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# Fayetteville-Cumberland County Economic Development Corporation

Board of Directors Meeting  
February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 / 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM  
201 Hay Street, Suite 401A  
Fayetteville, NC 28301

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## MINUTES

**Members Present:** Chair Kathryn Cox, Vice Chair Timothy Bryant, Secretary Dymond Spain, Treasurer Carl Manning, Commission Chair Kirk deViere, Ferd Irizarry, Josh Choi, Dr. Ulysses Taylor

**Ex-Officios Present:** Dr. Mark Sorrells, Clarence Grier

**Members Absent:** Mitch Colvin, Bill Hedgepeth, Doug Hewett (ex-officio)

**Staff Present:** Robert Van Geons, Jennifer Hammond, Brittany Tschida

**Visitors/Guests:** Kelly Strickland

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### 1.0 Call to Order and Welcome

Chair Kathryn Cox called the meeting to order at 8:03 am.

**Quorum:** Yes

### 2.0 Approval of/or Adjustments to the Agenda

Chair Kathryn Cox asked the board if anyone had any changes to the agenda.

**Action:** A motion was made by Kirk deViere to approve the agenda with no adjustments. Ferd Irizarry seconded.

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor.

### 3.0 Organizational Business

#### 3.1 Approval of January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 minutes – (sent electronically)

**Action:** A motion was made by Ferd Irizarry to approve the January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 minutes. Kirk deViere seconded.

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor.

#### 3.2 Approval of the January 2025 Financials

**Discussion:** Prior to approving the January Financials, Kirk deViere asked if the financial statements reflected January's action to move funds from salaries to medical insurance. Robert shared that they would be reflected in the February financial report.

**Action:** After the discussion above, Kirk deViere made a motion to approve the January 2025 financial report. Ferd Irizarry seconded.

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor.

#### 3.3 Board Meeting Date and Time

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**Discussion:** The three-month trial period of holding our Board meetings on the second Thursday of the month ends with the February 2025 meeting. The Board discussed their schedules to determine what meeting date and time best works for their schedules.

**Action:** After discussion, a motion was made by Ferd Irizarry to keep the meetings on the second Thursday of the month from 8:00 am to 9:30 am. The motion was seconded by Dymond Spain.

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor.

**3.4 Hiring Update:** Robert shared that Genesis Merced Rosa will be starting at FCEDC in the role of Executive Assistant on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Chela Scott will join FCEDC as a Project Manager on February 24, 2025.

## 4.0 Program of Work Update

**4.1 Project Pipeline:** Robert Van Geons presented the Board with the FCEDC Project Pipeline. He informed the Board that FCEDC has generated 12 projects since January 1, 2025.

**4.2 Major Project Developments:** Robert shared that there are several projects that are on the move, including Project Power Pack, which will be announced shortly. Other projects with momentum include Projects Tight, Rankin, Class IX, and Crossfit. Examples of industry sectors include dairy, chocolate, plastic to diesel, and tractor-trailer maintenance.

The year is already off to a busy start, with 4 project visits and more scheduled for February.

**4.3 Balanced Scorecard Metrics** for the 2025 balanced scorecard have been determined. Targets are listed below:

**1. To aggressively promote Fayetteville and Cumberland County as a superior business location, to grow existing industry, and to attract new jobs and investment (60% weight)**

**Qualified Projects Generated:** 90

**Project Visits:** 30

**New jobs created by announced projects:** 400

**Increased tax base (in millions):** 100

**Recruitment Outreach 125 – 50 – 25:** 250

**2. To engage in public and private stakeholders, to effectively market our community, to maintain adequate funding, and to expand support for economic development (40% weight)**

**Direct Engagement of Local Businesses:** 100

**New Shovel Ready Product to Market (acres):** 100

**Public Sector Support:** \$862,500

**External Revenue (inc. committed & collected):** \$200,000

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**Board Member Survey regarding Operations (%): 90%**

**Board Identified Initiatives: 6**

## 5.0 Reports & Analytics

**5.1 Existing Industry Report:** Existing Industry visit goals have been reset for 2025.

Progress towards annual goals: 8 visits out of 100

- Major private employers: 2/25
- Manufacturing: 4/30
- Distribution/Logistics: 2/20
- Defense: 0/30
- Operations/Business Services: 2/20

### Updates

- Delta Apparel: MJ Soffe officially shut down their plant on January 30th.
- Keeco may add a handful of positions due to the Henderson plant closure at the end of Q1
- Attended the Village Christian Academy Career Skills Day with two invited industry partners, Systel and Blue Ridge Power. Every 8th grader prepared a resume and participated in interviews with over 40 professionals around Fayetteville/Cumberland County
- An Industry Support Directory has been completed for our current and future partners who need resources and recommendations for business and real estate services, building materials and supplies, community resources, transportation & logistics, or utilities. A copy will be available on our website or can be printed or emailed
- The Business Support Network met on January 24th. 18 attendees from area organizations Cumberland County Schools, EDPNC, Fayetteville State, Fayetteville Tech, Methodist, Greater Fayetteville Chamber, MC-COG, NC Military Business Center, and PWC
  - The biggest topic of conversation was childcare.
    - FCEDC has started conversations with Tri Share through the NC Department of Commerce, webinar on February 7th with Partnership for Children in Cumberland County and Partners for Children and Families in Moore County
    - NCEDA Childcare webinar on February 11th
  - Chairman deViere asked if FCEDC has any solutions to the childcare crisis. Robert shared that our role is to listen to the priorities of local leadership and support where we can.
- Attended the virtual kickoff meeting of the Regional Energy Collaborative (REC), a partnership with the City, County, School System, PWC, Ft. Liberty, and MC-COG on 2/6/25
- The Commercial Real Estate Broker Breakfast - February 11th
- The Transportation & Logistics Committee will have its first meeting on March 7th, speaking about I-685
- The Plant Manager's Association is meeting in March or April – working with plant leaders to find a suitable date

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## **Can Do Performance Financing Program**

- Over 100 unique applications as of 2/7/2025
- Applicants who did qualify (location, non-profit, etc.) were told and were referred to other partners for assistance and support
- 56 inquiries have moved on to the second screening process. o Applicants were sent a Project Summary form, asking questions that align with the scoring system in place to determine funding eligibility
  - o Due back Thursday, 2/13/25 at 5:00pm
  - o An internal review will take place next week, with responses due to Project Summary candidates by 2/21/25
  - o FCEDC is working to set the first Can Do Loan Committee date

## **5.2 Marketing and Communications:**

Brittany Tschida shared an update on FCEDC's Marketing and Communications activities. She also shared the January 2025 Analytics

- **Marketing Updates**
  - o Triangle Business Journal connection
  - o Clear Channel Airport Advertising meeting
  - o Submitted Fayetteville/Cumberland County as a Great American Defense Community
- **Marketing Ongoing Projects**
  - o Website – Resource Page & SMS Sign-up
  - o CMMC Event – Tentative Date 3/25/25
  - o FCEDC 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Plan
  - o Events Flyers & Marketing Plan
  - o Project Tight curtain donation for Western North Carolina

## **5.3 Upcoming Events**

- o February 20: Chamber Coffee Club – Segra Stadium
- o February 21-22: SIOR Carolinas Conference, Charleston, SC
- o February 23-25: IEDC Leadership Summit, Washington D.C.
- o February 27: GFBJ Power Breakfast with Tom Barkin from the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond
- o March 2-4: NCEDA Spring Conference/Site Selectors, Pinehurst, NC

## **6.0 Items for Board Discussion**

### **6.1 Strategic Initiatives & Efforts in 2025**

- Next Generation Workforce –Working Group Underway
- Megasite Development – Option on largest ownership group in development – seeking state grant funds to support
- I-685 Effort – Providing active strategic leadership

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- Black Voices History Museum – 120 days out from study complete
- Can Do Carolina Grant Fund – 56 applications moving forward for second review
- Grant Management for Project Aero
- HR Talent Portal – Preparing Voucher for HUD
- Aggressively pursue the Army Innovation Lab project

**7.0 Director's Round Table** – Board discussed possible implications of new Federal Policies and what we are doing here in the community to support contractors as they deal with CMMC requirements

**8.0 Closed Session** – no closed session was required.

**9.0 Adjournment**

**Action:** A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Vice Chairman Timothy Bryant and seconded by Ferd Irizarry at 9:03 am.

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 am.

**Next Meeting: March 13th, 2025 at 8:00am**