
Fayetteville-Cumberland County Economic Development Corporation

Board of Directors Meeting
June 26, 2025 / 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM
201 Hay Street, Suite 401-A
Fayetteville, NC 28301

MINUTES

- Members Present:** Chairwoman Kathryn Cox, Vice Chair Timothy Bryant, Treasurer Carl Manning, County Chairman Kirk deViere, Mayor Mitch Colvin, Bill Hedgepeth, Ferd Irizarry, Dr. Brian Krakover, Kristie Allen
- Ex-Officios Present:** None
- Members Absent:** County Manager Clarence Grier, City Manager Doug Hewett, Dr. Mark Sorrells, Joshua Choi
- Staff Present:** Robert Van Geons, Rob Patton, Jennifer Hammond, Brittany Odom, Chela Scott, Genesis Merced Rosa
- Visitors/Guests:** Kelly Strickland
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1.0 Call to Order and Welcome

Chairwoman Kathryn Cox called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Quorum: Yes

2.0 Approval of/or Adjustments to the Agenda

Action: Bill Hedgepeth made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Carl Manning.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

3.0 Organizational Business

3.1. Approval of May 8th, 2025 Minutes

Action: Vice Chair Timothy Bryant made a motion to approve the May 8th, 2025, minutes. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Carl Manning.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

3.2. Approval of April 2025 Financials

Robert Van Geons presented the Board with the April financials.

Action: Bill Hedgepeth made a motion to approve the April financials. The motion was seconded by Ferd Irizarry.

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Vote: Unanimous in favor.

3.3. Approval of May 2025 Financials

Action: The approval of May financials was deferred to the August meeting, pending further review and correction.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

3.4. Proposed External Leadership Advisory Committee

Robert Van Geons proposed the creation of an External Leadership Advisory Committee, which would meet quarterly to discuss economic development needs, strategies & policies. The Board unanimously endorsed the idea and recommended the membership include:

- Mayor of Fayetteville & City Manager
- Chairman of the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners & County Manager
- Chairman of the PWC Board & General Manager
- President of Cape Fear Valley Regional Hospital
- Chair of the Cumberland County BOE & Superintendent
- President of FTCC & Chancellors of FSU and Methodist
- Ft. Bragg Garrison Commander
- Plant Managers Association President, Transportation & Logistics Chair
- CVB President and TDA Chair

3.5 Becoming a Center for Applied Innovation – Guest Speaker at August Meeting

Mr. Van Geons provided an overview of the innovation focused efforts underway, across our community. This included an update regarding progress at 611 W. Russell Street as well as developing partnerships with defense technology partners including AFCEA, AIC and others. The Board agreed it would be beneficial to hear from Mr. Dean Hoffman, President & Cofounder of Accel Innovation Corporation, at the August Board meeting.

3.6. FY 2026 Officer Elections

The board discussed the officer vacancies for the upcoming 2026 fiscal year. Chairwoman Kathryn Cox nominated Bill Hedgepeth as Board Treasurer, and Carl Manning as the Board Secretary. Chairwoman Cox and Vice-Chairman Bryant were nominated to retain their current positions.

Action: Mayor Mitch Colvin made a motion to approve Chairwoman Kathryn Cox's nominations. Chairman Kirk deViere seconded that motion.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

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4.0 Program of Work Update

4.1. Project Pipeline – Robert Van Geons presented the Board with the June infographic. Rob Patton presented the FCEDC Project Pipeline; FCEDC has generated 74 projects and 16 project visits since January 2025.

4.2. Major Project Developments – Rob Patton presented updates on projects Tribe, Steppenwolf, Rankin, Queens Carbon and Bucket 2. The project industry sectors include chemicals, apparel, life sciences, and furnishings.

5.0 Reports and Analytics

5.1. Existing Industry Report – Jennifer Hammon shared that there were 5 Existing Industry Visits in June: Cinterra, Carolina Handling, Phillips Towing, Systel, and Fayetteville Steel.

Progress Towards Annual Goals: 33 visits through 6/20/25, plus 16 meaningful private sector companies in attendance at the Major Employers event.

- Major Private Employers: 10/25
- Manufacturing: 13/30
- Defense: 5/30
- Distribution/Logistics: 8/20
- Operations/Business Services: 9/20

Meetings & Events:

- Business Support Network: July 16th at 8:30 am at FCEDC
- Transportation & Logistics Committee: 3rd Quarter Meeting will be held at Walmart Distribution Center, date TBD

Major Employers Reception Recap:

- 53 attendees (the weather caused last-minute cancellations)
- Attended by representatives from 16 different major private sector employers and 9 community partners
- Ted Abernathy’s presentation is available via PDD
- Thank you to Mayor Colvin and Chairman deViere for welcoming and connecting with our private-sector partners

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Updates:

- Alpek/Clear Path Recycling Facility Closure
 - 180 affected employees
 - Plant will cease operations at both on-site locations on July 31, 2025
 - On-site Job Fair with NCWorks on June 25th
- Happy 1-year anniversary, NVR (June 26th)
- Fayetteville Steel: New Ownership
- Keeco: Rebranding as Live Comfortably
- Kemin Industries: New owners of the Nitta Gelatin facility, with operations expected to commence in early 2027. They will be manufacturing dog and cat food at the facility.
- Manufacturing Week: September 29 – October 3
 - 7 local manufacturing operations are coordinating plant tours for students at all 10 traditional CCS High Schools (MANN+HUMMEL, Eaton, Chemours, Kuraray, Rollease, NVR, Myron)
 - Speakers in the Manufacturing Industry and from the Fayetteville HBA will be visiting all in-person middle schools, talking about career opportunities in manufacturing
 - Engage elementary school students with suggested “Brain Break” activities that allow them to work in groups to manufacture a widget
 - SBTDC will be hosting events centered around manufacturing support – more to come
 - City and County proclamations will be issued

5.2. Marketing & Communications – Brittany Odom presented Marketing updates and the April Analytics.

Marketing & Communications Updates:

- Recently Attended
 - Financial Times Festival Event
 - SelectUSA Investment Summit
 - NCEDA Tech Event w/ Lenovo
 - NC Tech State of Tech Exponential
 - Business NC Power List 2025 Reception
 - Area Development Spring Forum

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- NCEDA Annual Conference
- Announced Homemakers Furniture Closing & Can Do Finalists
- Sponsored June Events: Area Development in Savannah & NCEDA in Wilmington

Marketing & Communications Ongoing Projects:

- New Building Event – Fall timeframe
- Ordering FCEDC Swag Items
- FY 25-26 Event Plan
- Website – Resource Page & SMS Sign-up
- FCEDC 10th Anniversary Celebration Plan
 - Various events throughout the week
 - Potential Keynote Speaker – David Nour

Upcoming Events:

* Pending due to recent events

- July 22: EDPNC Go Global Road Show – Fayetteville Technical Community College
- July 29 – 30: AUVSI Drone & AAM Policy Symposium – Washington, D.C.
- *August 2 – 9: Israel Consulate of Atlanta Trip
- August 20: Site Selectors Guild Virtual Table Talk
- August 20 – 22: SIOR Regional Conference – Lake Oconee, GA
- August 25 – 27: AUVSI Pathfinder Symposium – Huntsville, AL
- September 10: IEEE IWRC AI & Autonomy – Grand Forks, ND
- September 14 – 17: IEDC Annual Conference – Detroit, MI

5.3. Special Projects Updates

Chela Scott presented the Board with the Special Projects updates.

Extension requests were approved, providing additional time to complete the Black Voices Museum Project. Work will be completed by October 31, 2025

- Cumberland County approved the project extension through October 31, 2025 and the release of the remaining funds
- In June, the City of Fayetteville approved an identical request.

Chela provided a summary of the new monthly cost per employee for insurance and payroll benefits versus our previous providers.

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- Current cost with ADP: \$1,594.06
- Estimated cost with Callahan & Rice Insurance: \$563.30
 - Estimated savings: ~ &50,000 annually
- Continental Tax Services has a monthly processing fee of \$275

5.4 Can Do Performance Financing Program

Two candidates received a total of \$425,000 in Round 1 Can Do Performance Financing Funding at the June 9th City Council Meeting

- Ashley Johnson of A&A Holdings Corporation: \$125,000 award, creating 5 jobs
 - Latisha Perkins of Maybridge Development, LLC: \$300,000 phased award, creating 8 jobs in Phase 1 and 4 jobs in Phase 2
 - Incentive agreements are being finalized for execution
 - Information Session held June 25, 2025
 - Round 2 application period is open from June 26th – July 11th
- Next Steps:
- Finalizing incentive agreements
 - Reviewing Round 2 applications as they are submitted

6.0 Items for Board Discussion

6.1 Strategic Initiatives

Items of Note

- Preparing a revised City/County Incentive Policy for discussion that adds parameters for “transformative projects”.
- GoldenLeaf - Closing out Sand Hills Road grant
- GoldenLeaf - Airport Lift Station – Bids received
- SEDC Board Reappointment and EDA Grant Application
- Option agreement in hand for largest Megasite parcel(s)
- HR Talent Portal Funding
- Next Gen Workforce Initiative – Upcoming trip to Durham and RTP
- Project Aero meetings with Federal Delegation

6.2 Balanced Scorecard: Robert presented the Board with the current Balanced Scorecard.

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7.0 Directors' Round Table – No additional discussion.

8.0 Closed Session – A closed session was not held during this meeting.

9.0 Adjournment

Action: Bill Hedgepeth made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Treasurer Carl Manning seconded that motion.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Next Meeting: August 14th, 2025 at 8:00 a.m.