

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Alsko, Amundson, Barrientos, Braun, Cromer, Feaster, Forster, Gilbert, Kenny, Shelton, Sisino, Stone, Williams

Public: Chambers

Staff: O’Toole, Brunson, Warner

Chair Braun called the meeting to order at 2:01pm.

Chair Braun entertained a motion by Feaster to go into Executive Session at 2:01pm. Shelton seconded; approved unanimously.

Chair Braun entertained a motion to end Executive Session by Feaster; Shelton seconded; approved unanimously. Executive Session ended at 2:51pm.

There was no public comment.

Chair Braun entertained a motion to approve the September 12th and October 31st meeting minutes made by Feaster; Kenny seconded; approved unanimously.

Shelton reviewed the FY 2024 budget to date. BCEDC is operating well within their budget.

Chambers presented an update on behalf of the organization, Blacquity. This has continued to be a successful program for entrepreneurs with continued success and momentum. Chambers provided an update to the board on how the grant received is benefitting their work. The BCEDC board commended Blacquity on their success.

Brunson provided an update to the board on the permitting process for the Beaufort Commerce Park spec building two. Due to unforeseen permitting challenges, the engineering firm has had to put more work into this project than was originally budgeted. BCEDC staff asked for approval of an additional \$25,000 for this budget knowing that \$15,000 will go towards work already completed and the remaining \$10,000 would see the permitting through to completion. Chair Braun entertained a motion made by Shelton; Sisino seconded; all voted in favor.

O'Toole provided an update that BCEDC will be seeking a new developer for the spec building within the Beaufort Commerce Park. Staff has updated the informational packet to send to developers.

Brunson provided an update to the board regarding project German. This is a company looking to locate within the Town of Bluffton creating 13 jobs with an investment of \$3.6 million. This project would be the first international company locating their headquarters in the Town. The Town of Bluffton has reviewed the project profile worksheet and will be before Town Council on December 10th for the first reading of their proposed incentives. This is an ideal project for Bluffton. BCEDC staff recommended a \$30,000 grant for this project. Chair Braun entertained a motion made by Feaster; seconded by Shelton; approved unanimously.

O'Toole provided an update that an extension of the filing of the organization's 990 had been granted until May 2025. Staff will receive clarifications on outstanding questions related to the organizations 501c3 status in December.

O'Toole provided an overview of a conceptual scorecard for the organization that would list additional metrics per the Executive Committee's request. The new metric items proposed are ones that staff feels comfortable about meeting within the first year. Staff has follow-up calls scheduled with their CRM database to ensure the metrics can be easily tracked.

Warner provided an overview of BCEDC's Business, Retention, and Expansion program. This overview explained the purpose of these meetings and how it is driven. Warner also provided a list of companies recently met with and a list of trends/common issues heard during these meetings. BCEDC board members are invited to attend BRE meetings if they are interested, and their schedule allows.

O'Toole provided an overview of the grants that are currently outstanding. This report will be given quarterly to the board and shows the detail required for the 990 reports.

O'Toole provided an update on the Site & Job fund. There was no action taken.

Brunson provided an update to the board on the result of a presentation made at the International Economic Developers Conference in September. The information gathered during that session was written as a white paper for IEDC.

For staff activity, Brunson shared a recap of the SCEDA mid-year conference in Greenville in October as well as her experience completing the Institute in early November along with Forster (Town of Bluffton) and Boykin (SouthernCarolina Regional Alliance). Brunson also reported on the status of the Chilton site purchase and green space application, as well as project Memorial.

There was no update from SouthernCarolina Regional Alliance.

There was no new business.

Chair Braun entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:57pm by Feaster; Shelton seconded; all voted in favor.