

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, June 20, 2012 Minutes  
1:00p.m. – Conference Room 4

Committee Members Present: Richard Cyr, Jim Gant, Tom Lennox,  
Councilman Bill Harkins, *Ex-Officio*,  
John Salazar, Terry Ennis

Absent: Peter Parrott

Town Staff Present: Charles Cousins, Director of Community Development  
Shawn Colin, Comprehensive Planning Division Manager

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**1) CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Gant called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**2) FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**

Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

**3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Economic Development Committee minutes of June 13, 2012 were approved as presented.

**4) NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Gant began the meeting by asking “What role should this proposed entity have in existing areas and properties?” After some discussion, the members stated that this entity will be focusing on economic *renewal*. What this entity is going to do is very specific:

1. Taking care of what we have. 2. Rejuvenate. 3. Attract what is new.

In preparing the report that this Committee will deliver to Town Council describing what the entity is about it should connote the level of economic activities. “Encourage, develop and support the local economic renewal required to sustain or enhance the quality of life on Hilton Head Island.”

Mr. Ennis reviewed the Economic Development Exemplar Synthesis that he and Mr. Colin put together. It is comprised of examples of what others have done; not to copy but to learn from them. In reviewing up to 16 places (websites) we came across many similarities.

**Some Key Characteristics:**

- Businesses: plan, execute, renew
- There needs to be a lot of coordination activity. The state, county, and other jurisdictions are involved. Have a team of advisors.
- One stop shop for information, direction and guidance.

- The better models instead of building a building and putting out a shingle, it is done virtually.
- Need to have the skills and the people to do the work.

The City of Naples had created an economic development council. They had a bricks and mortar arrangement. That didn't work and so it was dissolved. They went back and focused on redevelopment as the catalyst for private sector investment. The goal is to continue to grow from a retirement community to a business and innovation leader. Mr. Ennis stated that it might be worth having a conference call with them.

Some Learnings:

- The entity must be visible and accessible (phone, website, direct contact).
- Communication/Buy in of Community.
- How do you sell change to a large group of people? Should start out with the premise that status quo is not an option and why. Trend line in tourism money being spent is not where it should be.
- One stop shop concept.
- Clear objectives: Know what you are doing. You have to know what Hilton Head Island is and focus on that.

What this entity should do:

1. Establish visibility for economic renewal for Hilton Head Island; a website, phone, any items that say we are interested in economic renewal, come talk to us.

In concert with the Town the entity should work to create an environment that focuses on existing business and ongoing expansion; new business will find us; and create an environment that promotes active recruiting of businesses to our town.

What is needed in toolkit? – to be determined.

What functions should this entity perform?:

- What do we want to do and accomplish?
- Quality of jobs, total payroll and the sector.
- Need to be continually accessing barriers in the community and eliminate those barriers.
- This entity's largest customer will be existing business. Viewed as a positive trustworthy resource. Develop chemistry. Feeds into the types of skills we need. People make it successful. Reach out to existing business community. What those businesses need in order to grow.
- Marketing research role - what is the market today and where is it going.
- Visibility, marketing accessibility, coordination
- Communication, education and buy in community, bulk of this entity has to communicate well with prospects and the community.
- One stop shop
- Strategic alliance does six things: visibility, conduit, lead management, deal broker, policy definition advocacy, proactive.
- Know level of authority; know the other players, accountability for the deal.
- As a prospect: What are the rules of confidentiality and how am I protected?
- Should this entity have a role in identifying areas for redevelopment? And prioritize those things?

- Create a liaison function with this entity.
- Should this entity be involved in creating an atmosphere that motivates owners of abandoned property?
- Contact these owners and give them incentives and motivations to make their property work economically.

Chairman Gant stated that he will put the information received today and put it into an outline. At next week's meeting we will finalize what we think the entity should do.

**5) ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Submitted by Eileen Wilson

Approved by: June 27, 2012  
Jim Gant, Chairman