

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

There was a meeting of the Indian River County (IRC) Economic Development Council (EDC) on Tuesday, February 20, 2007, at 3:00 p.m. in the First Floor Conference Room "A" of the County Administration Building, 1840 25th Street, Vero Beach, Florida.

Present were members: Chairman William Penney, Banking Appointee; Vice Chairman Peter Robinson, Developer Appointee (arrived at 3:04 p.m.); Council Member Andrea Coy, City of Sebastian Appointee; Deborah Mayfield, Board of County Commissioners (BCC) Appointee; Doug Bournique, Local Industry Appointee (arrived at 3:05 p.m.); Gary Sullivan, Civic Organization Appointee; Penny Chandler, Indian River Chamber of Commerce (IRCOC) Appointee; Councilmember Debra Fromang, City of Vero Beach Appointee; Victor Hart, Sr., Gifford Community Appointee; Scott Carson, Real Estate Appointee; Talmage Rogers, Jr., Citrus Industry Appointee; Ray Coniglio, Sebastian River Area Chamber of Commerce Appointee; Linda Schlitt-Gonzalez, Member-at-Large Appointee and Ann Reuter, School Board Appointee.

Absent were members James Kretsch and Deborah Segal, Member-at-Large Appointees (all excused); Councilman Francisco Magana, City of Fellsmere Appointee (unexcused).

Also present were IRC Staff: Sasan Rohani, Long Range Planning Chief; Bill Schutt, Senior Economic Development Planner; and Terri Collins-Lister, Staff Assistant IV. Others present: Helene Caseltine, Alternate, IRCOC Appointee, David Hooper, Indian River National Bank; Beth Mitchell, Sebastian Chamber of Commerce and Peter Jones, Interested Citizen.

Call to Order

Chairman Penney called the meeting to order.

Moment of Silence for our Departed Friend, Mr. Robert Tenbus

There was a moment of silence held for the late Mr. Robert Tenbus.

Introduction of Ann Reuter, School Board Appointee

Chairman Penney introduced Ms. Reuter to the EDC as the School Board Appointee.

Approval of the Minutes of January 16, 2007 Meeting

ON MOTION BY Mr. Coniglio, SECONDED BY Ms. Fromang, the members voted unanimously (12-0) to approve the January 16, 2007 meeting minutes as submitted.

Expedited Permitting Process Sheets

Mr. Sasan Rohani, IRC Chief Planner, mentioned at the January 16, 2007 Joint Meeting of the Economic Development Council (EDC) and Economic Development Division (EDD) it was requested the permitting process be put in writing and gave a brief overview of the Expedited Permitting Program Processing.

Mr. Robinson arrived at 3:04 p.m.

Mr. Bournique arrived at 3:05 p.m.

Mr. Rohani distributed a copy of the Expedited Permitting Process, a copy of which is on file in the Commission Office.

He explained the Economic Development Public/Private Task Force (EDC Public/Private) was established to review the permitting process and identify the ways to improve that process. He explained Mr. Boling would be in the position as expeditor if a target industry would need their permit moved through the system.

Mr. Rohani said any business opened for commercial, industry or institutional permitted use which had 150,000 square feet or less of impervious surface could get a staff level approval.

He explained there was no way to expedite every permit that comes to the County, however, when a permit for a targeted industry would come in, Mr. Boling would designate one planner to work with the applicant through the process. Mr. Rohani indicated the Expedited Permitting Process was in place, however, the targeted industries needed to be flagged and staff trained to recognize targeted industries and then forward the applications to Mr. Boling.

Proposal of a Stealth Committee from the Indian River County Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Helene Caseltine, Alternate, IRCOC Appointee, distributed copies of a draft proposal called Establishing a Business Recruitment Team, a copy of which is on file in the Commission Office. Ms. Caseltine reviewed the background of the draft proposal and noted the Chambers several years ago had a Chamber's New Commerce Committee which had merged into the EDD. She stated at one of the EDD meetings there was list of priority action items in which some of these items were still very relevant including: 1) creating a better image of the County, creating the image of a business friendly place; 2) developing relationships with site location consultants; and 3) direct marketing to target industry lists.

Ms. Caseltine stated the EDC had discussed developing a Business recruitment team at several of the EDC meetings and she had suggested in her proposal those that could be represented on the Recruitment Team. She mentioned after speaking with other economic development organizations in Florida, many had "ad hoc" recruitment teams that were called upon when needed, customized to the prospective client's industry and needs. She opined the recruitment team could be more participatory by attending functions through Enterprise Florida which offered site selector events in other cities.

Ms. Caseltine pointed out Enterprise Florida does a lot of reverse investment trade missions to South America and individuals from the recruitment team could represent IRC as a place for those businesses overseas to set-up corporations within the County.

Mr. Robinson inquired about the Enterprise Florida Site Selector Events and opined someone from the EDC could attend as long as there were not two people from the same group.

Ms. Chandler mentioned if Enterprise Florida plans those site selector visits and invites the individuals, they could be invited to visit IRC. She felt by inviting site selectors to IRC, there was a better chance of selling in person at the location rather than a different location. Ms. Chandler added if there was a business prospect that the committee was working with, the recruitment team could even visit the client at their office.

Ms. Caseltine remarked that "personal visits" should be added to the draft proposal. Mr. Robinson suggested adding "*or designee*" on the proposal next to the Members of the Indian River Recruitment Team.

It was discussed whether the Chambers had utilized some of IRC retired Fortune 500 Executives. Ms. Chandler confirmed there was a group organized back in the 1990's and they met quarterly in the beginning. Ms. Schlitt-Gonzalez mentioned before that there was a Council 100 that later became sort of the Economic Development Group of the Chambers, however there were no results.

A discussion ensued on the recruitment team and Mr. Bournique referred to the overcrowding in South Florida and opined the recruitment team could market the firms there to relocate to IRC. Ms. Caseltine responded the challenge was that state incentives could not be used.

Mr. Carson inquired on the funding and where would it come from to pay for the travel expenses of the recruitment team. Ms. Chandler mentioned if there was a situation where a prospective business was looking at IRC, she felt the County would be open to assisting the recruitment team, situation by situation. She also remarked many individuals had used their own funds to finance those trips.

Ms. Mayfield asked once a business was identified, would there be enough incentives on the County level to get the business here. Mr. Bournique concluded that was where the recruitment team would need to get creative.

Mr. Peter Jones, Architect and Planner, opined the issue was that the County could not survive on property taxes alone. He felt the recruitment team had the ability to go out and encourage a business to come to IRC, however when they would come, it would take a year to get the permit and those businesses would then leave to go to another county that could get the permits within a couple of weeks. He realized there were concurrency issues, however if the County could not get past those then none of this would matter.

Mr. Rohani stated staff would do everything possible to expedite the permitting process at the County level; however there was a jurisdiction in which the County had no control over.

A discussion ensued on the availability of property in IRC for prospective targeted industries and why a business would need an expedited permit. Ms. Coy stated her concern with expediting permits was that she did not want to see any steps skipped in the process.

Mr. Bournique hoped this recruitment team would think outside the box and gave an example if the Dodger Complex would become available, it would be a great location for an extension of the University of Florida Campus..

Chairman Penney opined he would like to get Commissioner O'Bryan's opinion on the draft proposal of the recruitment team as well as Mr. Joseph Baird's, IRC County Administrator, opinion at the March 20, 2007 EDC Meeting and asked Ms. Caseltine if she would add the suggestions presented at the February 20, 2007 EDC Meeting.

Overview of the Bill Fruth Presentation – Helene Caseltine, Economic Development Director, Indian River County Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Caseltine handed out a summary of the Bill Fruth Presentation and informed the committee she had made copies of the presentation on DVD, a copy of which is on file in the Commission Office.

Ms. Caseltine indicated the two keys points was the need for improved and approved industrial land ready to go along with the availability of a trained and trainable workforce.

A discussion followed on the editorials in the Press Journal on the Bill Fruth Presentation. Ms. Caseltine stated Mr. Fruth agreed to come back to IRC and speak to some of the local civic organizations.

Discussion on the Review of the Draft County Evaluation and Appraisal Report Economic Development Element Date & Analysis

Chairman Penney stated Mr. Bill Schutt, IRC Senior Economic Development Planner, had sent out the Draft County Evaluation and Appraisal Report Economic Development Element Date and Analysis at the January 16, 2007 meeting for comments.

Mr. Schutt added there was a sub-committee formed through the EDD and he had been working with the two groups to get feedback for the Economic Development Element so there would be more pages to the Draft County Evaluation and Appraisal Report Economic Development Element Date and Analysis.

Establishing County Employment Trend Data Sheets Report Card

Chairman Penney told the committee Mr. Schutt had sent him a draft of the County Employment Trend Data Sheets Report Card and they were still reviewing the information. He asked for this agenda item to be deferred to the March 20, 2007 EDC Meeting.

Finalized Economic Development Incentive Sheets (approved by the BCC on December 19, 2006 and February 6, 2007)

Mr. Schutt gave the committee a finalized copy of the Economic Development Incentives which included all the updated comments, a copy of which is on file in Commission Office. He noted the Economic Development Incentives which was recommended by the EDC went to the BCC on December 19, 2006 in which the BCC only adopted certain aspects of the incentives. He continued it came back to the EDC and changes were made to the Impact Fees, then it went back to the BCC on February 6, 2007 and was approved.

Other Matters

Ms. Caseltine told the committee at the regional level the Chamber of Commerce was planning a High Tech Economic Development Summit at the request of Commissioner Chris Craft of St. Lucie County.

Committee Member Matters

Chairman Penney asked Ms. Mayfield for a brief overview of the Affordable Housing Workshop which was held on February 1, 2007. Ms. Mayfield concluded basically it comes back around to economic development and the wages being paid in the County. Mr. Rohani stated based on the recommendation by the local coalition board, staff was asked to go before the BCC on March 6, 2007 to re-establish the Affordable Housing Group. A discussion followed.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.