***Laurens County Development Corporation***

Board Meeting - **Minutes**

Tuesday – July 21, 2015

Attendees:

Stan Bryson, Mayor John Carter, Rusty Denning, Jeff Field, Randy Garrett, Tom Hardy, Randy Lis, David Pitts, Ernie Segars, Mayor John Stankus, Steve West, and John Young

Guests:

John Lummus (Upstate SC Alliance), Diane Anderson (Laurens County Council), Sam Leaman (Upper Savannah), Matt Phillips (McKinley Cooper)

Staff:

Marvin Moss, Lynn Finley and Sandy Cruickshanks.

Press:

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

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

*Minutes and Financials*

Chairman Bryson stated he wanted to move item #11 (Review of Land Sale) on the agenda to be covered after the executive session. Chairman Bryson asked the Board for a motion to approve the meeting’s agenda reflecting the change. Ernie Segars made the motion to approve and Mayor Carter seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the agenda.

Chairman Bryson then asked the Board for a motion to approve the minutes from the 05/19/15 meeting. Jeff Field made the motion to approve the minutes as presented and David Pitts seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes.

Lynn Finley provided a recap of expenses for May and June. With no questions or comments, the financials were accepted as information only.

Update on Investors: No new investors in the past two months. One investor, M B Kahn Construction, increased their investment level. There are 46 current investors.

*2014 Audit Report – Matt Phillips, McKinley Cooper:*

Matt Phillips provided a detailed review of the 2014 audit results. He reported that no major findings were reported.

*Existing Industry/Retail Update – Marvin Moss:*

* CB&I has announced a $4.4 million expansion with 56 new jobs. They also have an immediate need for welders.
* An existing industry with code name Project Needle is planning a $25 million expansion. The 2nd reading has just been completed.
* Chick-fil-A is on schedule to open and has publicly announced September 2 as that date.
* The LCDC staff hosted Upstate SC Alliance staff June 15 to cover current initiatives and properties. The opportunity enabled time for the Upstate Alliance team to see available properties first hand.
* Have conducted 10 industry visits (some have included the SCDOC Existing Industry Division and Lynn).
* John McClure has finished his warehouse in Hunter Industrial Park and IP will be moving into the facility in the next few weeks.

*Economic Development Update – Marvin Moss:*

* Referenced recently published articles covering the current trend of a decrease in submitted RFIs. This seems to also be the current trend for Laurens County. However, the RFIs being received seem to be of better quality.
* RFIs: 4 in May, 2 in June – YTD: 30
* Site Visits: 7 in May, 1 in June – YTD: 21
* Have a number of projects that are in the process and its down to Laurens County and one or two other communities. Project Yak is looking in the southern end of the county and have officially closed on the land. Not sure yet on when that will announce. Have Project Lobster looking in Clinton III. Project Laredo is looking in Hunter Industrial Park. Project Tablet is looking in the Clinton area and will be about a $5 million investment. Project DVZ is looking at acquiring the Spec Building. We have signed a contract of sale on the Spec Building. A developer is currently working with the company on a lease agreement and that should be finalized very soon. Project Tundra is about to purchase some property in Owings. Project Lace is looking at the BBA building in Gray Court. Have been told they have signed a contract on that and County Council will start possibly at the next meeting on some ordinances dealing with that project.
* The LCDC and the Chamber are considering offering a seminar to our existing industry on preventative maintenance with a company called QualPro.
* The Board should have received copies of two articles recently published from the State of the Upstate and Business in Focus. Both provided nice covered of Laurens County.
* Gave a presentation in June to Abbeville County on strategic planning and then another with the Golden Strip Rotary Club July.

*CEDC Update – No Report:*

*Laurens ED Update – John Young:*

* Finally Friday on the Square will be July 31.
* Due to the lack of viable candidates, Main Street has decided to postpone any new Jump Start grants until early 2016.
* The Hummingbird Restaurant has closed so there is now potential open space for a new restaurant.

*Upstate SC Alliance Update – John Lummus:*

* Currently have right at $500 million in new investment throughout the Upstate, 12 new projects, 9 existing industry have done expansions. About 2,000 new jobs across the region.
* Over the past couple of weeks they have seen a slight uptick in new RFIs. But activity has been in a little bit of a lull.
* Continuing to work on the Global Cities initiative. This is basically working with existing industry in their nine counties assisting them in learning about exporting and connecting them with the needed resources.
* Also looking at doing a new foreign direct investment plan.
* Will be hosting an event in Columbia in the fall for local developers and DOC project managers. Also planning missions in the fall to get in front of site selectors in Charlotte, Toronto, and Atlanta. There will be a site consultant visit event in October. On August 3, there will be a reception for the SC Association of Counties.
* Their staff visited with Laurens County in June to learn more about available sites, buildings and workforce initiatives.

Chairman Bryson asked for a motion to go into Executive Session at 12:49 to discuss an employee matter and a legal briefing on a contractual matter. Randy Garrett motioned and Mayor Carter seconded.

The Board returned to open session at 1:02. Chairman Bryson stated that a legal briefing on a contractual matter was covered and no action was taken. On the employee matter, Chairman Bryson shared the retirement announcement of Executive Director, Marvin Moss, to be December 31, 2015. A search committee is in place to begin a search for a new director and will be chaired by Dr. David Pitts.

*Review of Land Sales – Marvin Moss:*

* Project Tundra has indicated that they wish to buy 20 acres in Owings Industrial Park. This basically fills the OIP except for about 7 usable acres. The LCDC is in the process of taking down this acreage for Project Tundra.
* With the absence of Mr. Stovall, the finance committee report will be postponed.

*Other Business – None*

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn S. Finley