

**MINUTES OF NORTH BREVARD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE (NBEDZ)
SPECIAL DISTRICT BOARD, GOVERNING BODY OF THE SPACEPORT
COMMERCE PARK AUTHORITY**

February 10, 2023 @ 8:30 a.m.

Statham Park
7101 U.S. Highway One
Titusville, Florida 32780

Board Members:

In Attendance: Dan Aton, Rodney Honeycutt, Robert Jordan, George Mikitarian, and Donn Mount

Telephone: Dr. Brenda Fettrow

Absent: Bart Gaetjens, Donn Mount, and Stan Retz

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by George Mikitarian, Chair

Pledge of Allegiance: Dan Diesel, Mayor, City of Titusville

George Mikitarian, Chair, introduced the newest board member, Edna Wilson, who was appointed by the City of Titusville to replace Al Matroni.

Ms. Wilson stated she is excited to serve the City and it is a great honor; and she thanked the board for the privilege to join the NBEDZ board.

Troy Post, CEcD, CBE, NBEDZ Executive Director, stated this will be a different meeting today; several months ago it was discussed that there is a need to look at the Strategic Plan, which was first approved in 2012; in 2018, the board assembled to do a five-year review of the Plan; and there was discussion but no changes were made to the Plan. He added that any ideas that come out of today's meeting will be provided to staff and the County Attorney's Office to come up with the language for the conceptual ideas; it will then come back to the Zone board to approve; and then to the Titusville City Council and the Board of County Commissioners to be ratified. He mentioned there is a way for the public to participate; if the public would like to make a comment, he asked they fill out a public comment card and it will be addressed in the meeting during the proper subject; and he added if anyone would like to have the PowerPoint Presentation, to please let him know and he will send it out individually.

I. Where We've Been

Troy Post, CEcD, CBE, NBEDZ Executive Director, reviewed the current Plan, which includes four components, Business Attraction and Retention, Redevelopment Program, Development of Pad-Ready Sites/Spec Building, and Small Business Attraction; and he mentioned he feels there is a fifth component, the Strategic Initiative for some projects that do not fit into any of the other categories. He added much has changed since 2012, which was a dire time; there was high unemployment and high foreclosure rates; the updated Economic Assessment Report shows improvement with low unemployment and foreclosure rates; however, in North Brevard, much of the land is Federally owned; the

population is about the same; and now the Kennedy Space Center is successful again. He advised what the board is trying to do today is to make sure that the policies and programs still apply to the conditions today; that is the responsibility of the board; the basic mission was to land jobs and stimulate the capital investment in the area; he reviewed the requirements to make modifications to the Plan; and he mentioned if at the end of the meeting, the board has some recommendations, but they are not the type of things that would be taken to the City Council or Commission, there still could be some ways to adjust the things that it cannot anticipate through the current language. He went over the different components of the Plan where some changes could be needed; and he reviewed the spreadsheet with NBEDZ projects from 2012 to 2022 and there was discussion of some of the success stories and job-creating projects.

II. Where We Are

Edgar Campo-Palafox, Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast (EDC), shared what is going on in the national picture in terms of economic development and the site-selection industry; he mentioned that the projects are received from several sources, such as the State of Florida, directly from the company, and site selectors; in 2022 the Site Selection Guild published a report and it asked what was one of the factors of greatest impact in current site selection focused on industrial projects; and he shared that the number one factor is workforce and labor availability. He discussed some of the other factors that are also impacting projects such as supply chain and infrastructure; this area is highly competitive, especially with the aerospace industry, as there is a need for pad-ready sites; and incentives from the State are getting harder to come by.

There was discussion amongst board members relating to the Zone board being able to help the EDC with recruiting the workforce.

Troy Post, CEcD, CBE, NBEDZ Executive Director, spoke about benchmarking, a way to compare the NBEDZ community against other communities; there is competition with other cities, here locally and nationally, and periodically, he compares North Brevard with other similar metro areas; the two that are typically referenced are Huntsville, Alabama and Colorado Springs, Colorado; the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) report showed North Brevard as number two in 2021, which is up from number 171 back in 2012; and he looks at the best practices that other areas may have as a way to improve NBEDZ practices. He added according to the Economic Assessment report, it shows this market area to be about 144,000 people; he made comparisons to North Brevard with Huntsville and Colorado Springs and noted NBEDZ is competing with Colorado Springs for Starcom, the training and readiness command for the Space Force; if this project came to the area, it would bring up to 1,500 military personnel and contractors; and he continued to review statistics from this year's report, showing North Brevard to be number five.

Neha Pandit, NBEDZ Economic Development Specialist, shared the information that was received through the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis and the results of the online survey that included stakeholders, partners, past grant recipients, and different industries; strengths included financial resources, contribution and retention of jobs in North Brevard, and a strong relationship with the EDC; weaknesses included availability of industrial land and buildings, length of time to complete deals; threats included lack of high-end luxury housing for high-wage

employees; and opportunities included purchasing land, remove blight, and gateway corridor enhancements. She noted that many people do not know what the Zone is or what it does and it may need to build awareness; there was a suggestion that the program areas to emphasize should be redevelopment and small business development; and the need for workforce housing was mentioned.

There was some discussion of more weaknesses; this included mention of a sewer line issue on Grissom Parkway that affects the Spaceport Commerce Park (SCP), availability of skilled workforce, and City permitting taking too long; it was mentioned the Tree Committee holds up the process; and a suggestion was made to improve the appearance of the main corridors of the City.

Ms. Pandit shared there were 29 responses from the online survey out of 175 messages sent out; she reviewed the results of the survey; and one of the results showed that 72 percent of the responses said the permitting process was fair or poor.

There was discussion of the permitting process in Titusville; there needs to be more focus on the process to benefit where the Zone wants to go; the process takes too long and it is extremely difficult; and the Tree Committee is often the hold-up.

Ms. Pandit reviewed the rest of the survey results which seemed to echo some of the comments by the board.

Mr. Post advised he also had 21 people participate in a focus group conducted by the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council; he shared the results which echoed some of the board discussion; most of the results were positive and constructive; and discussion followed.

The meeting recessed at 10:42 a.m. and reconvened at 10:48 a.m.

III. What Is Missing

Troy Post, CEcD, CBE, NBEDZ Executive Director, introduced Angela Essing, Space Coast Office of Tourism, to facilitate discussion of the following subjects: Business Attraction, Retention of Existing Businesses, Redevelopment, Pad-Ready and "Spec" Building Development, Small Business, Workforce Development, Brownfield Redevelopment, and Infrastructure Improvement.

There was a suggestion to be proactive and attract the suppliers of the large companies in the area; there was more discussion of the challenges of businesses in the area; it was suggested the process of opening new businesses should be improved; affordable workforce housing needs were discussed along with the need to add it to the Plan; and infrastructure is needed to continue to grow. A point was made that the employees of the businesses receiving grants should live in the North Brevard area to help increase the tax base; there is a need for more property for industrial development and pad-ready sites; and there was discussion of using funds from the Spaceport Commerce Park to begin clearing some sites in the Park, which would require a discussion with the City.

Upon consensus, the meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donn Mount". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Donn Mount, Secretary/Treasurer

Approved on March 10, 2023