

Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation
May 21, 2026 – 2:00 pm
The COVE at Don Ryan Center, 97 Progressive Street, Bluffton, SC 29910

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Alsko, Azallion Kenny, Braun, Cromer, Forster, Gilbert, Perry, Shelton, Sisino, Williams, Willis

Guests: Nicole Wood (Beaufort County), Alice Howard (Chair, Beaufort Council), Brian Jackson (Regions Bank), Andy Fulghum (SCA), Jason Semple (SCA), Kay Maxwell (SCA),

Public: Nick Hammond (Davis|Floyd)

Staff: O'Toole, Brunson, Warner

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

Executive Session: None

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

Chair Braun entertained a motion to accept the Board Meeting Minutes from April 30, 2026, meeting made by Sisino; Cromer seconded; approved unanimously.

Shelton provided a Review of Budget FY 2025-2026 and Treasurer's Report. BCEDC is in a stable financial position with no areas of concern or particular risk within the line items. BCEDC is looking to be on budget as the year concludes. Audit process begins next month.

Warner provided an update on the Lot D Pad Site – SC Department of Commerce Grant with the BCEDC staff recommendation to begin the design and bid process continuing with Davis & Floyd. Chair Braun entertained a motion to Design and Go Out to Bid for Lot D Pad Site and Continuing with Davis & Floyd made by Williams; Forster seconded; Cromer recused himself from the vote; approved (10 in favor, 0 against, 1 recused).

O'Toole provided information on the Altios Lead Generation Proposal for the 2026 BCEDC / SC Department of Agriculture Mission. Target Sectors: Aquaculture/Mariculture/Fisheries, agricultural companies and equipment manufacturers. Deliverables: Meeting companies in Spain and Germany Meetings with target companies in the aquaculture and mariculture fields + vertical farming and other food sectors. Meetings with 7-10 quality leads (Companies interested in expanding into the US within the next 2 years). SC Department of Commerce European Office to possibly augment trip with the addition of 2 company leads. \$17,000 Mission Meeting Proposal. SCDA to provide a grant for half of the cost (\$8,500). BCEDC looking to pay the remaining half (\$8,500). Chair Braun entertained a motion to Approve the Altios Lead Generation Proposal for the 2026 BCEDC / SC Department of Agriculture Mission made by Shelton; Perry seconded; approved unanimously.

Chair Braun provided an update on the Board of Directors' Composition – Amend Bylaws to Allow for Additional Board of Directors. Board will consist of “up to 17 members” has been added, with 2 positions added to the Private Sector group (9 – 11 directors), per the board's recommendation. Chair Braun entertained a motion to Approve Amending Bylaws to Allow for Additional Board of Directors

made by Cromer; Perry seconded; approved unanimously.

Brunson provided an update on the Site and Job Fund. No action needed. Spartina 449 (Project Bag) payment to be made in June 2026. All other commitments will carry forward to the next fiscal year.

BCEDC Staff provided a written activity report.

- A. O’Toole gave an update on the BCEDC Scorecard. Warner provided information about the “intangible” items in Economic Development that the BCEDC provides. Perry suggested a “value added” line on Scorecard. Perry asked if a report could be given that breaks down investments/projects by municipality.
- B. Warner gave an update on Business Retention and Expansion: 75 BRE Visits completed YTD, 83% of Goal. BRE Spotlight: Recruitment Starts with Retention. Example: Hail Logistics being able to meet with an international prospect to talk about logistics needs as they begin their decision-making process.
- C. Brunson gave an overview of the marketing, social media and website performance from April 1, 2026, to April 31, 2026, including the New York and “Intent” Targeting marketing missions.
- D. Brunson shared BCEDC’s community involvement: Brunson welcomed USCB Class of 2026 into the Alumni Association on May 1st. O’Toole, Brunson and Warner attended the SCEDA Annual Conference and facilitated the Solution Station for local developers to problem solve issues in their community in a collaborative environment. MasterCorp ribbon cutting ceremony occurred on May 21st.
- E. Brunson went over the proposed meeting calendar for FY 2025-2026. The upcoming meeting schedule has been posted.

Maxwell provided the SCA update covering the project announcements for 2025, SCA’s continued partnership with Retail Strategies, ribbon cutting at the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Center in Allendale, the Regional Manufacturing Training Advisory Board, the first class of the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Center in Allendale, the Stantec Mobility Study being complete, TS Conductor’s Trade and Industry Award, website/social media performance, RBC Heritage, Select USA and the Marketing Calendar. Chair Braun asked if granular reporting from SCA regarding the Return On Investment for Beaufort County could be made available to the BCEDC Board and Beaufort County Council.

Chair Braun opened the Discussion of Beaufort County Council Work Session – BCEDC Strategic Plan. Chair Howard: Public Comment for the Work Session was omitted from the agenda by accident and is something that they have on every Work Session agenda. However, the second Public Comment may not have been appropriate. The Lobeco questioning from council and public was not accurate and the council members should have read the report for themselves. Sisino asked what the proposed path forward is – possible budget cuts have been mentioned by one council member. Chair Howard stated that she is 1 of 11 council members meeting next Tuesday to discuss the budget. Chair Braun asked if the County Council representative could share information to the BCEDC Board instead of surprising them with information or decision later. Williams asked what the plan for the budget is for Tuesday. Wood answered that there is an option to cut the Job & Site Fund budget. It remains unclear if this is purely a financial or performance-related decision, but BCEDC Board Members should talk to their representatives. Perry stated that the Town of Hilton Head has set aside the \$4.3 million from the Classic Motors Site sale for economic development initiatives. The story of economic development and how it has kept the milage low needs to be shared. “What does it say [to a prospect] about Beaufort

County if the BCEDC is defunded?”

Public Comment: None

New Business: O’Toole provided an update on the discussion regarding Multi-County Industrial Parks (MCIP) for incentivization of projects. Port Royal had recently been before County Council in the attempt to form an MCIP. O’Toole stated that the BCEDC staff could arrange Will Johnson of Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd to go over MCIPs and how they can be tailored.

Chair Braun entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:45 pm by Cromer; Perry seconded; approved unanimously.