

BEAUFORT COUNTY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



BEAUFORT COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD Monthly Board Meeting Minutes May 18, 2022

Present: Chairman Ed Booth, Commissioner Rebholz, Dr. David Loope

Absent: Archie Griffin, Dylan Bowen, Chad Keech, Andy Fisher, Clif Williams, Ricky Credle, Don Sadler, Joy McRoy, Bubs Carson, Mia Williams

Other Attendees: Victoria Hamill, Brian Alligood, Gregory Smith, Susan Squires

Welcome: Chairman Ed Booth

Introduction: Brian Alligood

It is my pleasure to introduce to you Brad Hufford. We are very fortunate and very pleased to have Brad work with us. Brad began his career working for NC Department of Commerce right here in Washington and has spent his entire professional career in Eastern North Carolina. The combination of the educational background Brad has the experience he has and the connections he has and all of that being in Eastern North Carolina was so important. In this position, in rural Eastern North Carolina, to really sell it, you have got to be from here, you have to understand it and you have to have lived it. We are very excited to welcome Brad to Beaufort County.

Introductions were made to Brad from each of the attendees.

Speaker: Brad Hufford, Beaufort County Economic Development Director

A little background on myself, as Brian said I am from Eastern North Carolina, my roots started in Pitt County where my great grandparents had a farm between Vanceboro and Grifton. My dad was in the Army and after living in Winterville, we moved to Pittsburg and from there to St Louis. I returned to Eastern North Carolina to go to ECU where I majored in History and Political Science. I then went to Grad School where I discovered Economic Development. I am very passionate about Eastern North Carolina communities, especially rural communities, and the challenges they face. My vision for Economic Development is that recruitment is important and there's a place for that but more importantly we need to work with existing companies, listen to their concerns and respond to their needs. I have broad vision of what Economic Development is, sometimes its recruiting new industry, sometimes its entrepreneurship, a large part is workforce development, it all fits together. Beaufort County has such

potential, its beauty and location...that part is an easy sell. We need to get the word out about the opportunities here in Beaufort County. I look forward meeting people, understanding our product, learning what our key differentiators are, and eventually put my own flavor on the position. I have an open-door policy, I want the citizens and stakeholders to know and understand we are here working for them.

Minutes: Chairman Booth advised without a quorum; approval of the minutes will be postponed until the next Advisory Board Meeting.

Community Reports:

Aurora, Clif Williams: Absent

Bath, Bubs Carson: Absent

Belhaven, Ricky Credle: Absent

Chocowinity, Joy McRoy: Absent

Pantego, Chad Keech: Absent.

Washington, Don Sadler: Absent

Washington Park Dylan Bowen: Absent

Community College Update, Dr. David Loope: We are working with Nutrien on our ongoing apprenticeship program. We are applying for a grant to create and Electrical Lineman Program which we hope will be up and running in 2023. We are offering level 2 Industrial Sewing and the Restaurant Cook and Server and FAA Drone Pilot classes. Things are going well at the college. We anticipate moving the Boat Building program into a new facility on campus by summer 2023. The College continues to collaborate with industry to offer workforce and customized training programs. We need to get people past the barriers that keep them from improving their lives.

County Update, Commissioner John Rebholz: The County will be holding the 2nd of the 5 budget meetings. Included in the upcoming budget is an allocation of a million dollars, \$250,000 over the next 4 years, for Beaufort Promise to offer free tuition at the Community College. Sales tax revenues have created a surplus opportunity to enable the county to move the money into a special revenue fund for Beaufort Promise. We will revisit this to see if this is working, is it a self-sustaining program.

EDPNC Update, Sarah Bernart: Absent

NC East Alliance Update, Mark Hamblin: Absent

Beaufort County Schools CTE, Vicky Hamill: Career and Technical Education We are offering Licensed Electrical Contractor programs at both Washington High School and Northside High School. Our Boat Building Facility at Washington High School is nearing completion, they are now adding the brick to the outside of the building. This was funded with a grant from Golden Leaf Foundation. We have to date had about 50 kids graduate from the Boat Building Program. Summer is approaching and we have about 30 kids signed up for our Summer Accelerator Program “Do Something Great”. This 8-day course will focus on our 3 Career Technical Education Academies; our Firefighting/Public Safety program located at Southside High School, the Boat Building program at Washington High School the Automotive program located at Northside High School. We have been fortunate to have received some additional funding and as a result we are implementing Paxton Patterson career exploration labs in all 5 Middle Schools.

NCWORKS Update: Greg Smith: NC Works Career Center is in a transition now to move towards a more regional model. I will be in Beaufort County Mondays and Wednesdays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays in Pitt County. The Martin County Career Center will be moving to Martin Community College. Although I may not be in Beaufort County every day, I am always available, and we are here to serve our communities. We have recently had some graduates from the Community College from the WIOA program. We continue to try to fill positions and trying our best to be accessible.

Comments by Chairman Booth: Brad, we are pleased to welcome you to Beaufort County.

Motion to Adjourn: Chairman Booth

Second: John Rebholz