

## ***Laurens County Development Corporation***

Board Meeting – **Minutes**

Tuesday – July 16, 2019

### Attendees:

Shawn Bell, Justin Benfield, Stan Bryson, Jon Caime, Randy Garrett, Mayor Stellartean Jones, Randy Lis, Amanda Munyan, Dr. David O'Shields, Dr. David Pitts, Mayor Nathan Senn, Rodney Smith, Steve West, Collie Lehn

### Guests:

John Lummus (Upstate SC Alliance), Matt Phillips (McKinley Cooper), Brown Patterson, Brenda Stewart

### Staff:

Jon Coleman, Lynn Finley, Whitney Robertson, Sandy Cruickshanks

### Press:

Emil Finley (WLBG), Vic MacDonald (Chronicle)

Chairman Garrett called the meeting to order at 12:02 and gave the invocation.

### Minutes and Financials

Chairman Garrett asked the Board for a motion to approve the meeting's agenda. Stan Bryson made the motion to approve and Justin Benfield seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the agenda.

Chairman Garrett then asked the Board for a motion to approve the minutes from the 5/21/19 meeting. Justin Benfield made the motion to approve the minutes as presented and Shawn Bell seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes.

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

### 2018 Audit Presentation – Matt Phillips

Matt Phillips provided a detailed review of the 2018 audit results and answered questions from the board. He reported that McKinley Cooper provided a "clean and unmodified" opinion of the LCDC financial position as of December 31, 2018 and no major findings were reported.

### Prospect Activity Report – Jonathan Coleman

-Mr. Coleman began by announcing the date set for the LCDC hosted trip to Charleston to tour the SC Ports Authority on October 17. He extended the staff's appreciation to Jeff Field of LCWSC and Justin Benfield of PRISMA Health for covering the cost of the bus transportation.

-New industrial prospect activity has been slower over summer. To date: 28 RFIs / 8 since last board meeting compared to 35 reported in July 2018.

### Product Development Update – Jonathan Coleman

-Mr. Coleman showed aerial photo updates of progress at the Connexial Center. The 12" water line has been laid and will continue up to Mt. Carmel Rd. The roadway and onsite water improvements are almost complete. The 150,000 SF spec building planned by LEC will go out to bid end of July – first of August. RIA and SC DOC grants have been awarded to assist in sewer upgrades which consists of relocating a pump station and is approximately a \$1 million project. When that is finished all infrastructure upgrades will be complete. As the weather begins to cool, landscaping and signage will be installed.

-The traffic transportation corridor study conducted for the Highway 14 area from Gray Court to the county line in Fountain Inn has been received. Recommendations were made for six different upgrade projects with

an estimated cost of \$61 million. It was received in time to submit for a \$25 million grant from the Federal Department of Transportation BUILD Grant.

Industry & Workforce Dev Update – Lynn Finley

An update on the recent closure announcement of Shaw Industries was provided. The LCDC is working closely with the SC Rapid Response and SC Works teams to get all the available benefits and services to these impacted employees. The company and their local leadership have been very accommodating and supportive of finding new, fulltime positions for their employees and taking advantage of all available assistance offered. Three job fairs are planned onsite over 3 days hosting 26 different companies and agencies. Closure is still planned for late August.

Marketing Update – Whitney Robertson

-Work has begun to update the Higher Opportunity initiative video which was originally filmed in 2017. The current video addresses the sometimes negative perception of working in industry whereas the updated version will focus more on the education and career opportunities available in Laurens County. The length will shorten from 5 minutes to 3 utilizing some of the original footage and adding new. New spotlights included in the update: a ZF apprentice to highlight apprenticeship programs, a local county council member (Garrett McDaniel) discussing his choice to return to Laurens as an entrepreneur and community leader, along with footage from the high school STEM camp and robotics teams. The work should be complete in September and will be shared with the community and schools for viewing.

- A link has been added to the LCDC website connecting to the Upstate Alliance's Move Up initiative which promotes quality of life and all the Upstate, as a region, has to offer.

Upstate Alliance "Move Up" Initiative – John Lummus

The Upstate SC Alliance is a regional economic development group marketing the 10 counties of Upstate SC to the world and represents a population of about 1.5 million people. John Lummus is the president of the organization. This past spring, the Upstate SC Alliance launched a new talent attraction initiative called "Move Up" at their annual meeting. This initiative includes a website and social media campaign promoting the region's employment opportunities and showcasing quality of life assets. The web address is [www.moveupstatesc.com](http://www.moveupstatesc.com). The Move Up brand represents not only moving to the Upstate but also to move up in careers, move up in lives. The website includes tabs on how individuals can find available jobs in the Upstate and also how employers can connect with these people looking. Employers are encouraged to place the Move Up badge on their own website and social media channels creating a link to the quality of life website.

Executive Session: Personnel Information Matter

Chairman Garrett asked for a motion to go into Executive Session at 1:19 to discuss a personnel informational matter. David Pitts made a motion and Stan Bryson seconded.

The Board returned to open session at 1:30 with no action taken.

Other Reports:

None

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lynn S. Finley