

**CURRITUCK COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**

March 25, 2010

Bank of Currituck, Grandy

Attendance: Elizabeth White, Tameron Kugler, John Rorer, Peter Bishop, Mike Painter, Ken Edgar, David Palmer, Ed Cornet, HD Newbern

Guests: Liliias Morrison, Debbie Rorer, Mike Florez

Item I. Call to Order

Chairman Palmer called the meeting to order at 7:09 PM.

Item II. Approval of Agenda

Chairman Palmer entertained changes or deletions to the agenda. Items added to the agenda shall include Item IV.(a) USDA Rules Changes and Business Incubator presentation; IV.(b) Community Development Agencies discussion; and item VI.(b) OBX Catch discussion.

Mrs. Kugler moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Edgar seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Item III. Public Comment

Chairman Palmer welcomed guests (List names).

Item IV. Approval of January 28, 2010 Minutes

Chairman Palmer entertained a motion for approval. Mr. Cornet moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Newbern seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Item IV(a). Funding through the USDA and Business Incubator development in Harbinger

Chairman Palmer described that the USDA has changed their jurisdictional areas and this allows for much more eligibility for guaranteed loans and grant funds, because Currituck was classified with the Hampton Roads MSA, which is urban not rural.

Chairman Palmer yielded the floor to Ms. Morrison. Ms. Morrison, owner of Harbinger Center, provided the EDAB with a summary plan for development of an incubator in her building. In consideration of the reduction in employment locally, and seeing the opportunity for growth and direction for business interests, Ms. Morrison launched this plan and effort.

Ms. Morrison is proposing a public-private partnership between the County and this facility to identify new business growth areas, technologies and support services for entrepreneurs and investors. Specifically, she would like the EDAB to be a lead

supporting agency for this endeavor and cooperatively work with the group to provide business development and advisement services.

Ms. Morrison directed the EDAB's attention to a PIES handout, a business incubator operated in Davidson County and in partnership. PIES works in partnership for development, investment, finance advise and 'economic gardening.'

Similar to this effort, the Currituck model would involve partnership with local community colleges, Score chapter, Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Rorer underlined the importance of broad-based business experience in volunteers and partners, as well as the current opportunity for this type of space.

Mr. Cornet mentioned that the UNC business school has supported and assisted several of these incubators with some level of success. Mr. Cornet further mentioned the importance for cost modeling, leadership staffing and administrative staffing (paid staff), and strong volunteer corps.

Chairman Palmer asked if the request before the EDAB was to support this and recommend it to the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Rorer stated that indeed the project idea is seeking support and further refinement with the assistance of this board.

As this project is in the earlier stage, Chairman Palmer's suggestion was to obtain more clarity from this project idea through further research and consultation with membership. Mr. Bishop and Mr. Cornet offered their assistance to further vet and develop the concept for EDAB support and possibly recommendation.

Mr. Rorer & Ms. Morrison specifically are requesting a letter from the EDAB expressing support and staff assistance to further flesh out the concept of a public-private partnership with Currituck County to operate a business incubator.

Chairman Palmer requested a motion to support this letter. Ms. White moved to send a letter to the Board of Commissioners to consider the above request. Mr. Cornet seconded the motion. Motion Carried.

Item IV(b). Community Development Agency / Economic Development Authority Discussion

Chairman Palmer introduced the concept of an independent, separate authority rather than the Economic Development Advisory Board, similar to the Outer Banks Visitor's Bureau.

Mr. Rorer feels that the centralized control has been an impediment to progress in Currituck County, and removing this function from centralized control would generate progress and create an arms-length separation.

Mr. Edgar asked if there were models for an independent authority. Mr. Bishop said yes, and he will present some models that exist to the EDAB for consideration.

Mr. Painter wondered what the Board of Commissioners felt about this action. Mr. Rorer felt that a strong lobbying effort would be required to get the approval of the BOC. Mr. Cornet stated that these organizations typically have a tax-subsidy of funding from the County government.

Ms. Morrison mentioned Occupancy Tax funding and the opportunities to fund additional economic development, and perhaps this type of agency.

Chairman Palmer asked Mr. Bishop to provide the EDAB with the further information to the board, including a sample Charter, scope of work for the facility, and what is the source of revenue.

Item V. EDAB Strategic Plan Work-Session:

Part A & B: Strategic Plan Progress, Milestones & Review & Event Discussion

Chairman Palmer yielded to Vice-Chairwoman White on this topic. Ms. White reintroduced the milestones document as we are in the 6th month of implementation of the plan.

After EDAB members had reviewed the documents, the board went through the milestones statements. The EDAB members discussed what items that have not been addressed in the timelines set previous, and what types should be pursued or dropped.

Vice-Chairman White and Chairman Palmer suggested that the EDAB review the document and the unfulfilled milestone items to develop opinions within the next two weeks and provide feedback to the full board via email.

Part C: Incentive Guidelines & Policy: Finalize Visioning & Next Steps

Chairman Palmer, along with other members of the Board, felt this agenda item required a separate independent work-session. The date proposed for this work-session is April 17th at 9 am at Moonrise Bay Vineyard on Knotts Island. Chairman Palmer will confirm the arrangements.

Vice-Chairman White will provide the format for each geographic visioning sections in the same manner as the power-point presentation formatted sections from earlier meetings. Mr. Bishop will provide maps, Land Use plans, and other relevant study documents like the UNC Visioning Study and Lawrence-Park marketing study.

Part D – Director’s Report

Mr. Bishop provided written reports for the EDAB to review.

Chairman Palmer provided an update from the CTP meeting from the previous evening. The meeting focused on identifying under-built roads, at-capacity roads, intersection improvements and other identified future issues as the growth is projected through 2035.

Further, the Mid Currituck Bridge folks were there to represent the upcoming draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project. Mr. Bishop and Mr. Palmer have requested all documents for the meeting for distribution to the EDAB for review.

Part E – Marketing Committee Report

Mr. Bishop provided a report of the meeting from earlier this evening with Mrs. Kugler. The draft budget was presented, highlighting spending allowances for print and online advertisements in regional, mid-atlantic, and targeted industry publications. The budget also provides an allocation for two ED & EDAB partnered events for local business education/job fair/assistance and for new or relocating

industries in a press-tour style environment. Finally, ED Staff are considering coop advertising for local businesses in certain target publications at a discounted rate.

Mr. Bishop informed the EDAB that the budget amendment from the TDA will occur following the regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners on April 5th.

The EDAB membership was supportive of the budget and felt that it reflected the suggestions of the board and professionals in the UNC and Lawrence-Park studies.

Chairman Palmer, Vice-Chairman White and Mrs. Kugler joined in stressing the importance of targeted marketing and advertising strategically to net specific industries that match the strategic plan. Mr. Bishop stated that he felt the current budget reflects this and provides for more targeted choices as industries are identified.

Item VI. Other Business & Announcements

A. April Calendar

B. OBX Catch seafood promotional program – Ken Edgar.

Mr. Edgar provided some numbers - \$8 billion commercial and recreational fishing, 200,000 jobs (commercial is 75% of the jobs, although revenue is split). This does not include boat building.

This is a non-profit organization to promote the fishing industry and local seafood. Currituck County...

There are 3 wholesale fishing companies in Currituck County, and

Mr. Edgar would like to see Currituck County become more aware of this effort and participate fully in the program. Mr. Edgar will provide the connection and opportunity to further pursue this opportunity for promotion and work with Mr. Bishop and commercial fisherman.

Item VII. Adjourn

Mrs. Kugler moved to adjourn. Mr. Newbern seconded the motion. Motion carried.