

**TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT, SOUTH CAROLINA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Monday, May 6, 2019
Municipal Complex, Committee Meeting Room, 3rd Floor
100 Ann Edwards Lane, Mount Pleasant, SC 29464**

MINUTES

Members Present: Kathy Landing, Chair; Bob Brimmer; and Joe Bustos
Members Absent: Rick Crosby (MPW)
Staff Present: Eric DeMoura, Town Administrator; John Holladay,
Business Development Manager

Ms. Landing called the meeting to order at 12:19 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes from the [April 1, 2019](#) meeting

Mr. Bustos moved for approval; seconded by Mr. Brimmer. All present voted in favor. Motion carries 3-0.

2. Public Comments

[None]

3. Discussion regarding annexation and economic development

Ms. Landing stated that this item is still being worked on. There are issues regarding sewer and the impact that the Charleston County Council's decision, which passed first reading, may have on the Town. She stated that one discussion was that the Town should not be attempting to control growth through utilities. She believes this committee is an appropriate place to start the conversation on how to attract great business and services to the Town. She added that there are a number of commercial properties within the Town limits, that are in the unincorporated portions. There are reasons why so many large storage facilities are being built, because they do not require sewer; however, if

there was a fire or a need for services, they would rely on the Town's emergency services. She stated that there are also businesses who are on Charleston County unincorporated land, within the Town, who do not pay property or business license fees, but utilize Town services. She asked what can be done to make this equitable to all the other businesses paying for services. She stated that House Bill HB3158 (Enclave Bill), is currently dead in sub-committee and can be resurrected. The bill states that it would allow Town Council to annex in donut holes (unincorporated property), that have been surrounded by the Town for at least five years and are 25 acres or less in size, which would include almost all of the unincorporated properties in Mount Pleasant.

Mr. Bustos stated that this would take State Legislation. In early 2000, the Town asked for the ability to have those properties annexed, which fell on deaf ears. He does not believe the State will ever allow a municipality to annex. He said the Enclave Bill which refers to the donut holes is slightly different; however, he does not believe it will ever pass. He added that there were recent meetings regarding the Snowden Community with reference to water and sewer. He said MPW (Mount Pleasant Waterworks), cannot provide services to Snowden without providing them to other unincorporated areas.

Mr. Brimmer agreed with Mr. Bustos and said the dynamics are not favorable for this type of legislation. He does not believe the support is there state-wide. He said one way the Town has some control is to look at what we are able to do to attract properties to come into the Town. He understands that the Town is doing this but wondered if more effort can be put forth to make it more attractive to be in the Town.

Ms. Landing stated that one of the developers who is looking at a significant property stated that there are a number of services that the Town provides, but does not promote, in addition to MPW sewer services. She said as Councilman Brimmer mentioned, the Town should take a closer look at what makes being in the Town more attractive.

4. Update on Business Development Office activities and outreach

John Holladay, Business and Development Manager, updated Committee members on recent activity.

East Cooper Hospitality Alliance: A quarterly meeting where those in the hospitality industry are invited, along with Charleston Visitors Bureau (CVB). He stated that he was hoping more from the food and beverage industry would attend; however, most in attendance were from the local hotels. He stated that he talked to the hotels about quality control checks and customer engagement. He stated that Jennifer Knight discussed optimizing social media. He added that they may move the meeting time up to 2:30 p.m. in order to attract more restaurants.

Town Proud: This meeting is for certified local small businesses. Banks, sporting goods retailers, restaurants and graphic design companies were in attendance. He said this cultivates an economy anchored in local ownership. He said they are the foundation of our culture, economy and the character of Mount Pleasant. He stated that Lowcountry Local First is the certifying agent. He stated that the plastics ban ordinance was discussed, because there were a number of questions asked. He stated that Jennifer Knight discussed social media optimization, which was well received.

April Ribbon Cuttings: Mr. Holladay stated that there were two; Home Depot and Alice's Clubhouse, which is the first dementia-specific memory care day center.

April Business Licenses: Mr. Holladay stated that there were 77 businesses with 40% being homebased. He stated that one year ago, there were 58 businesses with 44% being homebased. He said the economy appears to be strong in Mount Pleasant.

Ms. Landing stated she and Mr. Holladay are working on a program with the assistance of the Economic Advisory Panel Chair, Alan Bolduc, on programs to move the Town forward. She said there is also the importance of communication, which is the purpose of outreach

programs in the Town. This is so the businesses know that we care about them and want them to be here.

Mr. Brimmer stated that he finds it interesting to see the numbers on new business licenses. He asked Mr. Holladay to bring back to Committee or send out to Council a review of business licenses and impact fees. He said he is still hearing how difficult it is to open businesses in Mount Pleasant and that impact fees are a barrier. He said that he is not sure that he sees the huge impact on business licenses. He asked if Mr. Holladay could put together number prior to the impact fees taking effect, at each point they increased and the number of business licenses they have seen during that same period to see if there is any correlation or what impact those fees have had on the number of business licenses.

5. Adjourn

There being no further business, Committee adjourned at 12:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Ashe
May 6, 2019