

**ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**November 23, 2016 MEETING MINUTES**

Members Present: Greg Federline, Joseph Marotti, Nate McLaughlin, Jim Ulsamer, Frank Zedar,

Members Absent: Bob Alex, Robert Cahill, Wanda Clegg, Mike Gill

Staff Present: Helga van Eckert, Director  
Katrina Austin, Project Manager  
Lili Tuggle-Weir, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order: Chairman McLaughlin called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was said.
2. Roll Call: A silent roll call was taken, which reflected a quorum was present.
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes: October 26, 2016  
Mr. Ulsamer noted on the fourth line of item #5 the word “unemployment” should be changed to the word “relief”. He also stated that the date noted on item #8 should be changed from “January 26” to “November 23”.  
Approved unanimously with changes
4. Executive Director Report:  
Helga van Eckert began by thanking the council for their comments on the quarterly report and stated work has begun on the annual report. The annual report will include partner statistics to provide a comprehensive picture of all partner activities affecting economic development in Flagler County.

The DEO is in the process of creating a merchant forum for the businesses in Flagler Beach affected by Hurricane Mathew. Support agencies such as SBA and FEMA have been invited to the forum to help the businesses work through the claims processes. This will be a networking and working event. The forum will take place at Tortugas in Flagler Beach. Date to be announced.

Ms. van Eckert spoke about current projects as follows:

Project GS2 is moving forward. It is a construction project of 20,000 sq. ft. for an existing business in expansion mode. An incentive packet for this project is expected to be put before the EOAC at the next monthly meeting. Ms. van Eckert explained the need for this type of incentive because of the shortage of available buildings for businesses moving into or expanding in Flagler County.

Project Pony has had a positive site visit. They are an aviation manufacturing company from up north. Once again the lack of building inventory is an issue and the DEO is working to encourage the company to build a new facility.

Two project proposal opportunities through Enterprise Florida were lost this past month because we did not have available buildings for the companies to move into. One proposal through JaxUSA, was also lost because the company did not want to talk to locations that did not have an available building. The council discussed the need for inventory.

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Project Hello is a local investor who would like to build a research and development facility.

Project Cookie is a local entrepreneur that came to us through the Business Assistance Center (BAC). We are working in collaboration with the BAC and SCORE to help find building space and get the business in growth mode.

Ms. van Eckert stated that the lack of available building space has worked as a detriment and the department is working to establish incentives that would help reduce the cost of building thus encouraging prospect to construct new. She stated Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) programs are not commonly used in Florida but there are other programs that we could look at that would allow relief from tax revenues that would not have been collected if the companies hadn't built. She requested acknowledgment from the members that they support the department develop the incentives necessary to address the inventory shortage issues and that the members provide any thoughts or insights in the matter.

All council members agreed.

Ms. van Eckert closed her report noting the DEO wants to redefine the targeted industries based on the finding of the Boyette US 1 Corridor Study. Each member had been given a reorganized chart of industries and sectors.

- Green technology has been eliminated from the list absorbed under manufacturing and high tech.
- Corporate Services was added to the list due to the growth nationwide and statewide of that industry. This industry includes headquarters and back office activities such as payroll, human resources, billing etc. Based on the study, Flagler County is well situated for this industry from a location and workforce perspective.
- Distribution, logistics and manufacturing have been moved under the sector list because each of our targeted industries (aviation, agriculture, recreation) have distribution, logistics and manufacturing as a component.
- Entrepreneurship was added.

Mr. McLaughlin called for a discussion.

A definition of recreation/tourism was asked for by Mr. Federline. Ms. van Eckert stated the manufacturing of sporting equipment would be an example.

Mr. McLaughlin asked for clarification on why logistics would be eliminated as a stand-alone industry. Ms. van Eckert said it would be removed but instead would be included as a component of the other targeted industries. Mr. McLaughlin stated general warehousing of merchandise doesn't fall under any of the other industries. Mr. Ulsamer agreed citing Amazon. There was continued discussion by the members. It was determined that logistics would remain a stand-alone industry.

Mr. Ulsamer stated he agrees with the changes.

Ms. van Eckert summarized the changes as adding corporate services, adding entrepreneurship and moving green technology under the heading "High Tech".

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Mr. McLaughlin requested a vote to accept the changes as amended.  
Motion approved unanimously.

5. Partner Presentations:

**Margaret Sheehan-Jones, Parkside Realty, Commercial Real Estate**

Ms. Sheehan – Jones passed out an article regarding commercial development and global impact stating its relativity to planning for economic development in Flagler County and a summary of national commercial development trends.

Ms. Sheehan-Jones reviewed the national trends with the members and related those trends to the local market noting the county is trending with those national numbers.

Ms. Sheehan-Jones noted businesses are having difficulty finding industrial space in Flagler County. She said her biggest challenge is finding product for customers. It is difficult to convince customers to build due to the extraneous costs i.e. impact fees. She referenced a customer she is working with that needs 15,000 to 20,000 sq. ft. who can purchase more affordable existing space in Volusia County than build in Flagler County.

There was some discussion from the council.

**Deborah Williams, Flagler County Schools Foundation**

Ms. Williams shared a Foundation promotional [video](#) highlighting the Take Stock in Children program, The Foundation and Classrooms to Careers.

Ms. Williams explained that through belonging to a regional consortium and the state-wide Take Stock in Children program The Foundation receives about \$150,000 a year in the form of grants or match money. The operating budget is \$400,000 and the organization receives an annual \$1.5m endowment. The Foundation matches dollars with experience of the people who are involved.

There was discussion among the council.

Ms. Lynette Shott, Director of Student and Community Engagement, Flagler Schools stepped to the podium and stated the schools could not accomplish its goals without The Foundation's work.

Ms. Renee Stauffacher, Career and Tech Education Coordinator, Flagler Schools stepped to the podium and stated education needs to consider preparing students for jobs and providing multiple exit points along their career path that still allows them to earn a meaningful wage and that is what Flagler Schools is trying to do.

6. Council Comments

Mr. Ulsamer addressed Ms. van Eckert stating the need for beach restoration is critical to economic development and we need to reach out to all organizations that can help us reach this goal. The Ocean Hammock Resort suffered expansive damage and the

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dunes have been breached in multiple areas. The beaches need to be remediated and the path to getting it done is not clear.

Mr. Ulsamer further stated he is disappointed that a replacement has not been appointed to Mr. Meeker's seat on the County Commission. It is that district that has been most affected by Hurricane Matthew damage.

Mr. Federline asked how do we deal with the building inventory shortage.

Ms. van Eckert stated other communities have handled this issue with a private/public partnership. The DEO is looking at funding sources such as grants and asked the members to help champion the cause.

Mr. McLaughlin said if an opportunity came along that was meaningful enough to the community the community would "step up".

Ms. van Eckert asked the members to look at their calendars to check their availability for the December meeting to determine whether or not there would be a quorum and to respond to staff.

7. Public Comments - None
8. Next Meeting: The next meeting of the EOAC will be Wednesday December 28, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. in Board Chambers.
9. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m. upon motion, seconded, and unanimously carried.