***Laurens County Development Corporation***

Board Meeting – **Minutes**

Tuesday – November 8, 2016

Attendees:

Greg Alexander, Stan Bryson, Jon Caime, Mayor John Carter, Rich D’Alberto, Rusty Denning, Jeff Field, Randy Garrett, Tom Hardy, Randy Lis, David Pitts, Mayor John Stankus, Frank Stovall, Steve West, and John Young

Guests:

Jacob Hickman (Upstate SC Alliance)

Staff:

Jon Coleman, Lynn Finley, Becca Sturgeon, Sandy Cruickshanks

Press:

Vic MacDonald (Chronicle), Billy Dunlap (goLaurens.com), Cory Engle (Advertiser), Emil Finley (WLBG)

Chairman Bryson called the meeting to order at 12:09 and gave the invocation.

*Minutes and Financials*

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

Chairman Bryson then asked the Board for a motion to approve the minutes from the 9/20/16 meeting. Rich D’Alberto made the motion to approve the minutes as presented and Frank Stovall seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes.

Lynn Finley provided a recap of expenses for September and October. The financials were accepted as information only.

*Executive Director’s Report – Jonathan Coleman*

* RFI update: 38 – through October / 39 – at the same point in 2015. Of the 38 RFIs – 16 in Clinton, 12 in Laurens, 17 in Gray Court/Fountain Inn area.
* Expecting a project announcement over the next several weeks. This is Project Curry and is 68 new jobs and $8.1 million in new investment. This brings the total on the year to 195 new jobs and $102.6 million in new investment. All announcements this year have been for expansions with our existing industry which typically. Usually it is 80% to 100% of announcements.
* The unemployment rate average for the year is 5.7%. The current rate for October is 5.0%. This is the lowest percentage in about 15 years.
* The LCDC is moving forward with updating the website in two ways. First, the format will change to a more image oriented styling still including all the important data but presented in a fresh way. Secondly, a new data software solution will be integrated enabling the site to always provide the latest and most up-to-date demographic information for users. The data will be specific to Laurens County and will also include the Greater Laurens area which encompasses Laurens County plus the counties contiguous to Laurens County. The upgrades are expected to be complete by the end of 1Q17.
* The November edition of *South Carolina Business Magazine* is releasing very soon and the LCDC has committed to a double-sided postcard insert. One side is the LCDC ad and the other promotes the Clinton spec building. This edition is targeted specifically to site selectors.
* Jonathan and Lynn attended SCEDA Mid-Year conference in October.
* The Upstate Alliance held a site selector event in October where Laurens County hosted a consultant all day and participated in the two-day event.
* The Upstate Alliance is also hosting a luncheon in November with a group of Atlanta site selectors which Jonathan will attend.
* Jonathan participated in a marketing trip with a group from the Upstate Alliance to Canada in October. They visited with about 7 or 8 companies that have serious interest in expanding their operations to the Southeast. Ambassador David Wilkins also participated with the visit and hosted a reception with the group and some of his connections in Canada.
* The LCDC is still interested in hosting an industrial tour for our board and county council but would like to hear feedback from you on the best day of the week to plan a full day out of the office. Please share your suggestions with Jonathan or Lynn.

*2017 Budget Approval – Frank Stovall*

Mr. Stovall referenced the enclosed proposed budget information being presented by the Finance Committee. Mr. Coleman took the opportunity to point out several line items for clarification and to provide additional information. With no questions or discussion, Mr. Stovall recommended approval. Coming from the Finance Committee no second is needed and Chairman Bryson called for a vote. The vote to approve the 2017 budget was unanimous.

*Annual Meeting – Jonathan Coleman*

Mr. Coleman shared that tentatively the LCDC will plan on having the annual meeting on the January 17 board meeting date. The regular board meeting will be at 4:00, followed by an annual meeting and then a reception. The location will be Musgrove Mill Golf Club.

*Election of Officers for 2017 - 2018 – Stan Bryson*

Chairman Bryson stated that Steve West, Rich D’Alberto, and Greg Alexander served on the nominating committee. Chairman Bryson called on Mr. Alexander to provide a report from the committee. The committee met on October 12 and have a slate of officers to present to the board for vote. Officers presented are: Chairman, Jeff Field; Vice Chairman, Randy Garrett; Treasurer, Frank Stovall; Secretary, David Pitts; Immediate Past Chairman, Stan Bryson.

Chairman Bryson stated that with a recommendation from the nominating committee no second is needed. With no changes to the slate, a vote was called and was unanimously approved.

*Special Recognition – Stan Bryson & Jonathan Coleman*

Mr. Coleman began by mentioning there are two board members that will be retiring at year end. They have both served their organizations and community well over the years and we will miss having them on the LCDC Board as well. A special gift was presented to both Mr. Tom Hardy and Mr. Rich D’Alberto. A gift of appreciation was also given to Mr. Stan Bryson for his service to the board as Chairman.

*Other Reports:*

Greg Alexander (Chamber of Commerce)

Reminded everyone of the upcoming Oyster Roast on November 10.

Jacob Hickman (Upstate Alliance)

Mr. Hickman stated that they are finalizing their 2017 budget for approval. The recent marketing trip to Canada which was already mentioned was considered beneficial and a success. In the remainder of 2016 they have trips to Detroit and Germany planned.

*Executive Session:*

None

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn S. Finley