***Laurens County Development Corporation***

Board Meeting – **Minutes**

Tuesday – July 17, 2018

Attendees:

Shawn Bell, Justin Benfield, Stan Bryson, Jon Caime, Mayor John Carter, Jeff Field, Randy Garrett, Amanda Munyan, David Pitts, Rodney Smith, Mayor John Stankus, Steve West, John Young, and Collie Lehn

Guests:

Jolie Patterson (Fountain Inn intern, USC student)

Staff:

Jon Coleman, Lynn Finley, Whitney Robertson, Sandy Cruickshanks

Press:

Randy Stevens (WLBG), John Clayton (Advertiser), Larry Franklin (Chronicle)

Chairman Field called the meeting to order at 12:00 and gave the invocation.

*Minutes and Financials*

Chairman Field asked the Board for a motion to approve the meeting’s agenda. Randy Garrett made the motion to approve and Stan Bryson seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the agenda.

Chairman Field then asked the Board for a motion to approve the minutes from the 05/15/18 meeting. John Young made the motion to approve the minutes as presented and Shawn Bell seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes.

Lynn Finley provided a recap of expenses for May and June 2018. The financials were accepted as information only.

*2017 Annual Audit Report – Matt Phillips, McKinley Cooper*

Matt Phillips provided a detailed review of the 2017 audit results and answered questions from the board. He reported that McKinley Cooper provided a “clean and unmodified” opinion of the LCDC financial position as of December 31, 2017 and no major findings were reported.

*Prospect Activity – Jonathan Coleman*

Activity to date: 34 RFIs / 9 site visits

Currently have a letter of intent and expect a commitment soon for a new company to locate in Hunter Industrial Park.

An information sheet, created by the Upstate Alliance, is included in everyone’s board packets. This educational piece is focused on tariffs and recent trade discussions to provide an overview of international trade in the upstate and state. International foreign direct investment is important to Laurens County – Since 2010 there have been 25 announcements resulting in foreign investment totaling over $1 billion and over 3,000 jobs.

*New Marketing Materials & Update – Whitney Robertson*

A new full color marketing piece has been developed for the LCDC. This promotional piece is designed to be a leave behind, to give prospects and use during site visits. It is still a work in progress and can be updated as needed with new information. Posts continue to be made on social media and through email promoting the work of the LCDC.

At the end of May, the majority of the Upstate Alliance team visited Laurens County touring sites to be familiar with what is available to promote.

Later in July, Mr. Coleman will be attending a board luncheon for the International Asset Managers Council (IAMC) in Atlanta which is being hosted by the Upstate Alliance. He will also be participating in a marketing mission trip to Vancouver in September.

*Product Development Update – Jonathan Coleman*

The Laurens Electric Cooperative is preparing to close on an additional 90 acres just off of the original master plan for the Connexial Center. This will take the total park acreage to approximately 450 acres. DHEC permits have been submitted for water, sewer and road work to be handled through the LCDC. A daylighting permit has also been submitted which allows trees to be cut along the interstate to allow visibility along with an encroachment permit to the DOT. The SC Power Team has approved a $3.5 million grant for infrastructure improvements for this park which may be the largest grant award they have given.

Another item to mention concerning this area is that the LCDC is submitting a no-match grant request to the Federal Department of Transportation for $1.6 million for an interchange justification report and a corridor study from this site north to exit 22. Senator Graham’s office is aware of this submission and has offered to help in any way they can.

There are also concerns with traffic flow on Old Laurens Rd near the ZF facility. Depending on GPS systems used, trucks are getting misdirected into downtown Gray Court residential areas. Plans are being made now for large directional / wayfinding signs to help ease these problems. A large lighted monument style sign has already been installed at the Owings Park phase II where ZF’s logistics center is located.

Mr. Coleman shared a rendering of the Hunter Park spec building. A contract is expected to be signed with a contractor by late July with construction to begin in August. A ground breaking ceremony will be planned nearer that time. The size will be approximately 82,700 sq. ft. – expandable to 250,000 sq. ft.

*Industry Showcase – Lynn Finley*

There are two workforce events in the planning stages for this fall and both involve promoting manufacturing careers to students. There is a group coming together to plan a Business & Industry Showcase. This is a partnership with Laurens and Newberry Counties to bring together approximately 16 to 20 different companies to demonstrate their product and career options to all 8th grade students in the two counties. This showcase will be held at the Piedmont Tech CAM center and will host approximate 1,000 students. The 2018 MFG Day will be held the first week of October which will focus on high school aged students. There is already one industry in Laurens County committed to participating in the tours this year.

In mid-June, Ms. Finley had the honor to speak to a group of guidance counselors from across the Upper Savannah region about Laurens County and the current and future needs in workforce. They were participating in continuing education at the Piedmont Tech CAM center.

Piedmont Tech also hosted a group of Italian exchange students at the CAM center this summer. There were 12 students taking manufacturing classes while also having the opportunity to tour local companies (ZF, CeramTec, Shaw Industries, and CCL Label) and internships (Brawo USA, Alupress, Flame Spray, and Yanfeng).

ZF Transmissions is planning their 3rd annual signing day of apprentices for early August.

*September Board Meeting – Jeff Field*

Due to staff conflicts the September board meeting will be moved to Tuesday, September 11.

*Other Reports:*

None

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn S. Finley