***Laurens County Development Corporation***

Board Meeting - **Minutes**

Tuesday – July 15, 2014

Attendees:

Stan Bryson, Ernie Segars, Tom Hardy, Jim Coleman, Mayor John Carter, Steve West, Randy Garrett, Frank Stovall, John Young, and Rich D’Alberto.

Guests:

John Lummus (Upstate SC Alliance), Toni McKinley (McKinley Cooper), Jeff Burgess (Fitts & Goodwin) and Sam Leaman (Upper Savannah Council of Government)

Staff:

Marvin Moss, Jon Coleman and Sandy Cruickshanks.

Press:

Corey Engle (Advertiser), Emil Finley (WLBG) and Vic McDonald (Chronicle).

Chairman Coleman called the meeting to order at noon and gave the invocation.

*Minutes and Financials*

Chairman Coleman asked the Board for a motion to approve the meeting’s agenda. Stan Bryson made the motion to approve and Mayor John Carter seconded the motion.

Chairman Coleman then asked the Board for a motion to approve the minutes from the 05/20/14 meeting. Randy Garrett made the motion to approve the minutes as presented and Ernie Segars seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes.

Marvin Moss provided a recap of expenses for May and June 2014. With no questions or comments, the financials were accepted as information only.

*Financial Audit Results – Toni McKinley (McKinley Cooper):*

Toni McKinley provided a review of the 2013 audit results. She reported that no major findings were reported.

*Existing Industry/Retail Update – Jon Coleman:*

* Participated in a Workforce business summit in May in conjunction with the Carolina Apprentice Group. Six to seven industries were also in attendance. The hospital also hosted a CEO roundtable which was very well received by the attendees.
* A job fair was held June 18 at the CAM specifically for Laurens County businesses and citizens. Over 20 organizations participated and over 400 people attended.
* Two expansions have been announced and expect 3 or 4 more before year end.
* Retail Strategies performed their analysis of the cities of Laurens and Clinton and the surrounding county area. They have presented their research with the cities of Laurens and Clinton and were to present at the annual 100 Club meeting in June. They have rescheduled that to the September meeting. The information was very informative and shows a lot of opportunity for growth in the county and both cities.
* Completed the annual wage survey. The overall wage for the facilities that responded to the survey is $17.19. There are breakdowns for different positions as well. The data shows average wages up slightly over 2013.

*Economic Development Update – Marvin Moss:*

* RFIs through June: 32, site visits: 30 year to date
* There have been five projects this year the LCDC could not submit on – mostly the larger buildings in the 100,000 sq. ft. range.
* Water and sewer lines are almost complete in phase 2 of Owings Industrial Park. Awaiting permanent power at the pump station to finalize the phase 2 project.
* Have had strong interest in the spec building.
* Attended a recent Nexsen Pruet seminar covering changes to laws effective July 1.

*CEDC Update – Frank Stovall:*

* Fairview Apartments will be open by the end of July – all but one has been rented.
* Engaged in a contract with Creative Economic Development Consulting in creating an economic development strategic plan for the city. They are evaluating current industrial sites and preparing recommendations.

*Laurens First Update – John Young:*

* In the past three months Laurens First merged with the economic enhancement community of Main Street Laurens. This is bringing new life into the organization and a financial boost in Main Street Laurens’ economic activities.
* New program – “Jump Start”. This is a competition among entrepreneurs to encourage new business inside the city. Subsidies of $2,500 and other benefits will be awarded to selected businesses. Currently have 3 prospects and plan to make a decision on possibly two or three on the square.

*Upstate Alliance Update – John Lummus:*

* John Lummus came on as the new president of the Upstate Alliance in April 2014.
* Activity across the region is excellent right now with projects
  + $3.6 million in new announcements this year and 3,400 new jobs
* Moving forward with Global Cities initiative which is the export plan for the Upstate. Will be releasing the plan by the end of the year. This plan supports more exporting to assist our local industries and businesses.
* Implemented a major website update on July 1.
* Business recruitment team update:
  + Attending numerous shows and conferences both domestically and internationally
  + Inbound events: Successful port consultant meeting. Working with the SC Ports Authority to showcase the Inland Port.
  + BMW Pro-Am
* 3 Main Focuses are: Continue to market the best way possible, continue to support the local developers (particularly with research), and to brand us as a region

*Financial / Business Manager Update – Marvin Moss:*

* Ran an ad in the local newspapers and an Upstate Alliance newsletter.
* Deadline for submissions was Friday, July 11 – 12 resumes were received
* A committee of 4 will begin the review and interview process the week of July 21.

*Other Business*

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

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn S. Finley