



**Centralina Economic Development Commission
Board Meeting
January 21, 2010**

Commission Members Present

Keith Arbuckle
Mark Brady
Astrid Chirinos
George Dunlap
Ron Leeper

Jonathan Marshall
Jeanie Moore
Jim Puckett
Joel Randolph
Bill Thunberg

Guest

Mike Rowand, Duke Energy
Thorne Martin, Gastonia (Alternate for Michelle Nance)

Centralina Staff Present

Laura Mundell, Director, CED
Al Sharp, Executive Director, Centralina COG
Victoria Rittenhouse, Program Assistant, CED
Jason Wager, Planner III, Planning

1. *Call to Order:*

Bill Thunberg calls the meeting to order at 4:10PM.

2. *Around the region*

Keith Arbuckle: Waiting to see what happens with the health care reform bill.

Joel Randolph: Point out to all residents and builders in Mecklenburg County that there is a tax amendment for a height ordinance for residential, and I suggest that all residents take a serious look into the amendment.

George Dunlap: Mecklenburg County fortunate to have several new companies to the area, Electrolux and Husqvarna and one still in the works.

On the negative side: The projections for building permits in 2010 shows a \$25 million short fall, but we still have some time to make up for that.

Bill Thunberg: Lake Norman Regional Transportation Commission has the Urban Land Institute coming for an event from Jan 25- Jan 29. They will be looking at transportation and land use.

Astrid Chirinos: We continue to work on the Eco Industrial Park for Mecklenburg County on the Catawba River. This will be the second largest remediation of Superfund land in the U.S. The project is going to be called Re-Venture Park.

Ron Leeper: I serving on the NC Economic Development Board and we are working together to create jobs, to improve the economy and bring in innovations. We are very excited about some of the things to come.

On the construction side we are starting to see a little bit of light at the end of the tunnel.

Mark Brady: In Mooresville area Lake Norman, the economy is still slow, real estate market not bouncing back at all. If you are trying to sell a house in the \$850,000 and up, there is no movement. The sector that is doing well \$150,000-\$175,000 there is some activity going on in that area. We need jobs to bounce back once we begin to recover the jobs banking will come back, but it will never be like it used to be.

Thorne Martin: The City of Gastonia is currently focusing on downtown development/improvement. We are offering various generous incentives for business owners.

Jonathan Marshall: Overseeing the Building Inspection Division Cabarrus County we see we were comparing permitting from 2008 to 2009 for the last six months and 2009 was actually worse than 2008. We are starting to see a little turn around in the non-residential. Most recently we have had to adjust our staffing level in Inspections and most recently we have to move some folks around as well as lay-off several employees.

Jim Puckett: Manufacturing sector continues to wait just like everybody else, there was a little movement towards the end o the year.

Jeanie Moore: at Rowan Cabarrus Community College it looks like enrollment has increased 18%-19% over last spring's enrollment. In two years we have grow by around 40% on our credit side (degrees, diplomas and certificates) In the non-credit side we have likely grown about 15% over the previous year. It is a lot to absorb with a shrinking budget; we are doing more with less.

We have two new building opening this year one with be at our North Campus in Salisbury, which will primarily be a continuing education building for workforce development and outreach to the community and the other building will be opening on the NC Research Campus and will be open for classes in August 2010 for our BioTech programs.

Al Sharp: Workforce Development has more money but they depend on the Community Colleges to do the job training. The Title V which is the Older American Act, is really seeing hardship cases, these are unemployed older citizens over 55 are effectively desperate they are coming in to take a training job of 20 hours a week irrespective of what their background was. At the beginning of Title V these were homemakers coming back into the workforce, now we are seeing a full slice of everyone.

As bad as it may be here we are still seeing the population grow, people are moving into the Charlotte area because of our reputation for a job center and because they have better hopes of employment here than in WV, OH, or MI, so we are seeing this as a trend. So when the economy opens back up this will be a resource of skilled qualified people.

The CCOG kicked off a Regional Transportation Study to engage the 7 planning organizations on transportation in the metropolitan area. We are finding that everyone understands there must be collaboration within the region in order to get our fair share of resources for the region's transportation projects.

The Centralina Board of Delegates has established a Blue Ribbon Panel to look at CCOG in the future. We have completed a listed of 7 years goals and it is now time to focus on the future. If would like to participate on the panel please contact myself or Laura. The question is what can CCOG do in the future and how can it best serve the region.

3. Action: Approval of the Minutes

George Dunlap: Motion to approve the minutes

Ron Leeper: Seconds the motion
All approve

MOTION APPROVED

4. Next Steps for automotive supplies: Positioning the region to supply parts for electric cars.

Report from Jason Wager, Centralina Council of Governments and Mike Rowand, Duke Energy:

Jason Wager: Coordinator for the Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition, promoting alternative fuel, vehicles or any transportation technology that reduces dependency on petroleum, where it can help improve air quality and bring domestic investment.

What we want to discuss today is Electric Vehicles (EV), for the first time we are seeing OEM coming out with plans for mass production of EV's. We are looking at the EV industry consisting of three parts the vehicle, the battery and the charging infrastructure, which provides the energy for the vehicle. We recently put feelers out to see who in the region was doing what to get ready for the E what we found that there were several industries as well as public sector interest around EVs.

What were are going to see in late 2010 early 2011 Nissan will put out there version of the EV. All EV manufactures are looking for areas that are ready for their vehicles; that is do they have the inspection process in place, are there charging stations available. Typically 80% of your charging is done at home the other 20% of charging is public or opportunity charging which may occur at work or other areas.

Mike Rowand: The last couple of years Duke Energy has been focusing on the EV. The automakers will have these vehicles out later this year early next year. There have been talks

about making NC an early adoption state for the EV. We are trying to prepare the electric grid so that these vehicles can deliver as advertised. There are a lot of things a region needs to look at to be ready for the EV. How does a region become ready for early adoption of these vehicles? There are some financial things, but really there are a lot of non-financial items to be prepared for. Such as incentives, inspection processes; how do you stream line that customer experience.

So far we have found that Mecklenburg County has the best in class in the country for streamlining the inspection and permitting process for routine type installations of the charging infrastructure. Auto suppliers in the regions supply chain have an opportunity to participate in EV, if we can get the first round market here. On the public side we have public infrastructure that is needed, charging station, home charging and inspection processes.

5. *Appointment of nomination committee for CEDC officers*

Keith Arbuckle
Mark Brady
Joe Carpenter

6. *Logistics: Next Steps*

Laura Mundell: Brief overview of CEDC's role with Logistics, several years ago we identified the logistics industry as one of the key priority areas for the region. Two years ago we worked with members of the industry to create the Logistics Alliance of the Carolinas. This is a virtual collaboration.

One other thing that has recently occurred is the Governor has appointed a Logistic Taskforce. Logistics is a key industry in our region we are a distribution center. Log is closely tied to Advanced Manufacturing.

Topic to focus on today is freight (See Attachment A: Freight Presentation PP)

Motion: To proceed in planning and exploring match funding for and EDA application for a Regional Freight Mobility plan Phase I

Jim Puckett: Motion to approve the minutes

Keith Arbuckle: Seconds the motion

All approve

MOTION APPROVED

7. *Report on Advanced Manufacturing Website:*

www.mindsthatmanufacture.com we went through the website and demonstrated features of the new website.

8. *CEDC Meeting Dates*

See Attachment 2: Report to the Board

9. *Update on finding a match for the EDA Revolving Loan Fund*

We are continuing our efforts to find a match for this program

10. *National Transportation Week*

LAC has continued interest in participation in National Transportation week which is the third week in May. The group would like to hold an event, the City of Charlotte and the regional transportation planning organizations are supporting this event.

11. Ron Leeper: Motion to adjourn

Joel Randolph: Seconds the motion

MOTION APPROVED

Adjourn: 5:50PM