***Laurens County Development Corporation***

Board Meeting - **Minutes**

Tuesday – January 20, 2015

Attendees:

Mayor Sharon Brownlee, Stan Bryson, Mayor John Carter, Roger Case, Rusty Denning, Jeff Field, Randy Lis, Tom Hardy, Rich D’Alberto, Ernie Segars, John Young, Collie Lehn, and David Pitts

Guests:

John Lummus & Lauren Scoggins (Upstate SC Alliance), Joe Wood & Diane Anderson (Laurens County Council)

Staff:

Marvin Moss, Jon Coleman, Lynn Finley, and Sandy Cruickshanks.

Press:

Cory Engle (Advertiser), Emil Finley (WLBG), Daniel Taylor (golaurens.com) and Vic MacDonald (Chronicle).

Vice Chairman Field called the meeting to order at noon and gave the invocation. He then recognized and welcomed Laurens County Councilman David Pitts as a new board member for the LCDC.

*Minutes and Financials*

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

Vice Chairman Field then asked the Board for a motion to approve the minutes from the 11/18/14 meeting. Rich D’Alberto made the motion to approve the minutes as presented and Stan Bryson seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes.

Lynn Finley provided a recap of expenses for November and December 2014 along with an investor update. With no questions or comments, the financials were accepted as information only.

*Existing Industry/Retail Update – Jon Coleman:*

* Over the past two months the different councils have been visited to be given a report of 2014 economic development. This initiative will be finishing up soon with Town of Gray Court, Water and Sewer Commission, and the Commission of Public Works.
* Jon and Lynn continue to make calls for introductions with existing industry.
* At year end we had the CCL Label announcement which was $30 million in investment and 98 new jobs. Also currently working on three expansion projects.
* The job fair is planned for January 29, 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM and there are 15 companies confirmed to attend at this point. So far, it is primarily manufacturing but would welcome other industries if they have a need.
* The last CEO Round Table was held January 13 and was hosted by the hospital. It was well attended with a very timely topic of workers compensation which the group had requested.
* Since the last board meeting there was a recognition ceremony in Columbia at the State House acknowledging Laurens County as a Certified SC Work Ready Community. This is an important achievement for Laurens County. Workforce development continues to be a big topic and will also be the topic at the LCDC annual meeting to be held in February. Representatives from our two largest industries, ZF and Wal-Mart Distribution, will speak along with Rusty Denning from Piedmont Tech.

*Economic Development Update – Marvin Moss:*

* The annual meeting is planned for Tuesday, February 17 at noon. All board member’s councils, boards, and commissions are also invited. An invitation will be out soon.
* 2014 update
  + Announced 273 new jobs / $70.5 million in new capital / average wage is $16.24 which is up from $15.81 earlier in 2014 / unemployment is 6.1% in November which is down from 7.7% in 2013
  + Requests for Information YTD: 67
  + Having nothing to submit: 10 (down from 20 in 2013)
  + Site visits: 56 (up from 43 in 2013)
  + Website pages viewed: 248,986 (up from 237,873 in 2013)
* Have three projects expect to announce in 1st quarter: Projects Zeus, Yak, and DVZ
* Have engaged Thomas & Hutton to research possible new properties for consideration. We are rapidly running out of available properties, especially in the northern part of the county. Thomas and Hutton came back with 287 potential properties that would be within a 5 mile driving distance from an interstate. This covered the area from exit 60 on I-26 in Joanna up to exit 22 in Fountain Inn on I-385. A site has been identified in the northern end of the county, in the Laurens area and in the Clinton area for future potential as we need more properties.
* The Department of Commerce has a new county assessment tool they are launching and have asked Laurens County to be the first to do the assessment. A small group will be meeting to complete and discuss the findings.

*CEDC Update – Collie Lehn:*

* Continuing with sessions meeting with the consultant they hired to assist with a strategic plan and are anticipating the results soon.

*Laurens ED Update – John Young:*

* Have a new restaurant opened on the square called Yo’ Cup which was a part of the jump start initiative.
* The Palmetto Bank basically donated what is known as the “Chaney Building” on the square. It does need a good bit of work and the City has agreed to help with some of the expenses to get the building in the dry. They are discussing different options for its future use but the primary goal right now is to get the building stabilized.

*City of Laurens Update – Mayor Sharon Brownlee:*

* Plans are underway for the new vacant lot on the square. An inviting green space / park area will be created including tables, umbrellas, swings, and arbors.
* On schedule with the new civic center and plan to have all permits in place by the end of the month so construction can begin. Still expecting completion by December 1.

*Upstate Alliance Update – John Lummus:*

* Introduced Lauren Scoggins as the new Director of Investor Relations
* 2014 update: Approximately 4600 new jobs, every county in the Upstate had at least one announcement, and had over 60 total projects in both new and existing industry.
* Goals for 2015 are to stay on target markets, continue to focus the organization on marketing and branding the Upstate, uncovering leads and prospects, and working closely with the county developers.

*Review/Approval of By-Laws – Jeff Field:*

Vice Chairman Field stated that the Executive Committee met in December to review the by-laws and have several minor changes and updates to make. He provided a recap of all the needed updates. Vice Chairman Field then called for a motion on the by-law changes. A motion was made by Rich D’Alberto and seconded by Ernie Segars. The Board unanimously approved the changes.

A motion was made by Ernie Segars that in light of the vacancy on the Executive Committee of the previous past chairman, David Pitts be appointed to fill that position until the appropriate time the next chairman moves to that position. The motion was seconded by Stan Bryson and with no further discussion the Board unanimously approved.

*Approval of 2015 Officers – Marvin Moss:*

Marvin Moss began by stating the nominating committee that had been appointed in the November meeting was: Ernie Segars from the County, Greg Alexander from the Chamber, Steve West from Duke Energy, and Mayor John Carter from the Town of Gray Court. This committee proposed the following officers for the 2015 Executive Committee: Chairman – Stan Bryson, Vice Chairman – Jeff Field, Treasurer – Frank Stovall, and Secretary – Randy Garrett. Additional nominations from the floor were requested and being none, Vice Chairman Field proceeded with a vote. No motion was needed since the nominations were made from a committee. The Board approved the slate of officers unanimously.

*Other Business*

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn S. Finley