

Gerald W. Stewart  
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EcoDual, Inc.

Good Morning Everyone. I'm Councilman Jerry Stewart and I am delighted to be here today to be a part of this exciting news.

'Project Robot' is a phrase the community has heard a lot in recent weeks but has been told very little on what this is and how it will work. Finally today the community will get the answers they've been looking for. I'm very excited to announce that project robot is a partnership with EcoDual, a Beaufort based company that provides conversion systems for tractor trailer trucks to run on about 60% natural gas. The other part of project robot is a piece of equipment called a dynamometer that tests motors and engines after they've been modified to run on natural gas rather than diesel fuel. The County will buy the dynamometer, with the help from the South Carolina Department of Commerce and the Lowcountry Economic Alliance, for the purpose of job growth in not only Beaufort County but the lowcountry region. EcoDual will be the first business to use the dynamometer through their agreement with the Department of Commerce and it will bring hundreds of new jobs over the next few years. Mr. Doug Thompson, Executive Vice president of Engineering for EcoDual will explain more specifically on what this means for the company and how they will use the dynamometer in just a few minutes, but I want to talk to you briefly about how and why we, as Council members, are allocating funds for the purchase of the dynamometer for Beaufort County. There are other companies like EcoDual who are modifying various types of engines to run on natural gas and other alternative fuels as opposed to gasoline or diesel fuel. Having a dynamometer here in our backyard and, I like to point out and stress, the only type of machine like this in the entire state of South Carolina, council is confident that by having this unique piece of equipment, Beaufort County will be successful in attracting complimentary business utilizing this equipment to locate here in Beaufort County. There are many positives to using natural gas including, it being less toxic, emitting less CO2, which the U.S. and governments across the world are trying to improve upon, natural gas is much safer when stored, recent reports show it's cheaper than diesel fuel and ultimately it will reduce the oil dependency the U.S. currently has on countries overseas.

After learning these details as well as the South Carolina Department of Commerce providing a \$450,000 grant for ground and fiber upgrades and tax credits, as well as EcoDual committing jobs and capital investment, I as well as many of my council colleagues truly believe the \$850,000 money the county put forward for this investment was the best decision for all of Beaufort County. Right now EcoDual will be working out of the building behind me which lies in Councilman Brian Flewelling's district, but ultimately EcoDual Inc. will be working out of the Commerce Park which is owned by the City of Beaufort and lies in Mr. Dawson's district. I know that both Councilman Dawson and Mayor Keyserling would like to make some comments about what EcoDual and their jobs will mean to their citizens. With that I'd like to thank EcoDual for locating in Beaufort County and will turn the program over to Councilman Dawson.