



Chatham County, NC

Meeting Minutes

Board of Commissioners

Tuesday, August 9, 2016

6:00 PM

Horton Middle School Multipurpose Room

CALL TO ORDER

Present from the Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors: Chair Chris Ehrenfeld, President Kyle Touchstone, Dan Sundberg, Drew Weniger, Greg Lewis, Mayor Cindy Perry, Mayor John Grimes, Linda Harris, and Twig Wood.

Chair Ehrenfeld welcomed everyone in attendance.

Present: 5 - Chairman Jim Crawford, Vice Chair Diana Hales, Commissioner Mike Cross, Commissioner Karen Howard and Commissioner Walter Petty

BOARD PRIORITIES

16-1806

Receive update on the Chatham - Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site.

Attachments: [EDC Joint Workshop Presentation.pptx](#)

Mr. Touchstone gave a presentation with an update on the Chatham Siler City Advanced Manufacturing Site. (Presentation attached)

Commissioner Howard asked if the Golden Leaf money is available to more than one applicant. Mr. Touchstone stated the twenty-five million dollars would be split up over the three year period. There is sixteen million dollars available for the first year round of funding. More than one applicant can be approved. If the County is not approved in the first round it can apply again for the second and third rounds.

Mr. Sundberg asked how the Golden Leaf money could be used. Mr. Touchstone stated it can only be used for public infrastructure.

16-1807

Discuss the Chatham County - Chatham Economic Development Corporation contract.

Attachments: [Third Draft Joint Workshop Draft 8-4-16.pptx](#)
[Chatham County Contract Draft 7 26 16.docx](#)

County Manager Renee Paschal and Mr. Touchstone presented a presentation on the contract. (Presentation attached)

Commissioner Hales asked how the EDC is linked to the Department of Commerce with the building database. Mr. Touchstone stated the EDC inputs the buildings with the State Department of Commerce. The EDC has access to the database through its website. The State is currently in discussions about a new, more sophisticated

database that is GIS based. Mr. Touchstone has provided feedback to the State.

Commissioner Petty asked if there was another contract they used as a guide. Mr. Touchstone stated they worked with the County's Policy Analyst to come up with the contract but they had several examples.

16-1808

Discuss changes to the Chatham Economic Development Corporation Bylaws.

Attachments: [EDC Joint Workshop Presentation.pptx](#)
 [BYLAWS - FINAL - Amended 5-10-16.pdf](#)

Chair Ehrenfeld asked Larry Hicks to give a brief history of the Chatham Economic Development Corporation. Mr. Hicks served on the EDC Board for eight years.

Mr. Touchstone gave a presentation on the bylaws. (Presentation attached)

Mr. Touchstone stated the recommendation is to form a work group to revise the EDC bylaws and bring them back to both boards for their input. After a legal review it would need a two thirds vote for adoption.

Chair Ehrenfeld stated the goal is to move through this process as quickly as possible.

Commissioner Cross asked what the necessity is to have two commissioners on the EDC Board.

Chair Ehrenfeld stated the two commissioners currently serving serve in an ex-officio capacity. He has had recommendations that the commissioners not serve on the board and instead have County staff serve. He believes the biggest issue is figuring out the nomination process. The nomination process has been done differently every time and has not followed what is stated in the bylaws.

Commissioner Cross stated the EDC Board should be apolitical and having commissioners on the board even as ex-officios, in his opinion does not give that appearance, especially if you have two members who happen to be from opposite parties. He would recommend removing the commissioners from the board.

Commissioner Hales asked if Commissioner Cross would feel the same way about the town mayors. Commissioner Cross stated he would not because they are not appointed members and can appoint someone in their place.

Chair Ehrenfeld stated they have discussed having the Town Manager instead of the mayor.

Commissioner Howard disagrees with Commissioner Cross. This particular board has gotten compliments on its ability to be apolitical. She believes the commissioners serve in a liaison role.

Commissioner Hales stated the EDC Board has started the selection process of finding candidates. Chair Ehrenfeld stated there are five positions up for reappointment and three new positions available. Commissioner Hales stated if the appointments are done by the Board of Commissioners those appointments should be done after an election cycle. Chair Ehrenfeld stated they do need to decide when they want the appointments to run. His personal opinion is that the person should be

seated in the odd year between elections because newly elected commissioners are not familiar with what the EDC does. They would be able to make better recommendations after having served as a commissioner for a year.

Chair Ehrenfeld stated that whatever the EDC Board comes up with will be passed by the EDC Board first and will then be presented to the Board of Commissioners and the Commissioners will be asked to adopt the new bylaws.

Mr. Touchstone stated the commissioners have done a nice job of providing a diverse board. However, he also thinks there is room for some services and industries that are not represented.

Commissioner Petty stated he enjoys being a part of the EDC and the meetings, however he does not feel a need to be at the table. He suggested surveying other EDC's to find out how they staff their boards. He had a question as to what is the right number of board members. Commissioner Petty believes appointing the commissioners a year following an election is a good idea. He also believes the remaining members of the EDC needs to be decided by the EDC because they know who needs to be represented.

Mr. Sundberg stated he enjoyed having the commissioners on the Board and he would also like to have representatives from the towns.

Chair Ehrenfeld stated they would like to recommend a work group to include the County Manager, Mr. Touchstone, the Chair and Vice Chair of the EDC, and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT