

**Minutes of the PCEDC Meeting
Person County EDC Board Room
303 S. Morgan St., Roxboro, NC 27573
April 26, 2022**

Voting Board Members Present:

Mr. Phillip Allen-Chairman
The Honorable Marilyn Newell-Secretary
Mr. Dale Reynolds-Vice Chairman
Mr. Ernie Wood

Mr. Kenneth Perry
Mr. Donald Long
The Honorable Gordon Powell

Voting Board Members Absent:

Mr. Danny Talbert

Ex Officios Present:

Ms. Heidi York, County Manager
Dr. Claudia Berryhill, Agricultural Representative
Dr. Pamela Senegal, PCC Representative

Dr. Rodney Peterson, PCS Superintendent

Ex Officios Absent:

Mr. Brooks Lockhart, City Manager

ED Staff Present:

Ms. Sherry Wilborn, ED Director
Mr. Michael Thibault, Asst ED Director
Ms. Brandy Lynch, ED Specialist
(Minutes)

Others Present:

The Honorable Derrick Sims
Mr. George Willoughby
Mr. Bo Freeman
Mr. Ted Abernathy
The Honorable PJ Gentry

EDC Welcome and Invocation:

1. At 4:00 p.m., Chairman Allen called the meeting to order.
2. Mr. Dale Reynolds gave the invocation.

Approval of the March 22, 2022, Meeting Minutes:

3. Mr. Allen requests a motion to approve the March 22, 2022, Meeting Minutes.

A motion was made seconded and unanimously passed for approval of the March 22, 2022, Meeting Minutes.

Motion: Dale Reynolds

Second: Ernie Wood

The Honorable Marilyn Newell in at 4:05 pm

Ms. Heidi York in at 4:07 pm

Dr. Pamela Senegal in at 4:22 pm

Strategic Plan Update and Exercise

4. Mr. Allen turns the floor over to Ted Abernathy with Economic Leadership. Mr. Abernathy begins with an update on the Strategic Plan. Economic Leadership has been working on an updated plan for approximately 2.5 months. They intend to have a draft plan in May.

Abernathy also provides a review of the focus groups and stakeholder interviews.

Strengths of Person County

- Economy is recovering
- Workforce is key
- Person County's culture
- Location of Person County
- Piedmont Community College
- Person Memorial Hospital
- Close to the Triangle

Weakness of Person County

- Infrastructure, especially in southern Person County
- Housing
- Lack of product/shovel ready sites
- Housing
- Compete with everyone else
- Lack of young leaders
- The political climate in the area is deterring people

What people would like to see in the future for Person County

- Growth
- Better roads, more four-lane roads
- Infrastructure
- Manage the growth

What should EDC be doing

- Help existing businesses
- Bring better jobs, not just manufacturing jobs more white-collar jobs as well

Abernathy and his group are working on an Economic Assessment which includes a recommendation on a dashboard and metrics that can be followed. The dashboard could include: changes in jobs, tax base, housing units, and number of jobs with higher than average wages.

It will also include an employment assessment, incentive policy review, opportunity analysis, and a three-year action plan.

Abernathy asked if the board would be willing to take a survey. This survey is used to make volunteer boards stronger.

Abernathy inquired what the board would like to see from staff or board members going forward. Reynolds responded he would like them to continue to see engagement with existing industry, large and small, that the Assistant Director had started.

Other suggestions included

- Increased budget
- Continue to find ways to enhance our product
- Continuing to increase the budget
- Continuing to grow the staff, allows Director to focus more on recruitment
- Increase Product
- Board members to keep their "radar" up, a prospect may come from anywhere

- Website buildout, possibly a dashboard with local information
- More planning sessions
- More group trips to evaluate the product and look at competitor's product

Dr. Berryhill questioned if the Person County Board of Commissioners would be ready if action is needed. The Honorable Gordon Powell noted he is not able to speak for the board, but in his opinion, he is ready to respond to the needs. Ted Abernathy states North Carolina is rated very strong for economic development.

Abernathy noted his firm has worked with other counties in the past with issues that Person County is having including political issues. These counties have overcome the issues and are thriving now.

Sherry Wilborn stated there are 1600 residential units in some phase of development. Both the city and county are at the height of the budget season. She would like both the city and the county to look at funding departments on the front end. The inspections, planning, and zoning departments were examples given. Abernathy expresses the need for Person County Schools and Piedmont Community College to be ready as well. Wilborn noted the need to have the infrastructure in place to prepare for growth as well.

Wood believes the watershed regulations are holding Person County back. Other surrounding counties are growing and developing. Wood noted how many times he warned the Board of Commissioners of the problems with the regulations. Wilborn notes that those areas have the same regulations, but the market in more urban areas makes the development costs worth the investment and that Person County, too, will get to that point. York informs the board there is an attorney that works on behalf of Person County and Granville County on this issue.

Abernathy thanked the board for their time and noted he hoped to have the plan back for presentation in a couple of weeks.

Director's Report:

5. Sherry Wilborn's presentation will be included in the minutes.

Wilborn provided the board with information on the RTRP State of the Region Event at the Angus Barn on May 25th. There was enough interest to proceed with a table sponsorship with a cost of \$3,500.00.

Wilborn announced she was approached by someone in the logging industry about the possibility of timbering the North Park Site. Wilborn reminded the board she had completed the Golden Leaf grant application for clearing and grading the site already, however she reached out to Golden Leaf and there will be no issue with the grant application if the property is timbered.

By timbering the site, it would produce some revenue and could cut the cost down the road on clearing and grading. If the board would like to move forward, the next step would be the Person County Board of Commissioners. The North Park site is county-owned and would require Commissioner's approval, then going forward with an RFP.

Wilborn notes there is a downside. If you clear the site before you grade the site the topography will be more noticeable.

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed to obtain an RFP for timbering the North Park Location.

Motion: Dale Reynolds

Second: Phillip Allen

Before the vote, Dr. Berryhill inquired what condition the land would be left in. Wilborn responded the stumps would be left. Wilborn also noted the awarding of the Golden Leaf grant would be in June. Dr. Berryhill questions could leaving the stumps lead to increased grubbing cost? Wood stated it could, but it depends, but it could. Wilborn explains the timeline of the RFP could be arranged to coincide with the decision on the grant. Dr. Berryhill explains Person County has a forestry service, should they consult?

Wilborn explains no permitting is needed to timber the site. Mayor Newell questions whether timbering moves the site forward. Wood explains there would be a return on the timber to the county. Newell expresses concern over the appearance of the site if it was timbered. Wood clarifies even after the board and commissioners receive an RFP, the work will still require another vote.

Allen states there is a motion and a second on the floor and calls for the vote.

Member and Ex Officio Comments:

6. Dale Reynolds stated how nicely the Kerr Tar Economic Development Summit was done. He noted Piedmont Community College and Person County Schools looked like the star of the show.

Dr. Berryhill announced the adoption of the North Carolina beaver management assistance program.

Dr. Peterson noted Person County Schools was partnering with The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to bring talent to Person County.

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Dr. Senegal reminded the board of the job fair Piedmont Community was holding. The Customized Training Director Position is filled. Their kick-off project will be working with Polywood on their expansion.

Heidi York stated the Person County Commissioners would look at two more GREAT grant applications at their upcoming meeting. The Commissioners would also here a request on the fire district tax.

Chairman's Report:

7. Chairman Allen offered no report.

Next Meeting:

8. The next meeting was announced as May 24, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. in the Person County EDC Board Room 303 S. Morgan St. Roxboro, NC.

Adjournment:

9. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously passed to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:00 p.m.

Motion: Donald Long

Second: Dale Reynolds

May 24, 2022
Date Approved


Secretary

EDC Meeting
April 26, 2022

Director's Report

- The Vision 2022 Regional Economic Summit was held at the Kirby Theater and brought more than 200 people to Uptown Roxboro from across the 5-county Kerr Tar Region.
- The work with Economic Leadership continued with the updating of the Strategic Plan.
- Airport website work has begun. There will be a preview opportunity and rollout will try to be timed with hangar completion.
- Nominated and appointed by the NCEDA Board of Directors to serve on the EDPNC EDAC. Each of the 8 prosperity zones has 2 representatives, so I will be joining Michael Haley with Wake County Economic Development North Central (Triangle) Region. The group meets quarterly to collaborate on ED matters

April 18 BOC meeting:

- Commissioners authorized staff to support a grant application with NCDEQ to assist with costs for the Western Sewer Expansion. Each unit of local government is eligible for up to \$15M.
- Authorized a proposal to have additional Geotech work done on the Person County Mega Park, which is anticipated to be reimbursed through a grant from the Duke Energy Carolinas Investment Fund. Expected to be complete within the next 3 weeks.

RTRP State of the Region – May 25th at 5pm – Angus Barn Pavilion

Requesting a decision on level of sponsorship

Timbering of North Park site

Requesting a decision on whether to move forward with RFP process

THANK YOU!!