

FRANKLIN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Thursday, January 8, 2009 at 8:00 a.m.

Franklinton Town Hall

AGENDA

- I. Welcome – Chairman Shane Mitchell
- II. Review/Approval of Minutes from December 11, 2008 Meeting – Chairman Shane Mitchell
- III. Legislative Update – Representative Lucy Allen/Senator Doug Berger
- IV. Update on 401 Steering Committee – Gary Cunard
 - Adopt Formal Name for Committee/Representative from EDC
- V. Triangle North Executive Airport Update – Rob Southerland
- VI. Economic Development and Existing Industries Update – Ronnie Goswick, Richie Duncan
- VII. Company Visit Update – Mark McArn
- VIII. Update on Commercial Brokers Reception – Richie Duncan
- IX. Employment Security Commission Update – Mike Brown
- X. Update on Franklinton Town Hall – Town of Franklinton Representative
- XI. Other Business – Chairman Shane Mitchell
- XII. Adjourn – Chairman Shane Mitchell

FRANKLIN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Thursday, December 11, 2008

Minutes

The Franklin County Economic Development Commission was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chairman Shane Mitchell on December 11, 2008 at the Youngsville Community House.

In attendance were Chairman Shane Mitchell, Commissioners: Bryce Mendenhall (Public Utilities Director), Bobbie Jo May, Elic Senter (Mayor of Franklinton), Larry Carver (Town Administrator-Franklinton), Leelan Woodlief, Larry Woodlief, Scott Hammerbacher (Director-Planning & Inspections), Mark McArn, Angela Harris (County Manager), Lucy Allen (NC Representative), and Brenda Robbins (Administrator, Town of Youngsville). Also, in attendance were Ronnie Goswick (Economic Development Director), Richie Duncan (Existing Industry Coordinator), Lori Duke (Admin. Support Specialist), Rob Southerland (Airport Manager), Bruce Allen (Citizen), Mike Brown (Employment Security Commission), and Gary Cunard (The Franklin Times). Absent from the meeting were Commissioners: Joyce Cooke, Lyn Buffaloe (County Commissioner), Mike Leonard, John Barnes (Franklin County Chamber, Chairman), Mayor Karl Pernel (Mayor of Louisburg), Marsha Strawbridge (Mayor of Bunn), Doug Berger (NC Senator), and Margaret Nelms (Mayor of Centerville).

The second item on the agenda was the review and approval of the minutes from the October 9, 2008 meeting. Commissioner Leelan Woodlief made the motion to approve the minutes, with Commissioner Senter seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

The third item on the agenda was an update on the 401 Steering Committee by Gary Cunard. Mr. Cunard said that two (2) new members have joined the committee. Gerald Rogers, a retiree from Louisburg, and Robert Hobgood, senior resident superior court judge. Mr. Cunard said we need to get a meeting scheduled as soon as possible, and Louisburg College has offered its boardroom for January 8, 2009. Once a time is set, a notice will be sent out to the committee members.

The fourth item on the agenda was an update on Triangle North Executive Airport given by Rob Southerland, Airport Manager. Mr. Southerland said that one of the first things he wanted to do when he became Airport Manager in September was to spruce things up at the airport. He said that the Maintenance Department was a huge asset, along with airport employees Chris Sanderson and Dean Clark, in making the airport look better. Mr. Southerland said that he wanted to get the community and pilots' attention, and there have been

discussions about the possibility of having an air convention at the airport. Also, the County Commissioners recently approved a sky diving center at the airport. When Carolina Skysports shut down its skydiving operations, this left the skydivers there without a place to have jump operations, and they came to us looking for another place to have a skydiving center. We need to work out a contract first, but hopefully, they will start jumping in April. Mr. Southerland said that the airport belongs to the taxpayers and he works for the taxpayers. Therefore, he wants the airport to be an asset and not a burden. Richie Duncan showed the new airport logo to the Board, which was approved at the airport meeting on December 9th. She also said that the website is in the process of being redesigned. Mr. Southerland said that the airport's name had been recently changed to Triangle North Executive to tie into the hub – Triangle North Franklin.

The fifth item on the agenda was the economic development update given by Ronnie Goswick, and the existing industries update given by Richie Duncan. Mr. Goswick said that we are still busy updating our land and buildings inventory, and working with the Kerr-Tar COG on the hub site. Mike Leonard is working to get the shell building area at Triangle North Franklin landscaped, so we can begin taking pictures and get the building advertised. Mr. Goswick said we have had some inquiries on the shell building and Triangle North Franklin, and we are currently working on a project for Triangle North Franklin, which is for a new and innovative technology. Mr. Goswick said he recently visited the Dept. of Commerce to make sure they know we are here and looking for projects, but activity is extremely slow there as well.

Richie Duncan said that she has had many meetings over the past 3-4 weeks with existing industries, and they have said they don't want to cut back on their job force. They want to keep the same number of people and the same hours, so we are working with them to keep them healthy and growing. Ms. Duncan said that whereas Franklin County is still seeing retail growth, this is not true for the rest of the counties in the State. She recently met with visitors from the western part of the State, and they noted that there has not been much growth in their area, and there had been more closings. Commissioner Senter said that Franklinton will have a Hardees in a year or so, and the downtown area is growing. We are starting to run out of storefronts, which makes us very happy. Ms. Duncan said that a new pizza parlor is going in at the shopping center in Bunn. Gary Cunard said that the super Walmart project in Louisburg is not as large as the town once thought it was going to be. Across the county, Mr. Cunard said he thinks it's important to not understate just how serious the economical situation is, and there are some businesses that are hanging on by a thread. Ms. Duncan said she thinks this speaks volumes on how we need to work together to brainstorm on how to work with these businesses to keep them vibrant.

Angela Harris said we received an email from Rick Seekins, with the Kerr-Tar COG, asking us to submit ready-to-go projects because his office is working hard with the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) to have the rural regions of the country included in President-elect Obama's plans for the emergency economic stimulus. Commissioner Mendenhall said he has submitted seven (7) projects to the County Manager and they are as

follows:

1. Southern Youngsville Sewer Pump Station
2. Triangle North Franklin Offsite Sewer
3. Franklinton Sewer Outfall
4. East Youngsville Sewer Expansion
5. Construction of 300,000 Gallon Elevated Water Storage Tank
6. Construction of Sewer Interceptor (Ray's Creek)
7. Installation of 15,000 Linear Feet and 4,500 Linear Feet of Sewer Forcemain to Service new Franklinton High School

Each town received this letter, so each town should be submitting their own projects also. Commissioner Leelan Woodlief made the motion that we form a resolution to send to Congressman Etheridge and Senator Berger to show our support for President-elect Obama's economic stimulus plan, with Commissioner Senter seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

Richie Duncan said that Franklin County's tier status had been changed from a tier 3 to tier 2. The primary reason for this change was lower median household income and a significantly higher unemployment rate, and this is our county versus all other counties in the State. The positive aspect to this is that as a tier 2 county, each new job creation is awarded a \$5,000 job credit versus \$750 per job when we were a tier 3 county.

The sixth item on the agenda was the company visit update given by Commissioner McArn. Commissioner McArn visited Rampart Aviation, which is located at Carolina Sky Sports on NC 56 in Louisburg. They are located in a 20,000 sq. ft. building, and employ approximately 30 full-time employees. Rampart Aviation is the largest and most recognized skydiving plane overhaul operation in the world, specializing in avionics leasing, sales and repair and military training. One thing they felt that Franklin County needed more of were restaurants and hotels.

The seventh item on the agenda was an update on the commercial brokers' reception given by Richie Duncan. Ms. Duncan said that York Properties will hold a breakfast reception at Sirchie Fingerprint Laboratories on December 18th, and have invited about 30 key Wake County commercial brokers, along with some other Franklin County representatives, to tour Sirchie and to promote Triangle North Franklin and Triangle North Executive Airport also.

The eighth item on the agenda was discussion of a change to bylaws to include a representative from N.C. Cooperative Extension as an ex-officio on the EDC board. Chairman Mitchell said that when he recently attended the Farm City Tour Breakfast, he thought there would be a lot of opportunity from the Cooperative Extension office to help businesses grow, and we need to work together. With this in mind, he felt we needed someone from the Extension office to serve

as an ex-officio on the EDC board. Chairman Mitchell said he felt that we should have a representative from Triangle North Executive Airport as an ex-officio, also. Commissioner Senter made the motion that we add this as an agenda item for the January 5, 2009 County Commissioner's meeting for their review and approval, with Commissioner Leelan Woodlief seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

The ninth agenda item was an update on Employment Security Commission given by Mike Brown. Mr. Brown said that from October 2007 to October 2008, Franklin County's unemployment rate paralleled that of the State's. For the people who are applying for unemployment, there are three (3) ways they can file – come into the ESC office, go on line or phone in an initial claim. He said there are so many people who come in his office saying they can't find a job, even though we do have the largest labor base in the State. Mr. Brown said that his office was extremely busy, and they will be hiring three (3) more people because of this.

In other business:

- Chairman Mitchell welcomed Larry Woodlief as the newest member to the EDC board.
- Representative Lucy Allen said she had some good news and bad news. The bad news being there will be tremendous delays for transportation projects. The good news is that any project funded by Garvee bonds will move forward, so this is good news for US 401.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.