

**December 28, 2018**

The Martin County Board of Commissioners met in a Special Called Meeting on Friday, December 28th, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. in the Martin County Governmental Center, Commissioners' Boardroom at 305 East Main Street, Williamston, North Carolina.

**ASSEMBLY**

Those in attendance: Chairman Tommy Bowen, Vice Chairman Dempsey Bond, Jr., Commissioner Elmo "Butch" Lilley, Commissioner Ronnie Smith, Commissioner Joe R. Ayers and Clerk to the Board Jessica Godard.

County Manager David Bone, Finance Director/Deputy Clerk Cindy Ange, and Richard James, County Attorney were absent.

Chairman Bowen called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Bond led the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Lilley provided the invocation.

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

Commissioner Ayers made a MOTION to approve the agenda as presented, with a SECOND from Commissioner Smith. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES – Project Bonfire**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Commissioner Lilley made a MOTION to go into a public hearing, pursuant of NC G.S. §158-7 – Economic Development Incentives (Project Bonfire), with a SECOND from Commissioner Ayers. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

Martin County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) President / CEO Jason Semple referred the Board to the summary that was provided regarding the Project Bonfire / Economic Development incentives.

On September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Martin County Economic Development Corporation President Jason Semple was contacted by Tim Ivey, Regional Industry Manager for the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, regarding a confidential expansion opportunity known as Project Bonfire. The project would involve the retention of more than 300 full-time jobs and taxable investment of approximately \$90 million. Competing locations are South Carolina and Ohio.

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Semple submitted an incentives proposal to Mr. Tim Ivey, subject to approval by the Martin County Board of Commissioners.

On December 7<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Ivey contacted Mr. Semple and relayed Project Bonfire's request to have its incentive package approved by the Commissioners by December 31<sup>st</sup> but its identity to remain confidential until a location decision was reached.

Pursuant to this request, an advertisement for public hearing appeared in the December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018 edition of *The Enterprise* listing the investment as \$90,745,283 and the retained jobs as 358. The retained jobs number was corrected by the client on December 18, with the investment staying at the same level. Because the proposed incentive amount did not change, staff does not consider this to be a significant alteration. However, as a courtesy to the public, a corrected advertisement for the public hearing appeared in the December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018 edition of *The Enterprise*.

Also pursuant to this request, the Board of Commissioners was asked to hold a public hearing concerning a proposal to provide certain economic development incentives to a company known herein as Project Bonfire in pursuant of NC G.S. § 158-7. The County proposed an incentive package in which the County would contribute up to seventy percent (70%) of net new real and personal property tax revenues generated by the Company to the Company for a duration of up to the next eight (8) years to offset the costs of its taxable investment in the County of Martin if the Company chose the County of Martin for its expansion.

The purpose of these incentives would be to induce Project Bonfire to make investments in the County, to make improvements to facilities, and make expenditures to acquire and install machinery, equipment and other property, which may increase the tax value in the amount of at least \$90,745,283. This significant investment would also allow Project Bonfire to retain 300 full-time jobs over the next eight years, with an average annual wage equal to or in excess of \$64,185, which is higher than the County's 2018 average annual wage of \$29,907 (as reported by the North Carolina Department of Commerce).

If Project Bonfire chose Martin County for its investment, then Martin County proposed to enter an economic development agreement with Project Bonfire that would clearly state respective responsibilities under the agreement.

EDC President/CEO Semple stated there had not been a timeline given as to when the company would reach a decision, but he was hopeful that would be within the first quarter of 2019.

Chairman Bowen inquired as to whether this would be the last public hearing that would be needed regarding this matter. EDC President/CEO Semple stated this would be the last public hearing needed, but if the company chose Martin County, an incentive agreement would have to go before the Board of Commissioners for approval.

Chairman Bowen called for any questions or comments from the public, but none were given. Chairman Bowen then called for any questions or comments from the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Lilley stated this topic had been discussed many times and stated the County should be proactive with regards to getting and keeping good jobs within the community. No other comments were given.

Vice Chairman Bond made a MOTION to go out of public hearing, with a SECOND from Commissioner Smith. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously.

After the Public Hearing was closed, the Commissioners were asked to consider the following:



