

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

January 115, 2020

All Members were Present

Discussion of the proposed branding of the Garden District for NSB was postponed until the February Meeting.

The major topics for the meeting were the continuing adjustments and edits to the Southeast Volusia County Marketing Initiative (SEVCMI). The discussions began with the Mission and Vision statements and centered on the most streamlined and efficient way these could be worded to convey the Board's desire to attract companies in high tech, aerospace, and manufacturing. The goal is to add higher paying jobs to the area as well as diversify the tax base.

Tony Otte, NSB Economic Development Director, stressed the importance of the partnership with Edgewater & Oak Hill as each area offers unique attributes. Oak Hill and Edgewater offer land for development while New Smyrna Beach offers the environment and life style to draw a skilled workforce to the area. The Board also suggested that focus on drawing businesses from higher tax states with less desirable climates would play well with NSB's strengths.

Concerns were expressed in promoting the fact that NSB has lower wages than other communities in surrounding areas; especially given that our objective is to pull in targeted industries paying a higher wage scale. It was suggested to highlight the availability for higher education in Volusia and neighboring Counties.

The "business concierge" concept was discussed as an important service to offer for both new and existing businesses looking to expand. Such a service could help business owners navigate the process of establishing or expanding their operations. Tony reminded everyone of the Commercial Pre-Application process that connects applicants to the various city departments and allows them to get a better understanding of requirements and the investments required to establish and expand their business prior to making financial commitments. The concierge services could work to pull in additional regulatory entities such as FL DOT. It was also mentioned that streamlining the process will encourage more timely decisions .

Board Member Comments:

Disruption created by trains crossing Canal and blocking the street for considerable amounts of time was brought up by a Board Member. Edgewater instituted a noise ordinance that limits the use of the horn at intersections. NSB has higher density populations along the RR Tracks and safety requirements may affect the ability to enact similar ordinances.

Tony Otte announced that he plans to retire at the end of February.