

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, April 16th, 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, April 16th, 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:

Mr. Rand called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. Roll Call:

Present:

Bob Rand
Harry Lloyd
Christos Mavronas
Chris Bowler
Derrick Harris
Ruth Trager

Ex-officio: Lou Paris, Volusia County Economic Development
Nancy Keefer, Daytona Beach Regional Chamber of Commerce

Staff: Jeff Brown-Economic and Strategic Opportunities Director

3. Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the minutes from March 19th 2025 by Ms. Trager, seconded by Mr. Lloyd. The motion was carried 6-0.

4. Reports:

a) Volusia County Economic Development:

Mr. Paris shared that last night, the County Council approved their proposal to take over the management of the Volusia County Business Incubator. They are excited about this change and are grateful for the contributions of the UCF Business Incubation Program, which played an important role in building the local business ecosystem.

He explained that they began to see the need to expand services to a broader range of businesses. This led to conversations with UCF, where they realized they were asking the program to move beyond its usual scope. As a result, they began discussing the idea of managing the incubator themselves, in a way that would be more responsive to the needs of the business community.

Mr. Paris said they now have a strong new plan that will allow them to work with any business that wants to grow. The program will be more education-focused, with a structured process that builds learning into every step.

In terms of outreach, Mr. Paris said he hopes that by highlighting all the partners within Volusia Business Resources, they will be able to create greater awareness and strengthen support for businesses across the region.

b) Team Volusia Economic Development Corporation:

None.

c) Daytona Regional Chamber of Commerce:

Ms. Keefer shared that things are very busy in Tallahassee right now, and they are closely following a lot of early bills. One major focus is on preparing the future workforce by making sure kids are ready for school, particularly at the right reading and math levels.

She mentioned that a lot of tort reform changes from the last session are being challenged, and they are working to make sure progress continues. Some of the tort reform helped lower insurance costs, and they expect to see more of its impact over the next year. Ms. Keefer emphasized that undoing these reforms would hurt efforts to stabilize the market.

She also noted that the business rent tax might finally be removed, which would be a big help for the business community.

Locally, she said that tonight they will present an alternative plan regarding linkage fees, aiming to find a sustainable solution for affordable housing that can provide a steady source of funding for the community's needs.

Ms. Keefer announced that next week, on April 24th, they will be holding a groundbreaking ceremony for Exalt Health, a new rehabilitation hospital opening on Clyde Morris Boulevard. She also reminded everyone that the next Eggs & Issues event will be held on May 8th, featuring Secretary Perdue, who will speak about transportation issues.

Finally, she shared that the Welcome Back Legislative Breakfast in June will be moved to Embury-Riddle due to the growing size of the event's audience.

d) Economic and Strategic Opportunities Report:

Mr. Brown announced that the portal for Biketober Fest is now open and will remain open until April 28th. He also shared that on May 14th, the City Commission will hold a workshop to discuss Biketober Fest and Bike Week guidelines, with the goal of having them approved by this summer.

Regarding the CO report, Mr. Brown said that 194 units were approved in March, with a total construction value of almost \$39 million. Since the first quarter is now complete, he plans to prepare a chart comparing the number of COs issued in the first quarters of 2024 and 2025, to show how trends are developing. He will present this data at the next meeting.

On the TRT report, Mr. Brown explained that March had fewer projects because there were two weeks without any meetings.

He also shared that they have been working with the IT team to finalize the application discussed at the last meeting, which is designed for businesses with under 50 employees. He hopes to have the final draft ready for presentation at the next meeting.

Mr. Lloyd asked for an update on the Avalon project. Mr. Brown responded that they have not yet received a start date for construction, but discussions are ongoing about phasing and development on the north side of the project. Mr. Rand also asked for a general update on Avalon Park.

Mr. Rand encouraged board members to attend the City Commission meeting tonight, emphasizing its importance as linkage fees will be discussed. He expressed concerns that the fees could hurt business development since they are based on new construction to fund workforce housing. Ms. Keefer added that linkage fees are not a sustainable long-term solution for funding affordable housing, and that other options need to be explored.

5. Old Business:

None.

6. New Business:

None.

7. Public Comment Period:

None.

8. Scheduled Next Meeting: The next EDAB meeting is scheduled for May 21st, 2025

9. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Transcribed by: Chernecia Stuart