

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, January 15th, 2025, 8:30 a.m.
MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Board for the City of Daytona Beach, Florida, was held on Wednesday, January 15th, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. in the Commission Chambers of City Hall, located at 301 S. Ridgewood Avenue, Daytona Beach, Florida.

1. Call to Order:

Ms. Kilian called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

2. Roll Call:

Present: Carol Kilian

Harry Lloyd

Derrick Harris

Ex-officio: Brad Harris, Volusia County Economic Development

Keith Norden, Director of Business Development

Nancy Keefer, President & CEO, Daytona Regional Chamber of Commerce

Staff: Jeff Brown-Economic and Strategic Opportunities Director

3. Approval of Minutes:

A quorum was not present, so a motion to approve the minutes could not be made.

4. Reports:

a) Volusia County Economic Development:

Mr. Brad Harris introduced the Volusia Innovation Challenge, a new event for the county. While the challenge itself has been around for over a decade for college students, this version focuses on the entire community by adding "Volusia" to the name.

The event is a county-wide pitch competition, similar to Shark Tank, open to residents and students aged 18 and older. It will be held at the Ocean Center. Applications open on January 6th and close on January 31st. Between January and March 27th, judges will review applications and select finalists who will give live presentations at the Ocean Center on March 27th.

The goal of the challenge is to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship within the community while providing exposure for local business ideas. Even applicants who don't make it to the finals can participate in a showcase at the Ocean Center, giving everyone a chance to present their ideas.

He stated that they've issued press releases, included the event in the Volusia County Economic Division newsletter, and worked with partners who have shared it in their newsletters as well. As a result, notices are being sent out almost weekly. They are also promoting the event on social media.

b) Team Volusia Economic Development Corporation:

Mr. Norden shared several plans for the first quarter of 2025, expressing excitement about the upcoming events. One highlight is SpaceCom, an international and national space industry show scheduled for the last week of January at the Orange County Convention Center. He encouraged local practitioners to attend, noting that they have secured a well-placed exhibit booth and will host 15 Australian companies returning to the region after previous visits to Central Florida and Space Florida. Mr. Norden emphasized that participants don't need a launchpad to benefit from the event, as it brings together companies supporting the space industry. He added that this is their fourth year participating and that they are proud to offer this opportunity to local municipalities.

Looking ahead to March 13th, Mr. Norden mentioned their annual meeting at the Mori Hosseini Center at Daytona State College, where Secretary of Commerce J. Alex Culley will serve as the keynote speaker. Additionally, he discussed the Site Selectors Guild Annual Meeting, which will take place in Orlando the same week. This event, sponsored by regional organizations, utility companies, and Florida Commerce, will feature a pre-event hosting 60 consultants from around the world. Mr. Norden explained that this is a valuable opportunity for Florida and Central Florida to connect with international site selectors.

Mr. Norden also shared other updates. In November, he was one of six economic developers in Florida invited to join Governor DeSantis on an international mission, while Rodney Cruise represented Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He also announced the addition of a new manager of business development and research, who has 10 years of experience with CareerSource Central Florida in Orlando. Mr. Norden plans to introduce him at a future meeting.

Separately, Mr. Derek Harris spoke about his recent visit to Wichita, Kansas, where he learned that Volusia County's efforts in aviation and related initiatives are gaining attention.

c) Daytona Beach Regional Chamber of Commerce:

Ms. Keefer shared updates on the Chamber's recent activities and upcoming plans. She noted that Advocacy Director David Robinson presented the Chamber's position against moratoriums to the County Council.

While there is momentum for economic growth and solutions to issues like flooding, she explained that new regulations related to development and redevelopment are being considered.

At the school board meeting, the Chamber was represented by the Vice President of Resource Development, who introduced the Readers to Leaders program. This initiative, developed from a leadership class, is focused on improving third-grade reading scores through a collaborative effort.

Ms. Keefer announced the Chamber's annual meeting, scheduled for February 6th at the News-Journal Center, where they will bring people downtown and introduce their new Chairman of the Board, Michael Sznajstajler. She added that the Chamber has completed its strategic plan, which will be published soon. Under Michael Sznajstajler's leadership, they will also visit Tallahassee before the Florida Chamber's legislative event on February 10-11.

In March, the Eggs and Issues program will feature Mayor Henry delivering the State of the City address on the second Thursday of the month. Additionally, Ms. Keefer shared plans for the annual Volusia Days event, scheduled for March 31st to April 1st. During this event, a group of 60 participants, including representatives from all Volusia County chambers and business leaders, will visit Tallahassee to ensure Volusia County's priorities are heard at the state level.

Ms. Kilian encouraged board members to attend the Eggs and Issues meeting. Ms. Keefer clarified that it will take place on March 13th at the Yacht Club and assured that she will coordinate with Mr. Brown to send out invitations to the board.

d) Economic and Strategic Opportunities Report:

Mr. Brown provided updates on several topics, including the CO report and the TRT report. He noted that while there are no applications yet, staff is seeing many initial discussions about proposed developments.

In December, the city commission received a report from Sports Facilities Companies, a group the city hired to assess the potential development of 600 acres behind the First Step Shelter into a sports complex. The report proposed building an indoor field house for activities such as basketball, volleyball, and wrestling, as well as 16 outdoor synthetic grass fields. It also outlined a long-term plan to replace the current stadium with a new one that would offer better accessibility.

Mr. Brown mentioned that he recently met with the communications team, which has brought on a marketing expert to begin developing materials to attract investors for the sports complex project. He explained that the development will likely occur in phases, depending on financing and investor interest in specific aspects of the project.

Additionally, Mr. Brown shared that a meeting is scheduled for Friday with an out-of-town developer who is interested in exploring properties and potential developments.

5. Old Business:

None.

6. New Business:

Mr. Sznajstajler provided an update on the Brownfield Advisory Board. Ms. Jessica Gow discussed the first Brownfield site at 645 N. Atlantic Ave., the first beachside property to join Florida's Brownfield Redevelopment Program. This site is an operational gas station with historical contamination from previously removed storage tanks. In May 2022, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) approved a modified remedial action plan. The site is currently in the post-injection sampling and groundwater monitoring phase, with plans to submit a closure plan to FDEP soon. Ms. Gow noted that this site is adjacent to the Renaissance Hotel redevelopment, with zoning designated as Business Retail (BR-1), tying it into the area's broader redevelopment plans.

The second Brownfield site at 833 W. ISB is owned by Bethune-Cookman University. Environmental issues stem from its previous use as an auto repair facility. Site assessments began in summer 2022 and continued through 2023. In 2024, FDEP approved a request to discontinue groundwater monitoring, opting to use the existing surface as an engineering control. The redevelopment plan aims to achieve closure and allow continued use of the university buildings.

The third site is 218 W. ISB, the former First Baptist Church site, currently undergoing Brownfield review and remediation. This site is part of the Delta West project, which includes a mixed-use redevelopment plan approved in 2019 and amended recently by the City of Daytona Beach. Construction is scheduled to start in the first quarter of 2025.

Mr. Sznajstajler also discussed new Brownfield sites for 2024–2025. One is the Bay Street Brownfield site, adjacent to 218 W. ISB, commonly known as the Burgoyne Block. Extensive soil and groundwater testing have been conducted, with plans to use the existing impervious surface as an engineering control. The second site is the former Clyde Morris landfill, where the City of Daytona Beach has been the responsible party for cleanup. In December, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University agreed to join as a responsible party to help develop a cleanup plan.

Mr. Brown added that staff discussions are focusing on addressing affordable housing needs in light of anticipated job growth. In 2024, Boeing announced 400 engineering jobs with starting salaries around \$100,000, and Aura Aero announced 1,000 jobs, including 600 engineering and manufacturing roles with starting salaries near \$70,000. The challenge is ensuring that new developments provide housing attractive to these employees to retain them in the community

and counter the allure of nearby cities like Orlando. This is essential to prevent local economic growth from benefiting other regions.

Mr. Brown also addressed the proposed sports complex, emphasizing its dual purpose: generating economic development and offering a community facility for residents. The team has involved the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) in the review process to ensure the sports complex complements the Ocean Center rather than competing with it. The goal is to make the facility accessible to residents at little or no cost.

7. Public Comment Period:

Mr. Derek Harris shared that approximately 30% of the businesses he works with involve individuals relocating to the area, often working remotely. These individuals are drawn to the favorable weather and find the current rental prices affordable. However, Mr. Harris pointed out that workers in industries such as restaurants struggle to afford the same rent, emphasizing the need to create housing options that accommodate their income levels.

Mr. Harris also highlighted the upcoming Martin Luther King Jr. celebrations. The festivities begin with a scholarship banquet at the Hard Rock Hotel on Saturday, January 18th, at 4:00 PM, where several scholarships will be awarded, with each recipient receiving \$3,500–\$4,000.

On Sunday, January 19th, the "Seven Words from the King" event will take place, where seven speakers will each deliver a five-minute reflection on different excerpts from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speeches. This event will also start at 4:00 PM.

The celebrations continue on Monday, January 20th, with a breakfast at 8:00 AM at the Charles Cherry Center. Following the breakfast, a march will commence at 9:45 AM, starting from the Cherry Center, looping through Bethune-Cookman University, and concluding at Daisy Stocking Park. The day will culminate with a large MLK Festival at the park, bringing the community together to honor Dr. King's legacy.

8. Scheduled Next Meeting: The next EDAB meeting is scheduled for February 19th, 2025

9. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Transcribed by: Chernecia Stuart