

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

A meeting was held of the Indian River County (IRC) Economic Development Council (EDC) on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at 3:30 p.m. in Conference Room B1-501 of the County Administration Building B, 1800 27th St., Vero Beach, Florida. Note: You may hear an audio of the meeting and review the agenda and minutes on the IRC website - www.ircgov.com/Boards/EDC/2016.

EDC Members Present

Peter Robinson, Local Developer
Helene Caseltine, Indian River Chamber of Commerce
Karl Zimmermann, Member-At-Large
Andrea Coy, City of Sebastian
Brian Barefoot, Town of Indian River Shores
Harris Webber, Town of Orchid
Shawn Frost, School Board of Indian River County
Todd Howder, Member-At-Large
William Penney, Banking Appointee (arrived at 3:33)
Richard Stetson, CareerSource Research Coast
Jim Funk, Manufacturing Appointee
Keith Kite, Tourist Industry (arrived at 3:36)
Joe Idlette III, Gifford Community
Linda Schlitt-Gonzalez, Member-At-Large
Commissioner Peter D. O'Bryan, District 4, Non-Voting Commission Liaison

EDC Members Absent

Jay Kramer, City of Vero Beach (COVB)
Scott Stradley, BCC Appointee
John Dyer, Local Industry
Mike Lafferty, Real Estate Appointee
Beth Mitchell, Sebastian River Area Chamber of Commerce
Sara Savage, City of Fellsmere
Dan Richey, Citrus Industry
Casey Lunceford, IRSC

Others Present

Laurie Collins

IRC Staff

Bill Schutt, Senior Economic Development Planner
Sasan Rohani, Chief, Long-Range Planning
Stan Boling, Community Development Director
Tina Cournoyer, Commissioner Assistant, Recording Secretary

Call to Order

Chairman Robinson called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Attendance was noted to be insufficient for voting matters, so the Chairman introduced the guests for the meeting: Dennis Corrick, an attorney with Dean Mead, and Lee Bouldin with D&E sales. Others present introduced themselves. Louis Schacht, of Schacht Groves, walked in during introductions. Then the Chairman meeting directed the meeting to the next agenda item.

Citrus Industry Presentations:

The first speaker was **Louis Schacht**. Mr. Schacht spoke about the decline of crop productivity due to citrus greening. He said it had effected grapefruit, which was the biggest export item. He said to survive, those still in business have had to diversify. He talked about new techniques that had been implemented, such as more frequent application of fertilizer; additionally, bactericide was available to combat citrus greening. He said some other fruits were more resistant to the citrus greening, such as lemons.

Bill Penney arrived at 3:33, bringing attendance to quorum.
Keith Kite arrived at 3:36.

Mr. Schacht reported citrus greening was a worldwide problem. He explained it was a disease and required a vector (a bug) to spread it; abandoned groves could harbor either the disease or the bugs. A benefit he shared was it had increased the collaboration between those in the citrus industry due to the common enemy they all fought.

Next, **Lee Bouldin** spoke from the grower and packing house perspective. He said citrus, especially grapefruit, was the top product, but they were also looking to diversify. He said the greening was hard to identify because the fruit still looked good but did not taste good. He said costs of growing had more than doubled over the last few years, but overall he said growers were still optimistic. He said it was important to look at not only what could grow here but also what could be marketed successfully. Some growers had started growing blueberries and peaches.

Then **Dennis Corrick** spoke about Ag land and how, in the future, the US would be feeding the world. Some old grove land would have to be converted to grow crops such as carrots, onions, sweet potatoes or corn. Cattle lands were considering finishing their beef instead of shipping it out, and leasing land out for other income (crops, water storage, etc.). He said the key was to diversify.

Approval of the EDC Minutes of August 16, 2016

ON MOTION BY Mr. Zimmermann, SECONDED BY Mr. Funk, the members voted unanimously (14-0) to approve the minutes of August 16, 2016 meeting.

Other EDC matters

--Chairman Robinson announced Seminole County was adding 1000 jobs
--Ms. Caseltine announced the temporary small business hurricane disaster office would be closing, but businesses could still apply if needed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned **at 4:33 p.m.**

Next meeting date: December 20, 2016 at 3:30 p.m.