Meeting Minutes

Present: Alsko, Arnette, Azallion-Kenny, Braun, Brown, Feaster, Fleming, Forster, Glover, Marshall, Perry, Phillips, Rodriguez, Shelton, Williams
Absent: Dallas, Gough, McElynn, Cromer, Sisino, Toomer
Staff: O'Toole, Stone, Brunson

Chair Feaster called the meeting to order at 2:04.

The BCEDC Board accepted the resignation of Carlton Dallas. Mr. Dallas has served on the board for 4 years, and we thank him for his service.

The BCEDC Board had new appointments due to the recent elections at the end of 2023. The following members were appointed: Mayor Phil Cromer, representing the City of Beaufort; Mayor Larry Toomer, representing the Town of Bluffton; Mayor Kevin Phillips, representing the Town of Port Royal. Chair Feaster entertained a motion for these appointments made by Perry; Alsko seconded; approved unanimously.

Chair Feaster entertained a motion by Perry to go into Executive Session; Marshall seconded and all approved.

Chair Feaster entertained a motion to end Executive Session by Perry; Alsko seconded; approved unanimously. Executive Session ended at 2:30pm.

There was no public comment.

Chair Feaster entertained a motion to approve November 16th minutes Braun moved; Alsko seconded; approved unanimously.

O'Toole reviewed BCEDC's operating budget. The BCEDC has $673,000 in cash available. $150,000 in utility tax credits. Sponsorships for Converge have been received.

O'Toole reviewed the 2023-2024 workplan and per the November meeting offered an opportunity for each municipality to update the BCEDC board and staff on their key priorities. BCEDC staff will work to incorporate these priorities into the workplan.

Beaufort
Marshall provided an update on behalf of the City of Beaufort. With new leadership, Beaufort is focused on leveraging the Beaufort Commerce Park and diversifying the industry with higher salary jobs. Beaufort is looking to work with USCB and TCL for placement of graduates from their cybersecurity program.

Bluffton
Forster provided an update on the behalf of the Town of Bluffton. With prior leadership, Mayor Sulka challenged Forster to think about what residents need. This led to a study of the Town of Bluffton to

look at the labor force by industry and occupation to identify gaps. Some industries identified by this were mixed use commercial, services-based industry, retail pharmaceutical, and workforce housing.

Hilton Head Island
Mayor Perry provided an update on behalf of the Town of Hilton Head Island. Hilton Head Island has some challenges that the residents are 59+. The direst need is expanded medical services like oncology and geriatric care. Most people are leaving the island because of housing and the commute. Perry wants to encourage the private sector to assist with solutions on housing. Over the coming months, Hilton Head Island will be reviewing the LMO and code enforcements for clearcutting.

Port Royal
Mayor Kevin Phillips provided an update on behalf of the Town of Port Royal. He shared that Port Royal is focused on light industrial and commercial. Port Royal's overall priority is to keep the current feel of the community, and they are willing to work with companies interested in this area to ensure that the community's needs are met.

Beaufort County
Amundson is going to present at another date. Glover offered that O'Toole has covered many of the county's priorities during his earlier comments.

Chair Fester entertained a motion for the $19M request to the county for the product plan made by Marshall, Perry seconded; approved unanimously.

Chair Feaster entertained a motion for a $30k grant out of the site fund budget to support operations growth on St. Helena for Project Ward. Perry moved; Joel seconded. Discussion was held about performance agreements and potential call backs. The SC Department of Agriculture will do an audit within a certain time frame of progress. The BCEDC will ask for proof of payroll. The board would like to see regular updates of projects and their investments. After discussion, all approved the motion as presented.

Glover offered that he would bring a report to the BCEDC board on the grant received earlier in the year.

O'Toole reviewed the job and site fund with the board. The BCEDC shows a $30k grant for Project Ward and a surplus of $438,568. Chair Feaster entertained a motion by Braun; Arnette seconded; approved unanimously.

Stone provided an update on the second spec building. Permit approvals are at the state level.

O'Toole shared that RFPs accounting and engineering firms were advertised within the local media sources. To date, fourteen engineering firms and seven accounting firms have inquired about the proposals.

Fleming provided an update on SCA. A list of potential marketing trips was shared with tentative dates. SCA's annual event is on February 29th at USC Salkehatchie. Chair Feaster stated that she had received a letter from SCA about appointments for their board. The BCEDC will add this to the February board meeting agenda. BCEDC staff activity is as follows:
- Stone shared an update on near term projects. There is a meeting on Project Cloud at Palmetto Hall at the end of January.
- Brunson shared an update on Converge. To date 420 people had registered. BCEDC staff was excited to host Sara White of Global Location Strategies, Greenville to talk about the site selection process.

For new business, BCEDC staff will continue to monitor lead flow, closed and lost leads. The board suggested that the next roundtable event be focused on financial institutions and knowing what capital is available.

Chair Feaster entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:57pm. Perry moved; Alsko seconded; approved unanimously.