is also the D-Day Memorial nearby, so if the County can attract a percentage of those visitors as well, again the County would be doing very well.

All the attractions featured in the brochure had representatives present at a stakeholders meeting held to plan the brochure, with the exception of the local hotels. The hotels were included based upon a 50 bed criteria. For this reason, hotels with less than 50 beds were not included in the brochure. Mr. Calohan asked if the brochures will be placed in the tourism office in Lynchburg. Mr. Davidson said that they will be placed there.

Mr. Calohan inquired regarding the joint tourism effort between Appomattox and Lynchburg. Mr. Davidson said that he heard from Becky Nix before she went back to Lynchburg that Appomattox was getting ready to do away with the town's department of tourism. Mr. Davidson said that the Town of Appomattox rejected the opportunity to form a joint tourism effort with the City of Lynchburg. Mr. Laurell commented that there were personality issues on both sides of the tourism issue. General discussion of Appomattox's approach to tourism and to expansion followed.

// Mr. Davidson moved to his next item on the agenda, the industrial incentive policy. Mr. Davidson said that he mailed a copy of the incentive policy with the meeting packets. The last time the policy was updated and approved by the Board of Supervisors was in August 2005. Two Commission meetings prior, the Commission discussed the employment grants. The Commission made recommendations on those. Mr. Davidson refreshed the language in the first paragraph of the incentive policy. He said that the biggest issue needing updating is the section on expediting the building permitting process. The last few years expediting the process has not been a big deal. However, now the DEQ and E&S are enforcing not only the quantity of the run-off but also the quality. Due to the complexity of the E&S provisions and stipulations, the E&S part of permitting takes the most time. Campbell County has a very efficient process. A 30-day turn-around for a permit is a very reasonable timeframe and is shorter than the process of neighboring localities. The 30-day timeframe, however, is dependent upon the proper coordination of the various parties involved. Mr. Davidson discussed the steps for getting plans approved and explained how without proper coordination the process can take longer if people are unaware of the process and do not coordinate with the various parties involved. This can turn a 30-day process into a 60-day process. If people request assistance, the Department of Economic Development will work with them to coordinate their efforts and to help them keep things on track. This is the best way to expedite the process. Mr. Reeves asked how people would go about requesting help from Economic Development. Mr. Davidson said that he can help with projects that come through his office. This information will also be on the ED website. Mr. Davidson said that he can also put news of this option in the County Chronicle next spring. Mr. Reeves said that he thinks this would be a very good public relations effort to put it in the Chronicle. This shows how the County is helping people.

Mr. Davidson pointed out a few other edits in the incentive policy, including a mistake under the employment grants. Mr. Davidson advised the commission that the information for the employment credit used to come from the Central Virginia Industries, a private membership organization of companies, but then the County discovered that this information was limited and not representative of all the industrial sectors of the region. The Bureau of Labor Statistics gives the best information on this issue, and their information covers the Lynchburg Metropolitan Statistical Area. No one reports solely on Campbell County. Based upon the data gathered, the commission made changes to the employment credit table of the incentive policy two meetings prior. Mr. Davidson discussed the employment credit table, and he said that he does not think the

Board of Supervisors will have a problem with the increases in grant amounts. He did point out the if the County is fortunate in bringing into the County a company creating 100-150 jobs, the high grant amounts will probably slow the Return on Investment. The Board of Supervisors likes a 2 year ROI, so they will have to consider this. However, Mr. Davidson said he will emphasize the importance of employment and employers' desire for employment credit.

Mr. Calohan asked if construction jobs are included under the manufacturing jobs. Mr. Davidson said that the Bureau of Labor Statistics no longer call jobs manufacturing jobs; it now calls them production jobs. Mr. Davidson said, however, that construction jobs were not under the production jobs he used to come up with the average wage used in the employment credit table. Mr. Laurell suggested dropping the word "industrial" from the title of the incentive policy and calling it the "Economic Development Incentive Policy."

Mr. Davidson asked for a vote of support to finalize the edits to the incentive policy and to submit it at the next available Board of Supervisors meeting, which could be in November, December, or January. Upon a motion by Mr. Driskill, seconded by Mr. Rosser, and duly adopted by unanimous vote, the Economic Development Commission voted to approve the changes to the incentive policy and submit it to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

// Mr. Davidson next discussed his last item on the agenda, the 2009 meeting schedule. The 2009 meeting schedule was included in the meeting packets sent out. Mr. Davidson commented that the meeting location may change for 2009. The County is finishing a new meeting room in the Haberer building. If the new meeting room provides sufficient space, the Commission will probably begin meeting over there. Economic Development will provide the Commission members with sufficient notice if such a move takes place.

Matters from the County Administrator:

// Mr. Laurell had no items for discussion.

Matters from Commission Members:

// Mr. Damron said he would like to mention that Seneca Commerce Park was added to the scope of Phase II of the Campbell County Sewer Master Plan. They are in the process of gathering information regarding the operational assistance. It may work out that an on-site package treatment plant can be installed in the park.

// Mr. Overacre said that he wanted to say that on the issue of the Boxley zoning matters, regardless of people's feelings on the outcome, he believes that the County did a real good job of showing that the process works. He read a lot and watched a lot, and from an outsider's perspective he feels that the procedure allowed for a lot of open discussion and room for compromise. Mr. Laurell said that the feedback he has received has reflected the opposite opinion, and he thanked Mr. Overacre for his comments. Mr. Damron asked if the applicant did what was expected of them. Mr. Laurell said that they not only did that but went above and beyond what was legally required and expected of them, but they also are taking steps to work with the community and meet community needs. General discussion of the Boxley Quarry issue followed.

Mr. Laurell commented that next time there is a public hearing the EDC members are welcome to attend.

Following a general discussion of the aforementioned matters, and with no other items presented for consideration, upon a motion by Mr. Overacre, seconded by Mr. Carroll, and duly adopted by unanimous vote, the Economic Development Commission adjourned at 1:08 pm.