

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
September 14, 2021

Orange County Economic Development Office
131 W. Margaret Lane
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Minutes

Members Present: Estella Johnson, Kristen Young, Sharon Hill, Johnny Morris, Dave Gephart, Kevin Thomas, Tom Proctor, Jonna Foushee, Jane Saiers

Orange County Staff: Steve Brantley, Amanda Garner, Lindsey Hirni

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Johnny Morris at 4:13 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Sharon Hill and seconded by Estella Johnson to approve the Minutes from the July 21, 2021 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

The Economic Development department recently transitioned from an external website to the County's website. Amanda Garner presented the new website and highlighted some of the features, programs and information that will continue to be updated from within our department. Johnny Morris had a question about the current sites and buildings tab and offered a recommendation for a research platform that could help with more listings.

Steve spoke to the board about the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the funds that our department is requesting for business retention, expansion and recruitment over the next 4 years. Some of the board members had questions related to the first round of ARPA funds and the reason why there were no funds given to the Economic Development department.

A Motion was made by Kristen Young and seconded by Estella Johnson to draft a letter of support to the County Managers office from the Advisory Board for the Economic Development department ARPA funding request. The motion passed unanimously.

Steve spoke about the Long-Term Recovery plan that was developed by Hagerty Consulting including the phases and goals. He mentioned the department's connection to the economic recovery support function and shared the additional community partners that have been involved throughout the planning process. Steve presented the 4 strategies that were developed, these include: 1) Support our small businesses, 2) Identify barriers, 3) Collaborative marketing for local spending, and 4) Training programs to help with employment needs.

Steve spoke about a proposal to establish Advisory Board Strategic Priorities. Examples of previous priorities were shared with the committee such as Article 46 expenditures and the SWOT Analysis. Kristen Young suggested the board form a smaller group to discuss the Economic Development side of Article 46 and any report back to the full advisory board results of these conversations.

Director's Report

Steve presented some new maps and an update on current project activity within the county.

Adjournment

Johnny Morris adjourned the meeting at 5:30 P.M.