

MEETING MINUTES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MEETING

Date: October 8, 2024

Time: 12:30 pm

Meeting called to order by: Tony Stanzione at 12:43 pm

IN ATTENDANCE

Kyle Johnson, Synagro; Donna Perez, Wells Fargo Advisors; Nancy Ridgeway, public; Cosmo Giovanizzi, Ocean First Bank; Tony Stanzione, BACC/CDC; Ronnie Town, ACE; Christy DiLeonardo, Workforce Development; Sandy Forosisky, City of Vineland; Bob Campbell, Millville/Downe; Wade Sjogren, WHIBCO; Jerry Velazquez, The Authority; Heather Santoro, The Authority.

PRESENTATIONS

Synagro – Jerry V. introduced Kyle Johnson from Synagro. Kyle is in sales and marketing. Synagro recycles 70,000 tons of bio-solids per year. They utilize the compost sludge and wood chips to create a compost product that has several uses to a wide range of markets. Their typical customers include nurseries, agricultural uses, construction sites, etc. Their product is registered as a soil amendment. Their workforce is highly automated and they employ 10 employees ranging from laborers to management. Their facility is currently operating at full capacity. Synagro has become involved in the community at the local level and has made a \$50,000 commitment to Deerfield Township to develop a pickleball court in Rosenhayn.

DRBA – The presenter was unable to attend.

Lassande Papas – Tony Stanzione and Jerry V. discussed how the importance of partnership and working together with State and local entities can help a project come together. In the Lassande Papas project, there was a potential for the business to relocate outside of the County. Instead, they worked with the Authority and Upper Deerfield Township, which granted them a 30 year pilot to keep the business from leaving the County. The total project investment of building a new plant and expansion is \$200 million investment and will retain 150 jobs and also increase jobs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Jerry discussed the following projects that the Authority is currently working on:

- Fire Station in Bridgeton
- NJ State Police Station in Commercial Township
- Cape May Justice Complex
- Jail project in Salem
- ACE infrastructure and their 4 areas of focus in the County
- There are upcoming projects in Vineland
- Upgrades and projects at the landfill including the landfill cover project and admin building upgrades

Two things to pay attention to in the County:

1. Millville Airport due to its important connection with the Golf Course and other industries in the County
2. Broadband – Currently there is \$24 million for the Broadband project, however, the County has been invited to apply for additional funding through the State's broadband infrastructure funding and to date, Cumberland County has not applied. This project is important because it creates infrastructure for other service providers.

Sandy F. stated that it is important to apply for these funds as there were very few entities invited to apply and Cumberland County is one of them.

Wade Sjogren and Christy DeLeonardo suggested that since this board serves in an advisory capacity to the County, a letter should be drafted to the Board of Commissioners emphasizing their thoughts and considerations regarding the importance of the broadband project.

A general motion was made by Christy D. to send a letter to the Commissioners, that it is this board's recommendation to complete the broadband project and apply for any additional funding that can be utilized to better serve County residents. Wade Sjogren seconded the motion. All board members present were in favor of the motion.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

There were no commissioner comments as there were no commissioners present at the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Nancy Ridgeway commented that she loved the idea of writing a letter to the County regarding broadband.

Ronnie Town from ACE mentioned that the transmission lines from Newport to South Millville were being upgraded. She also mentioned that residents can set up for "high bill" alerts regarding their electric bills and that ACE will do free energy audits for residents.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Christy D. and seconded by Sandy F. All present were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 1:39 pm.

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING CUMBERLAND COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD

**February 13, 2024
12:30 pm**

The meeting of the Cumberland County Economic Development Board was held on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at the training center of The Authority, Millville NJ. Vice Chairman Tony Stanzione called the meeting to order and explained that the meeting was being conducted in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of the meeting was published in the local newspapers and posted as required. Silent Roll call was completed.

Members present:

Tony Stanzione
Donna Perez
Jerry Velazquez
Christy DiLeonardo
Dr. Jim Piccone
Cosmo Giovanazzi
Mayor Kelly
John Ruga
Wade Sjogren
Bob Carlson

Staff:

Kim Ayres
Heather Santoro
Samantha Leone

Commissioners:

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Guests/Public Members:

Ronnie Town, ACE
Sandy Acevedo
Nancy Ridgeway

Board Reorganization:

The following members were elected to officer positions:

Tony Stanzione	Chairman
Wade Sjogren	Vice Chair
Sandy Forosisky	Secretary

All positions were unanimously endorsed.

Also discussed was the possibility of having some joint meetings with the Workforce Development Board as our roles and responsibilities have a lot of crossover as do our members. It was agreed that it would be a good use of time to meeting jointly and the we will do so at the next scheduled Workforce Development Meeting on May 16, 2024 at CCTEC at noon.

Presentation by Jef Buehler, New Jersey Business Action Center (via zoom)

Mr. Jeffrey Buehler of the NJBAC gave a presentation on the roles of the NJBAC in advocating for and directly assisting businesses across the state. Jef is the Assistant Director. The BAC is a free and accessible business support ecosystem that serves as a toolkit for individual businesses, business organizations or districts, and municipalities. The offices provide support and guidance in the form of technical assistance, site location, and targeted export promotion grants. They also provide commercial cannabis collaboration, business enhancement special projects for municipalities, real estate and resources, and planning and prosperity guidance. There is an on-call concierge, online chat, and business navigator training. Specialized sectors also have targeted support, including film, life science/technology, advanced manufacturing, and food and beverage. Training is provided in all aspects of commercial cannabis, with informational resources also available to help understand the requirements of licensure.

The Office of State Planning is part of the BAC. They will be updating the current State Plan during 2024 and all businesses were urged to pay close attention and participate in the public outreach sessions. The BAC is already working directly with the County Planning Offices to gain input. The Preliminary Plan will be shared online and there will be 21 county hearings from June-August 2024. Kim urged members to keep abreast of developments with the State Plan as the findings in the plan will guide state regulatory and funding decisions.

Highlighted New Business: Relema, Vineland, NJ, Stephano Tedesco (via zoom)

Mr. Stephano Tedesco of Maestri D'Italia, Inc. gave a presentation on a new food-based business to be located on Garden Rd. in Vineland. Relema will import exceptional sliced meats from different regions of Italy. The first phase of the building has been approved for 70,000 sf and will open in late 2024 or early 2025. He stated that the company had received terrific support from the City of Vineland and the county as they planned their project and went through the development process.

Relema is part of the Italian company Maestri D'Italia which provides high quality deli meats and charcuterie products that are sliced in their US facilities. They currently have a facility in Virginia and one in Lakewood that they have outgrown. They first came to the US in 2014 and set up in NJ in 2018. They quickly found the need for additional line capacity and that began their search for land to build a new facility within a reasonable distance of Lakewood. Their products include slow cured, pre-sliced, strips and slow cooked meats. Products are available for consumers in the US in stores such as Lidl, Aldi, Shop Rite, Kroger, Whole Foods, Sam's Club and The Fresh Market.

Highlighted Project: Rowan Medicine Building, Cumberland Campus. Lewis Evangelista

Mr. Lewis Evangelista provided a summary of the uses that will be located in the new Rowan Medicine building under construction at the Rowan College of SJ- Cumberland campus. The new 16,500 sf building represents a multidisciplinary approach to care, with three medical practices to be housed within:

- Child Abuse Resource Center: providing behavioral and health services to children who have been victims of abuse; a nationally recognized program to address abuse, domestic violence in adolescents and their families;
- Neuromuscular Institute: for study and treatment of related diseases; teaching future physicians on osteopathic muscle manipulation and pain based on muscular system; will also deal with addiction medicine and outpatient care
- Regional Integrated Special Needs Center: medical and behavioral services to adolescents and adults with disabilities; will be able to get all types of care within 1 practice, integrating as many services as possible

The approach being taken is to provide all multi-disciplinary services in one setting through the three different practices, including psychological, social work, medical care. Social Services will be available in all three practices. Almost all of the people who will be assisted have social service issues in addition to medical issues and this will enable them to obtain those services in one physical location.

At our next meeting we will have the medical doctors attached to these practices provide additional information.

Commissioner Comments:

None present

Overall projects review: Jerry Velazquez, The Authority

Jerry reviewed numerous projects being managed by The Authority, including some projects in Salem County and Cape May County. The Millville Public Library and the Library in Cape May County are nearing completion and work is continuing on the design and bidding of the Bridgeton Firehouse. The County is now going to go forward in constructing a new jail, with a regional approach. The Courthouse Project in Salem is nearing completion which represents a \$33 million project. Building 3 at the Cumberland Family Shelter is being renovated to provide 6 units for families so they can stay together at the shelter (\$2 million). The county has hired a broadband consultant.

A couple handouts in the packet demonstrated the taxpayer savings from shared services (\$4.7 million) and the extend of economic impact from Authority projects. Over \$1 billion in impact over the last 7 years; \$140,635,902 invested in 2023 which equates to an economic impact of \$226,906,066.

Jerry also encouraged members to pay close attention to the development of the State Plan. In the past the Plan was definitely used to determine key funding issues and there are still unresolved issues with the designation of some areas within the county. An example of this is parts of the Millville Airport are not designated for growth, despite being zoning for industrial use and having municipal utilities to the site. These are the types of issues that must get resolved under this revision of the Plan. The Authority will be closely following this development.

Finally members were encourage to read the brand new report by the Chamber of Commerce of South Jersey: Long Story Short: Southy Jersey. This report details the uniqueness of challenges faced by southern New Jersey Counties and provides a specific chapter on each county.

Chairman Stanzione thanked everyone for their attendance, and asked for input from members on what they would like to see at the meetings and any suggestions for formatting the meetings differently.

With the conclusion of business the meeting was adjourned at 1:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Ayres
The Authority

