

**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
MARCH 16, 2010
7:00P.M.**

ATTENDEES:

City Council: Mayor Bryan Hough, Mayor Pro-Tem Carolyn Breyare, Perry Toomey, Jerry Bishop, Bennie Brookshire, Jim Hope and David Moore.

Economic Development Committee: Chairperson Barbara Lawrence, Ann Danzi, Jason Shoemaker, Lee Beatty and Todd Young.

Staff: Danny Jackson and Jamie Guffey, Co-Interim City Managers

Mayor Hough called the meeting to order, allowed for introduction of attendees and asked Mayor Pro-Tem Breyare to do the Invocation.

Mayor Hough stated that the primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss how the city moves forward, as it relates to economic development. He stated that at the recent City Council Retreat there were conversations regarding economic development but there were not any definite answers to questions.

The Mayor recognized Barbara Lawrence, Chairperson for the Economic Development Committee (EDC). Ms. Lawrence gave the group a power point presentation based upon this year's NC Main Street Conference, held in New Bern, NC. She indicated that there were a lot of similarities between what New Bern has done and what Mount Holly wants to do. Ms. Lawrence stated that some of the accomplishments of New Bern were thirty (30) years in the making, based upon vision plans much like what Mount Holly has done.

The next item for discussion was Mount Holly's Economic Development "Toolbox." Ms. Lawrence explained the notion of certain projects that the EDC had been working on to promote economic development. She noted that maps of the projects were exhibited in the rooms for others to review.

Mr. Lee Beatty, Chairman of the Mount Holly Community Development Foundation (MHCDF) discussed the role of the Foundation in the city. He indicated that the Foundation has a mission of promoting strong community values, quality of life and economic development. Mr. Beatty also discussed private investment, façade programs, National Historic District and the value of the proposed Greenway Plan.

Ms. Ann Danzi, EDC and Foundation member updated the group regarding the Foundation's Logo Contest. She said that the ultimate decision would be that of the City Council.

Mr. Jason Shoemaker, Chairman of the Mount Holly Chamber of Commerce, discussed the position of the Chamber as it relates to economic development in the City of Mount Holly. He indicated that the newly formed Mount Holly Chamber was a chapter of the Gaston Regional Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Shoemaker stated that one of the primary missions of the Chamber was to focus on the local commercial entities. He listed a number of events held by the Chamber.

Mr. Todd Young, EDC member, stated that the city needed to focus on public relations in a way to create economic vibrancy. He said that we needed to promote buying local and establishing our own economic identity.

Mr. Jackson, also an EDC member, discussed some of the city owned assets contained in the Economic Development Toolbox.

The next item for discussion was Business Investment Recruiting. Ms. Lawrence discussed the Market Study component of the city's Vision Plan. She indicated that the study recommended hiring someone to help recruit businesses to Mount Holly. She stated that the city may not be ready for taking such a step. Ms. Lawrence discussed the need for the city to do its own marketing data collection. She said that the city could purchase the data and have it processed through the planning department.

The Mayor lead a discussion of such items as how all of the previously mentioned entities could work together to get the job done, updating a list of the city's assets and incentives for commercial prospects.

The next item for discussion was the Economic Development Priorities Task List. The Mayor reviewed the list of five (5) items that were identified and recommended by the EDC as economic development priorities. The discussion involved funding, city brochures and other marketing materials. Ms. Lawrence stated that the EDC wanted to make sure that the City Council was comfortable with the task list, to ensure that the EDC was moving in the right direction.

Councilman Moore stated that he felt as though the EDC was on the right track with the task list. Mayor Pro-Tem Breyare indicated that the list gives direction at the EDC meetings. Councilman Hope stated that we can be successful when there are good people to carry out the will of the City. Councilman Toomey stated that he fully supports the efforts of the EDC. Councilman Brookshire stated that he was in support of the efforts of the EDC.

The Mayor instructed the EDC that they needed to establish a budget regarding certain expenses that were discussed earlier in the meeting. Councilman Bishop stated that in regard to the established Economic Development Budget as approved by the City Council, there are not any formal details about how the money would be spent. For clarification sake, Mr. Beatty wanted to know if the directions for the EDC were to collect the marketing data, interpret it and hire an expert to create an action plan for the City.

The last item for discussion was the current vacancies on the EDC. Mayor Hough stated that he intends to fill the two vacancies on the EDC by the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45P.M.

