

Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation
October 16, 2025 – 2:00 pm
Culinary Institute of the South at Technical College of the Lowcountry
Gillis, Sampson, Chiacchiero Classroom – Room 215 A, B, & C
1 Venture Drive, Bluffton, SC 29910

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Azallion-Kenny, Braun, Cromer, Perry, Shelton, Sisino, Stone (Designee for Arnette), Tabernik, Williams, Willis

Guests: York Glover (Beaufort County Council), Michael Moore (Beaufort County), Kay Maxwell (SCA), Mealer (Town of Hilton Head Island), Taylor Boykin (SCA)

Public: Joe Fragale, Nick Hammond (Davis & Floyd), Elvio Tropeano, Graham Trask

Staff: O'Toole, Brunson, Warner

Chair Braun called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm.

Chair Braun entertained a motion to approve the appointments of Karen Gilbert, Beaufort County School District Designee through June 2028, and Verna Arnette, Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority Designee through June 2028, for BCEDC Board of Directors made by Perry, Cromer seconded; approved unanimously.

Chair Braun entertained a motion by Shelton to go into Executive Session at 2:04 pm. Cromer seconded; approved unanimously.

Chair Braun entertained a motion to end Executive Session by Perry; Cromer seconded; approved unanimously. Executive Session ended at 2:20 pm.

Introductions: BCEDC Board of Directors, BCEDC Staff and Guests made introductions.

Chair Braun entertained a motion to approve September 18, 2025, Meeting Minutes made by Sisino; Williams seconded; approved unanimously.

Shelton gave a Treasurer's Report and reviewed the FY 2025-2026 budget. No line items of concern in the Treasurer's review of the monthly financial report. All items are on budget at this time.

Chair Braun entertained a motion to Authorize Executive Committee to Retain Legal Counsel made by Azallion-Kenny; Shelton seconded; approved unanimously.

O'Toole provided an update on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for 70 Acres South of Whale Branch. Updates to the past MOU include 90 days of formalization, 70+/- acres in a new location instead of the original 58+/- acres, and the developer to share all due diligence information if they do not move forward with the project. Chair Braun entertained a motion to Approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for 70 Acres South of Whale Branch by Perry, Shelton

seconded; Discussion: Williams asked if the engineering firm had been chosen. The developer had already been using Thomas & Hutton, so after reviewing proposals from the shortlist, BCEDC included them for their portion of the project as well since opportunities for cost sharing could be utilized. Approved unanimously.

O'Toole provided an update on the Purchase of 10.25 Acres on St. Helena project with a three-year plan compiled of the information and recommendation for Beaufort County Council. Chair Braun entertained a motion for the Recommendation of Purchase of 10.25 Acres on St. Helena to Beaufort County Council made by Cromer, Williams seconded; Discussion: Tabernik stated that she will be voting no; Vote 8:2 (Tabernik and Cromer opposed), approved.

O'Toole provided an update on the 117 Acres at Lobeco. The new Voluntary Cleanup Contract requirements from the SC Department of Environmental Services have been reviewed by environmental legal counsel, John Boyd of Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd, with no outstanding items. BCEDC Staff will sign Voluntary Cleanup Contract.

O'Toole provided an update on the Recommendation on Sale of 31.79 Acres in the Beaufort Commerce Park to City of Beaufort Council. A Letter of Intent has been shared with the City of Beaufort Council at their meeting on Tuesday, October 14, 2025. Chair Braun entertained a motion for the BCEDC Board to Recommend Sale of 31.79 Acres to City of Beaufort Council made by Williams; Shelton seconded; approved unanimously.

O'Toole provided an update on the Transfer of Davis & Floyd Contract for Due Diligence and Design to "Lot D". With the previous action to recommend sale of 31.79 acres within the Beaufort Commerce Park, the project currently looking to locate on "Lot F" would have to be moved to "Lot D". Davis & Floyd had been named the engineering firm for this project and Chair Braun entertained a motion for the Transfer of Davis & Floyd Contract for Due Diligence and Design to "Lot D" made by Perry; Cromer seconded; approved unanimously.

O'Toole provided an update on the L3Harris-Kigre Grant/Retention Agreement that had been voted on at the September 18, 2025, meeting. A productive meeting was held with Jamie Mannor, Finance Director L3Harris, Steve Shoenburg, L3Harris-Kigre Operations, Mayor Alan Perry, Mayor Town of Hilton Head Island, John O'Toole, Michelle Mealer, Town of Hilton Head Island, and Brian Warner. With the support of the BCEDC Board, an agreement was proposed of a grant obligation extension tied to L3Harris-Kigre's continued operation on Hilton Head Island through December 31, 2029. Chair Braun entertained a motion for the L3Harris-Kigre Grant/Retention Agreement made by Perry; Shelton seconded; approved unanimously.

Brunson presented the Parker Poe Fiscal Impact (Cost/Benefit Analysis) Modeling Software run for Project Bag for information purposes and to show the detail of the program reports. The executive summary of fiscal impact models will be included along with the pro-forma for BCEDC grant requests moving forward.

O'Toole provided an update on the Japanese-SC/American Advanced Mobility with William Fugate. A prospective project in advanced air mobility has expressed interest in South Carolina and William Fugate has provided an executive summary of Japanese outlook and processes in the location decision making process. Other suppliers and support companies have been identified as well.

O'Toole provided an update to the Site & Job Fund including the potential expenditures of the SC Department of Commerce Site Enhancement Grant match funding, pending Beaufort County Council approval. No change, information only.

Maxwell provided the SCA update via a handout and went over the announced jobs and investment amounts, Project Circular announcement in Bamberg County, Site Consultants Meeting (Brantley Strickland – Colleton County), Anuga Food Conference (Kelli Brunson – BCEDC), Marketing Mission to UK and Ireland, October 23 Drive and Pull Event, November Atlanta Site Consultant Event, November Switzerland Roadshow (SCA and HSB Law Firm), December 2 Last SCA Board Meeting/Christmas Celebration, December 8-12 Ontario Marketing Mission.

BCEDC Staff provided a written activity report. Highlights included Brunson at Anuga Food Show with SC Department of Agriculture, SC Department of Commerce, and the SC Power Team, O'Toole completing SCEDA Advanced Symposium and being awarded SC Certified Economic Developer (SCCED) credential, and Warner announcing USDA Grant award for Downtown Strategies in Port Royal, via a partnership with SCA.

Brunson went over the proposed meeting calendar for FY 2025-2026. The upcoming meeting schedule has been posted.

Public Comment: None.

New Business: O'Toole invited all that are able to attend to attend the 2025 Asian Cultural Studies Conference Program held at USCB.

Chair Braun entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:30 pm by Sisino; Azallion-Kenny seconded; approved unanimously.