***Laurens County Development Corporation***

Board Meeting - **Minutes**

Tuesday – November 18, 2014

Attendees:

Rich D’Alberto , Mayor Sharon Brownlee, Stan Bryson, Mayor John Carter, Jim Coleman, Randy Garrett, Greg Alexander, Frank Stovall, Jeff Field, Randy Lis, Tom Hardy, John Young, and Collie Lehn

Guests:

Jacob Hickman (Upstate SC Alliance), and Jeff Estes (Center for Advanced Manufacturing)

Staff:

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

Press:

Cory Engle (Advertiser), Emil Finley (WLBG), Daniel Taylor (golaurens.com) 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. Randy Garrett 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 09/23/14 meeting. Stan Bryson made the motion to approve the minutes as presented and Rich D’Alberto seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes.

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

*Existing Industry/Retail Update – Jon Coleman:*

* The last CEO roundtable was held on 9/29 at the CAM and was well attended. The next planned meeting will be in January 2015 at the hospital.
* Another job fair is being planned for January 2015 and information will be sent when it is available.
* Jon and Lynn continue to make calls for introductions with existing industry.
* Met with Sandy Cruickshanks, the County auditor, and a team from the Department of Revenue to review all the FILOTs to ensure compliance. No major issues were found.
* Update on Chick-fil-A: should start to see activity on that site within the next month.
* Had the opportunity to participate in a study conducted for the City of Laurens on rebranding.
* Recap on existing industry highlights for 2014: 105 new jobs announced with $17 million in capital investment. Expecting to announce an additional $30 million in investment and 175 new jobs before year end. Also, hope to have 4 more expansions within the first and second quarters of 2015.
* A request was made to be updated on the scholarship committee. Jon reported that a new committee has been established. The first meeting of the committee was held in November 2014. The committee is exploring options for future funding opportunities and reported that the Community Foundation will continue to assist in raising funds. Chairman Coleman added that The County has made a onetime funding commitment of $50,000.
* Jeff Estes was in attendance and was introduced as the new director of the Center for Advanced Manufacturing

*Economic Development Update – Marvin Moss:*

* Reported on an Area Development survey focused on the top 10 factors considered by corporate executives across the US when determining the location of new facilities:
  + 1. Availability of skilled labor / 2. Highway accessibility / 3. Labor costs / 4. Construction costs / 5. Advanced information & communications technology / 6. Available buildings / 7. Corporate income tax rate / 8. State & local incentives / 9. Low union profile / 10. Energy availability & costs
* RFIs YTD: 59 – September had 11 & October had 10 RFIs. Activity is really strong
  + 50% from SCDOC / 25% from the Upstate Alliance / 25% generated internally
* Site Visits YTD: 52
* Location of properties being submitted: Clinton – 24, Laurens – 25, Gray Court/Fountain Inn – 40 (OIP Spec Building – 16)
* Recently participated in a marketing trip in November to Detroit with 8 promising appointments.
* Attended the mid-year meeting for SCEDA in September.
* Upstate Alliance recently hosted an event for consultants and it was a great opportunity to showcase Laurens County to one of the attendees. A project has already been assigned as a result.
* Attended a 2 day workshop in Columbia sponsored by the SCDOC.
* Gave a presentation at a CPW planning meeting.
* Now have the final report in hand from the site selection study which outlines the possible properties to consider for the future.
* The OIP sewer project is at the final stages of completion. Expect to have the permit from DHEC around Thanksgiving.
* Have two projects that plan to announce before year end: Project Lambeau & Project Zeus. Together, expect approximately $15 million in investment and 150 jobs.
* Jointly planning a Red Carpet Breakfast with the Chamber for December. The focus will be on economic development. Plan to have a panel of four experts to discuss topics such as what attracts businesses to our area along with other indicators and factors for Laurens County.

*CEDC Update – Frank Stovall:*

* The City is moving forward on its economic development strategic plan and it is designed to complement what The County plans. There is a survey link currently on their web page and all present are asked to complete if possible.

*City of Laurens Update - Mayor Sharon Brownlee:*

* In the middle of a rebranding study – logo, tag line, etc. Meetings and round tables have been held to collect information. This step was a suggestion made by Retail Strategies.
* Attended the last Ten at the Top event. Pleased to share that Main Street Laurens received an award based on the submitted idea called “Finally Friday.” The idea was awarded one of the two available $5,000 awards in the category.

*Laurens First Update – John Young:*

* No report

*Upstate Alliance Update – Jacob Hickman:*

* The Upstate Alliance is in the process of 2015 budget approvals and establishing an aggressive marketing calendar for the upcoming year. The plan is to include local counties more than in the past and to complement the Department of Commerce plan rather than duplicating efforts.
* The recent consultant event worked out great for The Upstate. It was planned so that the attending consultants could see the assets for the entire region. They were very pleased to see an immediate project for Laurens County to come from that event.

*2015 Budget – Randy Garrett:*

* Randy Garrett presented the proposed 2015 budget from the Finance Committee and was pleased to report that it is a balanced budget. Additional detail was provided on specific items for clarification then Mr. Garrett stated that the Finance Committee recommended the proposed budget for passage. Chairman Coleman called for a vote and the proposed 2015 budget was passed unanimously by the Board.

*Appointment of Officer Selection Committee – Jim Coleman:*

* Chairman Coleman announced the appointed officer selection committee as: Ernie Segars, Steve West, Frank Stovall and Mayor John Carter. The committee will meet prior to year end to prepare a recommended slate of officers.

Chairman Coleman asked for a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss one employment matter. Frank Stovall made the motion and Jeff Field seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved to move into executive session. No action was taken as a result of the Executive Session.

*Other Business*

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn S. Finley