

**FRANKLIN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2009 AT 8:00 A.M.**

**YOUNGSVILLE COMMUNITY HOUSE**

**AGENDA**

- I. Welcome – Chairman Mark McArn
- II. Review/Approval of Minutes from August 13, 2009 Meeting – Chairman Mark McArn
- III. Legislative Update – Representative Lucy Allen/Senator Doug Berger
- IV. Update on 401 Citizens Action Committee – Gary Cunard
- V. Committee of 100 Annual Meeting – Don Lancaster
- VI. Economic Development and Existing Industries Update – Ronnie Goswick/  
Richie Duncan
- VII. Company Visit Update – Chairman Mark McArn
- VIII. Other Business – Chairman Mark McArn
- IX. Adjourn – Chairman Mark McArn

# FRANKLIN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

**Thursday, September 10, 2009**

## Minutes

The Franklin County Economic Development Commission was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chairman Mark McArn on September 10, 2009 at the Youngsville Community House.

In attendance were Commissioners: Mark McArn, Matthew Winslow, Larry Woodlief, Cedric Jones (N.C. Cooperative Extension), Lucy Allen (NC Representative), Leelan Woodlief, Don Lancaster (County Commissioner), Shane Mitchell (County Commissioner) and Brenda Robbins (Administrator, Town of Youngsville). Also, in attendance were Richie Duncan (Existing Industry Coordinator), Lori Duke (Admin. Support Specialist), Mike Brown (Employment Security Commission), and Gary Cunard (The Franklin Times). Absent from the meeting were Commissioners: Scott Hammerbacher (Director-Planning & Inspections), Angela Harris (County Manager), Elic Senter (Mayor of Franklinton), Rob Southerland (Airport Manager), Joyce Cooke, Mike Leonard, Bobbie Jo May, Laureen Jones (Chairman-Chamber of Commerce), Bryce Mendenhall (Public Utilities Director), Marsha Strawbridge (Mayor of Bunn), Mayor Karl Pernell (Mayor of Louisburg), 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 August 13, 2009 meeting. Commissioner Robbins made the motion to approve the minutes, with Commissioner Lancaster seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

The third item on the agenda was the legislative update given by Representative Lucy Allen. Representative Allen said she was certain there isn't anyone here that doesn't understand the economic situation in North Carolina, and what our Governor and legislature had to do in order to get the budget passed. If they had not of issued some executive orders before July 1<sup>st</sup> of last year, our budget would not have passed. The Governor had to cut the salaries of our state employees and teachers by 0.5%. This did help us get through the year, and it did hurt, but if this had not of been done, there would have been hundreds, possibly thousands, of state employees that would have lost their jobs. Representative Allen said the one (1) cent increase in sales tax is very hard on people, but it will raise \$803 million and this will help a great deal with the budget. Representative Allen said there were some programs that they could not continue to fund in full, and some of the cuts made were: \$225 million in local education, \$16 million for Smart Start and we have reduced service funds for supplemental state-funded services by \$16 million. Although we had to make significant cuts across the board, there were some programs that we feel are vital and we must continue to invest in, such as providing

funding for additional “Learn & Earn” high schools (\$3.6 million) and completing the last phase of a three-year takeover of Medicaid from counties, freeing money for local governments (\$252 million).

The fourth item on the agenda was an update on the “401 Citizens Action Committee” given by Gary Cunard. Mr. Cunard said they are in the final stages of putting the application together for the TIGER funds. We have about 260+ letters of support to go with the application, and we are very pleased with this. We are asking for \$65,455,000, and the grant would be announced sometime between October and February. Mr. Cunard said we have put together a very strong cost benefit analysis, and once this is all done, the grant application, along with all the studies, will be on the County’s website for anyone to read.

The fifth item on the agenda was a report on the upcoming Committee of 100’s annual meeting given by Commissioner Lancaster. Commissioner Lancaster said the annual meeting of the Committee of 100 is September 17<sup>th</sup> at Hill Ridge Farms’ conference center. The guest speaker is Keith Crisco, Secretary of Commerce. The social is from 6:00 p.m. to 6:45, with dinner and the meeting beginning shortly thereafter.

The sixth item on the agenda was the economic development and existing industries update given by Richie Duncan. Ms. Duncan said County Manager Angela Harris was unable to attend the meeting today, and asked that Ms. Duncan inform the board about a couple of items on her behalf. We have received unofficial notification that three (3) grants applied for have been approved, and they are: (1.) The Town of Franklinton applied for a \$25,000 building restoration and re-use planning grant through the Rural Center on behalf of Franklin County Volunteers in Medicine. FCVM is in negotiations to purchase a vacant building on Main Street in Franklinton, and will be restoring the building to include a medical clinic and thrift shop. (2.) The Town of Louisburg applied for an \$18,000 grant to renovate a former manufacturing facility for reuse by the Thomas Clifton Law Office. (3.) The EDC office applied for a \$48,000 health care initiative grant via the Rural Center on the behalf of Zollieville Rest Home in Louisburg. Zollieville will utilize the funds to complete necessary renovations to their facility allowing them to open a wing that has been closed and to improve the standards in the existing facility. This grant status is pending.

Ms. Duncan said that the County Manager also asked that she mention the Franklin County Green Initiative Committee. Cedric Jones is the chairman of the committee, and said that the next meeting is next Thursday at 2:00 p.m. in the extension center annex. Mr. Jones said the purpose of the committee is to let the public know that Franklin County government and its employees are making an effort to be more environmentally conservative. Commissioner Winslow said yesterday he attended the GreenNC 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Tradeshow for the North Carolina Building Industry, which was held at the Raleigh Convention Center. They had a huge exhibit hall with many vendors, such as Progress Energy, ElectriCities, Novozymes and N.C. Solar Center. Commissioner Winslow said there were all types of new technology, such as solar water heaters and flexible solar panels that you peel the backing off of and stick

wherever you wish. It was a very amazing and interesting tradeshow.

Richie Duncan said Christine Mackey, Partnership Specialist with the U.S. Census Bureau, made a presentation to the County Commissioners on September 8<sup>th</sup> to inform them of the initiatives and process for the 2010 Census. The Commissioners adopted a resolution of support for the project in Franklin County, and designated County Commissioner Sidney Dunston to serve on the "Complete Count Committee" as chairperson for the Franklin County committee. Ms. Duncan said that because we need to reach into all the various areas of the county, she asked that we nominate someone from the EDC board to serve on the committee also. Commissioner Lancaster nominated Commissioner Matthew Winslow, with Commissioner Mitchell seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

Richie Duncan said that it was announced at the Triangle North Executive Airport meeting on Tuesday that Rob Southerland, Airport Manager, would be leaving and his last day will be October 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Southerland has been called back into active duty with the Air Force.

Richie Duncan said the Tar River Festival in Louisburg is being held this Saturday and the Fall Festival in Youngsville is on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Also, the annual meeting/banquet of the Franklin County Committee of 100 is being held on September 17<sup>th</sup> in the conference center at Hill Ridge Farms. The guest speaker is Secretary Keith Crisco with the N.C. Dept. of Commerce.

Richie Duncan said we are actively marketing the Hon facility in Louisburg by getting the word out to the Department of Commerce and Research Triangle Regional Partnership that the building is available. Ms. Duncan said inquiries and activity remain steady, and we have four (4) businesses with pending expansions. Ms. Duncan said approval was given by the County Commissioners for the county to engage the services of Excelsio Communications for the overall mapping and design of the Communications Plan. In addition, Excelsio will assist with the writing and submission of a grant request for Franklin County for the second round of funding via the Broadband Initiative.

The seventh item on the agenda was the company visit update given by Chairman Mark McArn. Chairman McArn said the company he is profiling is Sightron, Inc., which is located on Jeffrey Way in Youngsville. Sightron is located in a 5,500 square foot facility, and has five (5) employees. They provide sales and service for Sightron brand sporting goods, such as binoculars, rifle and sporting scopes. Alan Orr is the Product Manager, and he said he has been in contact with Richie Duncan and she has provided all the information he has requested. Shane Mitchell has also provided Mr. Orr with the contacts he needs for them to potentially grow in Franklin County. Mr. Orr said at one time, they were looking to expand, but that is presently on hold.

Chairman McArn said he is working with Total Fire Systems in Youngsville to find them a bigger space because they have acquired a very large military contract. They looked at the shell

building, and their decision is now between the former Brock Contract Services building in the Youngsville Commerce Center and a building on 780 Park Ave. in Youngsville.

The eighth item on the agenda was other business. There was no other business to report.

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