

City of DeBary
Regular Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, February 17, 2005
7:00 PM

Florence K. Little Town Hall
12 Colomba Road DeBary, Florida 32713

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order** – Vice Chair Don Kitner

2. **Roll Call**

Present: Neil Coppens, Don Kitner, Leonard Marks, Tom Smith, and Diane Schaefer

Absent: Gretchen Ganas.

Also Present: Planning Administrator Anita Gonzalez, City Manager Maryann Courson, Council Member Patrick Fulton, and Vice Mayor Richard Gunter.

3. **Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting January 20, 2005**

Committee Member Tom Smith motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. Committee Member Leonard Marks seconded the motion. All the members voted to approve the minutes as submitted.

4. **Election of Chairman**

Committee Member Don Kitner nominated Tom Smith as Chairman. Committee Member Leonard Marks seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

Committee Member Neil Coppens nominated Don Kitner as Vice Chairman. Committee Member Leonard Marks seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

5. **Discussion for Recommendation of Support for Proposed West Volusia Conference Center**

David Bridgman, of the West Volusia Chamber of Commerce, presented to the Committee members a copy of the West Volusia Cultural & Corporate Training Center ECHO Grant that would be before the County ECHO Board. There is information included regarding the benefit to the City of DeBary.

Mr. Bridgman explained the history of the project. Three cities started working on the idea of a Civic Center. A study determined a small Civic Center was all the communities could

afford. Daytona Beach Community College wanted to participate in the project. D.B.C.C. suggested that if the college owned the facility, they could get the State to pay all the operational costs. All three cities would be able to use the facility. The County subsequently wanted to be involved. The County offered a 38-acre site on Rhode Island Avenue and Veterans Memorial Parkway for the Center.

The Chamber of Commerce was asked to be the lead on the project. Deltona pledged \$2 million, \$1 million from Orange City, and \$1 million from DeBary. The County donated the land and donated \$1.6 million dollars. Now they are seeking \$2.4 million from the ECHO grant program. The total project is \$23 million dollars. It would be 140,000 square feet and seat 5000 people in open seating and 1800 people in banquet style seating. It would be a multi-use facility. All partners will have discounted use of the facility. The project will spur economic development in all three cities, indeed the whole region.

Chairman Smith stated the City Council has not pledged funds because they are waiting for information regarding the financial return to the City of DeBary. Mr. Bridgman responded that it is a complex issue, which is now being formulated. The inter-local agreement signed by the other cities is available for the Council's review.

Chairman Smith discussed the demographics of the region and the number of jobs that would be generated from the project both during the construction phase and as permanent jobs. He stated that 18 to 36 jobs would be created for DeBary residents directly from the hotel and facility itself. That does not include spin-off jobs. He then commented that there is intrinsic value to all the residents of DeBary.

Committee Member Marks asked about the location and noted it is near the Orange City Landfill. Mr. Bridgman stated there are plans to shut the landfill down. It is now used for hurricane debris and burning.

Committee Member Coppens asked what are the uses of the facility that would benefit DeBary. Mr. Bridgman responded it could be used for art shows, concerts, bands, dances, high school proms, high school graduations, plays, recitals and historical displays. The building can be subdivided into many sections. There will be courses and D.B.C.C. classrooms. The Chamber of Commerce will relocate there. There will be a Board representing all the partners, so each partner has equal use of the facility.

Mr. Bridgman stated that quality of life is important for companies that want to relocate. DeBary and the West Volusia region have a desirable quality of life and this facility will further enhance the quality of life.

Chairman Smith asked the Committee to draft a resolution to give to the Council asking for support for the West Volusia Conference Center.

Vice Chairman Kitner motioned to approve the resolution as read. Committee Member Schaefer seconded the motion. All members voted to approve the motion.

6. Matching Grant Program for Legal Non-conforming Signs to be made Conforming

The list of non-conforming signs needs to be field reviewed, as the list is old. City Manager Courson presented a packet including a sample letter to be sent to business owners with non-conforming signs who could be eligible for the grant. The matching grant form has also been updated.

There was a discussion between Chairman Smith, City Manager Courson, and Committee Member Marks regarding whether to include homeowners association signs or just business signs. City Manager Courson reviewed the prior and current sign code regulations.

Committee Member Schaefer asked what problems will the business owners face getting the application reviewed at Volusia County. City Manager Courson stated that if there are a limited number of applications they can be reviewed by Planning Administrator Anita Gonzalez. If there were a lot of applications she would need help to review them. Chairman Smith suggested that Planning Administrator Gonzalez initially review all applications. That way the City would know what applications were submitted and have an opportunity to follow up. City Manager Courson suggested changing the bottom line of the letter to ask the business owners to call Planning Administrator Gonzalez to schedule a pre-application meeting.

There was a discussion between Chairman Smith and Committee Member Marks regarding changing the letter to include the words that the program is “voluntary.” Chairman Smith reviewed the package and noted that it included a revised application, the acknowledgement form, and the draft letter. Committee Member Coppens questioned if the business owners will be told what their sign violation is for them to evaluate whether to participate in the program. Chairman Smith and City Manager Courson discussed how to notify the sign owners of how their sign is non-conforming. Vice Chairman Kitner suggested the sign regulations be made part of the package sent to the business owners. Vice Chairman Kitner motioned to approve the cover letter with the discussed changes and to include the application form and the explanation of the requirements of the sign code and that it be mailed to all the business owners on the list. Committee Member Coppens seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0. Chairman Smith asked Planning Administrator Gonzalez to keep the Committee updated on the progress of the applications.

7. Discussion of Economic Development Strategy Plan

Chairman Smith remarked that the Plan is impressive. It is disheartening, however, that the Committee and the community as a whole have not been proactively seeking businesses to relocate here. He stated this Committee is tasked to bring new business into town. The Plan suggests which businesses to try to attract. He suggests utilizing the Internet. There should be a link to the City of DeBary’s website to list properties available and desired businesses on the Plan. Committee Member Marks suggests there be some advertising in trade and business magazines.

City Manager Courson responded that there has not been pro-active business recruiting in the past. The City has relied on the County’s efforts to grow the County as a whole. Vice

Chairman Kitner suggested that he could continue to attend the County Economic Development meetings. City Manager Courson stated that John Kizer of the County Economic Development staff has been assisting the City with recruiting new business.

Chairman Smith stated that he wanted to identify five or six things the Committee wanted to do. He stated he would reach out to the County Economic Development Committee to see what they can do to help the City grow. Committee Member Schaefer suggested that someone from the County come to speak to the Committee and give suggestions. City Manager Courson suggested that John Kizer be asked to attend the next meeting.

Chairman Smith suggested there be another business round-table to brainstorm ideas to grow the community. It should include home-based businesses. City Manager Courson stated there has been a good turn out in the past.

Mr. Mac McShea stated that he thinks it would be excellent to have a business association started in this area. It needs to include home-based businesses. Chairman Smith stated he would like to draft something to send out to see if there is an interest in a business association. He would also like to ask when business owners could meet with the EDAC committee. It would be good to have that done prior to the next meeting. It was decided to schedule a workshop to review the letter to be sent out to business owners.

There was a discussion of the Sunshine Law. City Manager Courson stated that, when the full Committee is present, she will make a presentation of the Sunshine Law.

8. Other Business

Vice Chairman Kitner told the Committee there is a Redevelopment workshop on “Keys to Successful Redevelopment Initiatives” on Wednesday February 23rd from 2 PM to 5 PM at the Yacht Club and Convention Center in Daytona Beach. The cost is \$30. City Manager Courson stated that the City would sponsor the members wishing to attend.

9. Adjournment The Committee adjourned at 9:03 PM.

**APPROVED March 17, 2005
CITY OF DEBARY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Tom Smith, Chairman