

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF STOKES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS
STOKES COUNTY GOVERNMENT
DANBURY, NORTH CAROLINA
MAY 21, 2008

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a joint meeting with the Economic Development Commission in the Commissioners' Chambers of the Ronald Wilson Reagan Memorial Building (Administrative Building located in Danbury, North Carolina on Wednesday, May 21, 2008 at 1:30 pm with the following members present:

Chairman J. Leon Inman
Vice-Chairman Jimmy Walker
Commissioner Ron Carroll
Commissioner Ernest Lankford
Commissioner Stanley Smith

Economic Development Commission (EDC)
Chairman Worth Hampton
Vice Chairman J. Leon Inman
Member Sam Hill
Member Jane Priddy-Charleville
Member Russell Slate
Member Bruce Younts

Member Turk Tergliafera - absent

County Personnel in Attendance:
Interim Eco. Dev. Director/County Manager K. Bryan Steen
Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins

Chairman Worth Hampton called the Economic Development Commission to order.

Chairman J. Leon Inman called the Board of Commissioners to order.

Commissioner Ernest Lankford delivered the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Inman opened the meeting by inviting the citizens in attendance to join both Boards with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Economic Development Department/Philosophy - Discussion

Chairman Hampton expressed the EDC's appreciation to the Board of Commissioners for the joint meeting.

Chairman Hampton presented the following brief history:

- Role of the previous Economic Development Corporation- bought and sold properties
- Previous Economic Development Corporation was dissolved and the Commission was created

Chairman Hampton noted the need for both Boards to share input and obtain input from each other to determine the exact function of the current Economic Development Commission.

Chairman Inman requested the Board of Commissioners express their feelings regarding the role and expectations of the Economic Development Commission:

Commissioner Carroll noted the following:

- Assessment of what we have
- Assessment of what we need
- Where are we going and what do we need to get there
- Assisting in recruitment of economic development projects

Commissioner Lankford noted the following:

- Must have a vision
- Must set objectives and goals to carry them out
- Recruitment of small/medium size businesses that would fit the environment of Stokes County, bring jobs to Stokes County, and improve the Stokes County tax base which would provide additional revenue
- Recruitment of entrepreneurship

Commissioner Smith noted the following:

- Agreed with Commissioners Carroll and Lankford
- Recruitment of economic development in order to create jobs
- Recruitment of businesses to increase tax base

- Assist the Economic Development Director
- Be the eyes and ears for the Commissioners, bring back the information needed by the Board of Commissioners regarding economic development
- Keep the Board of Commissioners headed in the right direction

Vie Chairman Walker noted the following:

- First, identify the economic development needs and opportunities for the County
- Prioritize those needs and opportunities by what is the most important opportunity and the greatest need
- Collaborate and communicate
- Work with more than the Board of Commissioners
- Appointment of a Tourism Board – EDC to collaborate with the Tourism Board to promote economic development
- Work with businesses (new and existing)
- Follow up and be accountable – evaluating the progress of the EDC

Chairman Inman noted the following:

- Look at the whole spectrum of things that really defines what economic development is
- Economic Development is the recruitment of new businesses along with the expansion and retention of current businesses
- Develop an Economic Development Portfolio (strategic plan, develop a roadmap to get us there)
- Do not want a “yes” Board, want an Economic Development Commission that operates independently

Chairman Hampton requested EDC members to comment.

Member Jane Priddy Charleville noted the following:

- Thoughts expressed by the Board of Commissioners clearly express the role and expectations of the EDC
- With those clarifications, the EDC can move forward and do positive things for Stokes County
- Must have a vision in order to set goals
- Develop the “right” plan for Stokes County as soon as possible
- County already has the Angelou Economic Plan to start with
- Must continue to have communication
- Continue to promote tourism
- Need for another Tourism Board, the previous Tourism Board helped to unite different areas of the county
- The County must be ready for tourism

Member Bruce Younts noted the following:

- Previous Tourism Board inventoried the tourism assets of the county
- Tourism is a part of economic development

- Tourism brings people to Stokes County that may come back to live or open a business
- Use the existing Angelou Economics Study as a starting point – it is a snapshot of where the County is
- Take stock in what has been accomplished since the Angelou Study
- Noted the importance of the current economic development in the County – recent economic development expansions which has or will increase the county’s tax base – for example: Parkdale America and KobeWieland
- Need for education in the County
- Have great expectations, but must take baby steps – Economic Development is not going to happen overnight – must be realistic
- Must have information packages for those interested in Stokes County

Member Russell Slate noted the following:

- Big supporter of Tourism
- Need for reinstatement of Tourism Board which would be a wing under the Economic Development Commission
- Tourism Board would operate as a separate entity
- The need to market Stokes County – know what we have to offer and how we need to market it
- Desires small businesses instead of the larger businesses
- Need to preserve what we have – Stokes County has tremendous assets

Member Sam Hill noted the following:

- EDC’s responsibility is to do a great deal of the leg work for the Economic Development Director and the Board of Commissioners
- Doing what is necessary to bring a plan together
- Set goals for consideration by the Board of Commissioners
- Angelou Study is a valuable tool which includes a step by step operation for agricultural, industrial, entrepreneurship, and tourism
- The study also includes very valuable information regarding marketing
- Most important – need to get started as soon as possible

Chairman Hampton noted the following:

- Been associated with economic development in Stokes County for the past 25-30 years
- Challenges in bringing industries to the County
- Need to work with and be involved with existing businesses
- Need to be there for existing businesses who wish to expand
- New things are happening in Stokes County
- Tourism has a great opportunity – assets such as river, mountains, history, etc. are already here in Stokes County
- Agree that the Angelou Economic Study is a very valuable tool

Chairman Inman challenged the EDC to use the Angelou Study to develop a strategic plan and challenged the Board of Commissioners to develop a Land Use Plan.

Commissioner Lankford reiterated the need for a vision and looking at the whole picture. Commissioner Lankford, a member of the Piedmont Triad Partnership, noted that the Partnership, which is one of only seven in the state, is predicted to have the most potential of growth over the next few years. Commissioner Lankford also noted the large industries such as Federal Express and Honda who are locating in Greensboro and that the County should look at opportunities to locate the small industries/suppliers in Stokes County.

Vice Chairman Walker noted the recent public hearing in King regarding a certificate of need for an Imaging Center (Novant Health for the King area.

Interim Economic Development Director and County Manager Bryan Steen noted his desire to assist the EDC, the Economic Director, and the Board of Commissioners to bring and retain economic development in Stokes County.

Member Jane Priddy-Charleville noted the need for the EDC's Strategic Plan to be approved by the Board of Commissioners so that everyone is on the same page.

Vice Chairman Walker noted the division among different parts of the county and that the EDC Strategic Plan must be suitable for all parts of the County.

Chairman Hampton noted those divisions are a part of the county and the EDC would work within it, around it, and with it.

Member Jane Priddy-Charleville requested to change the word "division" to "diversity".

Member Sam Hill noted the need for the EDC to work with the towns and cities within the County.

Commissioner Carroll noted the need to remember a comment from Commissioner Smith, “Remember, a part of what we have is what we don’t have and don’t want”.

Economic Development Director – Job Description –Discussion

Chairman Inman noted the full time Economic Development Director position will be proposed in the fiscal year 2008-09 budget.

Chairman Inman noted the need for a director who is out in the county, promoting the county, recruiting new businesses as well as maintaining communication with existing businesses, writing grants, and working closely with the EDC.

Chairman Hampton expressed the director must have economic development experience, must have grant writing experience and must be able promote Stokes County.

Member Sam Hill expressed the director must have marketing experience to be able to “market” Stokes County.

Member Russell Slate noted even with economic development or marketing experience, it would take at least two years to learn Stokes County and suggested possibly being able to hire locally (from Stokes County, someone who already knows how to sell Stokes County. The director will need to be able to analyze all parts of the County.

Member Jane Priddy-Charleville noted the need for the director to be able to market Stokes County, be professional, be genuine and real, and most important – “be themselves”.

Member Bruce Younts noted the need for the director to be an “ombudsman” for Stokes County, someone who knows Stokes County.

Both boards discussed the job description for Economic Development Director, timeline for getting a director in Stokes County, tourism being a part of the job description, and getting a tourism board active again.

Vice Chairman Walker noted the need to keep things moving and pick up the pace to make things happen.

Commissioner Carroll noted “it is time to put our money where our mouths are and it takes money to make money”.

Member Hill noted the need to look at possible additional staff for the economic development office.

Manager Steen noted that some counties offer incentives to the Economic Development Director if certain projects are accomplished.

Member Priddy-Charleville noted that the county would need to be careful in offering incentives, you may get more that you want.

Both Boards discussed future plans for the EDC, interviewing for a director, and the need to start advertising for a director.

Commissioner Carroll noted that the hiring and firing of the Economic Development Director is the responsibility of the County Manager.

Chairman Hampton noted the EDC would be happy to review the job description developed by the County.

Chairman Hampton and Chairman Inman both expressed appreciation to the members for their attendance at today’s meeting.

The EDC discussed scheduling another meeting before their regular June 18th meeting.

Member Priddy-Charleville suggested that EDC members be familiar with the Angelou Study in order to get started on the EDC plan.

Chairman Hampton entertained a motion to recess the EDC meeting until Wednesday, June 4th at 1:30 pm.

Member Priddy-Charleville moved to recess the EDC meeting until Wednesday, June 4th at 1:30 pm. Member Hill seconded and the motion carried (6-0 with Member Turk Tergliafera absent.

The Board of Commissioners continued their meeting.

Request- Board of Education

The Board discussed requesting additional information from the Stokes County Board of Education.

Commissioner Carroll recommended the Board request the following items in order to look at the whole picture for the 2008-09 budget:

- Most recent State and Federal Allotment Revisions for F/Y 2007-08
- Summary of all permanent positions by PRC
- Summary of 2007-08 expenditures in PRC 24, 31, 68/69, 72
 - By broad category: personnel by position, materials/supplies, technology, staff development, etc.
- Analysis of Current Expense and Capital Outlay Fund Balances
 - Start with amount shown in the audit at June 30, 2007, then show restricted amounts, appropriations to 2007-08 budget, etc., to arrive at Fund Balances available for use in 2008-09
- Ratio of instructional computers to students by school
- Ratio of library books to students by school

The Board discussed the items recommended by Commissioner Carroll.

Chairman Inman entertained a motion to request the additional information recommended by Commissioner Carroll from the Stokes County Board of Education.

Commissioner Smith moved to request the items recommended by Commissioner Carroll from the Stokes County Board of Education. Vice Chairman Walker seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Inman entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Lankford moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Smith seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Darlene M. Bullins
Clerk to the Board

J. Leon Inman
Chairman