

**Campbell County  
Economic Development Commission/CEDS Committee**

**September 29, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Campbell County Economic Development Commission was held on Thursday, September 29, 2016 in the Campbell County Citizen Services Building Conference Room, Rustburg, Virginia.

**Members Present:**

Lester Wooldridge, Chairman  
Hugh Bragg  
Richard Carroll  
Willie Jones  
William Anderson  
Scott Tweedy  
Richard Metz  
Kathy Carson  
Frank Davis  
George Rosser

**Also Present:**

Mike Davidson, Director of Economic Development  
Frank Rogers, Campbell County Administrator  
Sarah Johnson, Program Manager, Economic Development

**Member Absent:**

Robert Maslow  
Kevin Davis

// Lester Wooldridge called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

// Mr. Wooldridge asked the members if they had any comments or corrections to the minutes from the previous meeting, held on March 24, 2016. No corrections were made and a motion was made by Mr. Hugh Bragg and seconded by Mr. Richard Metz to approve the minutes.

**Matters from the Economic Development Director**

**Project Updates**

**Industrial Prospect Activity/ Marketing**

Prospect activity has picked up and we continue to see activity from an existing businesses perspective.

**310 Marketing-** Our campaign has started and we have had promising calls with several companies. We are continuing to focus on advance manufacturing, food & beverage, Pharmaceutical, telecommunications, & financial & professional services.

**Shentel** –We continue to work to obtain easements to run electricity to the sign.

**Project Red Head** – Wendy's is now open.

**Project Chili's-** Chili's is now open.

**Southside Electric** – They are relocating about .6 of a mile on Dearing Ford Road. Their rezoning has been approved and they are ready to move forward.

**Project LEKTRO** - We are continuing to work with and explore options for this project.

**Project Buckshot-** Abbott announced their expansion that involves a \$34 million investment and 56 additional jobs.

**Standard Insurance** - Standard Insurance announced the location of a new customer service center in the Altavista Office Park. The Altavista Office Park is the home of the former Intersections call center. Standard will invest \$1.7 million and employing 235 people within 4 years.

**Compliance Monitoring** – Continue working to verify compliance for American Plastic Fabrication, Comfort Inn & Suites, Hampton Inn, Chili's, Wendy's, Abbott, Schrader, BGF and Standard Insurance.

**Seneca Commerce Park -**

We released an RFP for subdividing the property at Seneca Commerce Park. Draper Aden was selected through the interview process and we are continuing to work with them to proceed with the next steps in the project.

**Joint Airport Industrial property -**

The Preliminary Engineering Report for inside the fence at the airport is slated is completed. The report was presented on May 19 to a select group from Lynchburg & Campbell County. The report has implications for Project LEKTRO. We are waiting on Lynchburg to begin talks about a regional airport commission as well as a regional industrial park.

**Website –**

The new Economic Development website went live in May. Our former web master went out of business and we had to come up with a new site. Our current webmaster is Civic Plus and they did a good job working with us to get our web site revised. Take a look at us at - <http://www.campbellvirginia.com/>.

**Agriculture -**

The Central Virginia Producer Support Grant was started in May with 14 counties eligible to participate with \$467,500.00 available for reimbursements. This grant will continue through the end of the year. We anticipate applying for a new grant his October titled Central Pasture, crops & Livestock Grant. This grant will have 8 components which are Grain Bins & Dryers; Hay Barns; Hay Wrappers; Livestock Handling Equipment; Pasture Wells and Watering Systems; Shade Structures; Solar Power Equipment & Windmills; & Irrigation Systems.

**Existing Business Visitation -**

Existing business visitations were conducted to Abbott, Rage Plastics, & BGF.

**Industrial Development Authority -**

The Banker Steel lease continues to work nicely.

**Brookneal Campbell County Airport -**

Management of the fuel tank has been transferred. Interviews are also being conducted for a new on-call engineering consulting firm.

**Tourism -**

We continue to market Tourism.

**Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance-**

The LRBA continues to be active. Their new website went live mid-September. The web site is - [www.YesLynchburgRegion.org](http://www.YesLynchburgRegion.org).

**Unemployment 2016-**

	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<b>County</b>	4.9%	4.7%	4.6%	3.7%	4.0%	4.4%						
<b>State</b>	4.4%	4.2%	4.2%	3.5%	3.6%	4.0%						
<b>US</b>	5.3%	5.2%	5.1%	4.7%	4.5%	5.1%						

*VEC Tracking shows 1,145 unemployed persons in Campbell County in June.*

Mr. Wooldridge mentioned that the previous location of the Brentwood Church on English Tavern road is doing well. They have 15 acres and are bringing some new business to the area.

Mr. Davidson noted that the zoning went well for that property and that the business is already up and running.

### **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Process Review**

Mr. Davidson explained that the Comprehensive Economic Strategy (CEDS) is a well-defined process by the federal Department of Commerce. Campbell County started in 2003 and the process has to be updated every 5 years. He noted that there are some members now who were a part of the 2012 updated.

Mr. Davidson explained that since 2003 there have been a number of things that the EDC has made some wonderful recommendations to the Board of Supervisors in this process. In 2007 the EDC identified that retail was an important sector to pursue as opposed to only focusing on manufacturing/industrial development. As those jobs began to go away due to technology changes, the County decided to research retail. In that research, Campbell County found that the County was not providing services to the residents, the residents were leaving the county for basic goods and services. Because of the recommendation of the EDC, the policies have been changed to be more retail friendly and Wards Crossing West is the best example of that change. The incentive policy has changed to provide better incentives to offset some of the infrastructure costs for retail/services sector.

Mr. Davidson stated that the EDA has changed some of the operational housings for this process. He stated that it used to be a 40 person committee because the committee had to mirror the demographics of the county. Now the EDA isn't looking at large committee but are focusing on community forums and larger community participations. Campbell County has always had community forums but we will do them different this year. SWOT analysis, Education conversations, etc. will now be held in those community forums. Mr. Davidson noted that these forums will have special invitations for people to attend and there will be online surveys, website participation, and social media outlets included. Mr. Davidson plans to finish the process by June of 2017. The EDC will have the normal meeting schedule but the EDC members are invited to all of the forums as a general citizen.

Mr. Davidson then noted that he and Mrs. Johnson are involved in the data gathering stage. He explained some of the data gathering procedures with the members.

Mrs. Johnson then discussed the handouts the members received with some of the various tables that have been populated thus far. Mrs. Johnson spoke of the 2008 recession and the population growth in 2010. She noted that the population has maintained to be the same in recent years.

Mr. Davidson stated that the EDA requires a certain data sets and a lot of that information is based on estimates and some of that data can be very dated. He explained that the information is required to be pulled from specific sources mandated by the EDA.

Mr. Frank Rogers noted that the trends are the most important piece to consider.

Mrs. Johnson went on to discuss the census information for Brookneal and Altavista using the 2010 Census and the estimates for 2015. She then discussed the regional counties and MSA information. She noted that Campbell County has not had much of a change since the previous reporting. She then talked about the school enrollment and graduate rates and how it has stayed fairly consistent in the last year. She stated that there were some significant enrollment drops in the previous years, especially in Rustburg High School.

Mr. Davidson noted that sequestration has had a significant impact on Virginia as a whole in terms of defense contracts which has impacted the numbers. Mr. Davidson pointed out that the trends are what we need to pay attention.

Mr. Jones asked if private schools are included in these numbers.

Mr. Davidson clarified that they are not because the private schools do not record or track political jurisdictions of their students.

Mr. Jones then stated that it's likely that the school population numbers are much higher for Campbell County residents because there are students in private education facilities.

Mr. Rogers agreed that these numbers do not include private or homeschooling but that it also could be that graduation rates and Kindergarten rates are different. He also mentioned that the age groups in the County could be shifting to the older populations who no longer have children in school and the younger college age families without children yet. This will affect enrollment rates as well.

Mrs. Johnson continued to discuss the data that she presented such as median household incomes and the changes in those areas as well as comparing that information to regional and statewide numbers.

She also discussed the per-hour-wages for each surrounding county and noted that Campbell is the highest for the region. She discussed the trends in Virginia as a whole.

Mr. Rosser asked for clarification in those numbers and wondered if the reporting was for the jobs that are in the county or the people who live in the county.

Mr. Davidson stated that it's the company reporting those numbers.

Mrs. Johnson stated the average-weekly-wages by industry have increased. She discussed the different sectors and the wages. She also talked about unemployment rates for the area and noted that the region is fairly the same.

Mr. Davidson reminded the members that the important thing to recognize is that Campbell continues to be lower than the federal and higher than the state in unemployment rates so the trend has stayed the same.

Mrs. Johnson noted that Campbell County is fairly low for the area on a regular basis in unemployment rates. She then went to talk about the labor inventory for Campbell County and compared those numbers with Lynchburg MSA. She noted that manufacturing is the largest sector.

Mr. Davidson stated that a lot of times the data isn't reported in the manner that the EDA is requiring it to be presented. Campbell County uses JobsEQ to help piece that information together but it's still a challenge to put it in the format the EDA requires. Mr. Davidson noted that Campbell County is doing very well in the industrial sector compared to the rest of the Country and have the highest percentage of labor force in that sector.

Mrs. Johnson then spoke about the specific businesses that are located in Campbell County and noted the top ten.

Mr. Davidson stated that employers are sending employee numbers in ranges.

Mr. Jones asked if most of the employment lies in the top ten businesses or is it spread in the smaller firms.

Mr. Davidson said that it's the combination of both. He noted that a company that is working 3,000+ employees holds a larger percentage than 100 companies that employ 10 people. A lot of this data is not reported like it used to be reported so it's hard to know that answer.

Mr. Rogers noted that some of the larger businesses are also in the Town of Altavista so that changes some of the percentages as well.

Mrs. Johnson then spoke of agriculture sales and the trends from 2007 to 2012.

Mr. Davidson noted that 2012 is when the data was collected and it wasn't released until 2014.

Mr. Metz noted that livestock and crop numbers are very different in 2015 and 2016. Mr. Tweedy agreed and noted that those numbers increased.

Mr. Davidson stated that the FSA won't release a lot of helpful information. He also noted that the region is fairly diversified so the fluctuation isn't as powerful. This process is also important because it allows us to communicate to the Board of Supervisors how important agriculture is to our county. We have been using Tobacco Commission grants to help assist the producers in the area.

Mrs. Johnson went on to talk about farm size and the raising trends in number and lowering trends in size.

Mrs. Johnson then spoke on Tourism and the rise of trends in expenditures and employment.

Mr. Rogers asked Mr. Tweedy if those numbers feel correct.

Mr. Tweedy noted that he wouldn't have thought that it would be that many.

Mr. Davidson noted that it's difficult to know if this data captures farms that are not solely relying on farms as income. He noted that the age of farmers are increasing so the reduction of farm land may be in production but someone else has purchased the land to farm.

Mr. Davidson asked the members if they had any questions.

### **Matters from Commission Members**

// With no other items presented for consideration and a motion from Mr. Tweedy, seconded by Mr. Metz, Mr. Davidson adjourned the meeting at 1:07 P.M. The next EDC meeting will be held on Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon in the Campbell County Citizen Services Conference Room.