The Carroll County Board of Supervisors held a Joint meeting with the Carroll County EDA on October 7, 2019 in the Board Meeting Room of the Carroll County Governmental Center.

BOS Members Present:
> Rex L. Hill
> Dr. Tom Littrell
> Bob Martin
> Phillip McCraw
> Robbie McCraw

EDA Members Present:
> Ricky Thomas
> Mandi McCraw
> Larry Chambers
> Richard Sowers
> Larry Edwards
> Kaye Carter
> Ronnie Collins

Staff Present: Cellell Dalton, County Administrator
Steve Durbin, County Attorney
Crystal Adams, Administrative Coordinator

Others Present: Sandy West

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Ricky Thomas called the EDA back into session.

Mr. Hill called the Board of Supervisors to order.

PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN

Mr. Thomas stated that tonight we will go through each section of the plan below. We will not make any changes tonight, just collect comments.

Carroll County Economic Development Authority Strategic Plan (Proposed)

Section 1 --- Goals and Objectives

Section 2 --- Identify and Engage Local/Regional Stakeholders

Section 3 --- Identify and Engage Professional and Government Resources

Section 4 --- Identify and Engage Our Brightest Young Talent at the Post-

Secondary Level Section 5 --- Determine Target Areas (Industry, Service, Tourism,

etc.)

Section 6 --- Develop a Marketing Plan

Section 7 --- Communicate with our Local

Stakeholders Section 8 --- Make Course

Corrections as Needed

Section 1 --- Goals and Objectives

Develop/Challenge/Improve/Clarify our Vision Statement and Mission Statement

- **Promote Economic Growth and Improve the Quality of Life for our residents.**
- **Determine core mission of the EDA**
  - **Increase/Improve Job Growth**
  - **Strengthen existing businesses**
  - **Recruit new businesses**
  - **Promote the area as a good place for business**
  - **Increase tax base**
  - **Manage existing assets/holdings**
- **Become active and engaged in pursuing the economic outcome that we want.**
- **Strengthen our toolbox.**
- **Determine categories that currently fit within our community framework:**
  - **Agriculture,**
  - **Textiles,**
  - **Food and Restaurant,**
  - **Machinery,**
  - **Wood Products,**
  - **Transportation,**
  - **Etc.**

- **Determine other categories that could be developed**
  - **Engineering Innovation,**
  - **Logistics and Distribution,**
  - **Traditional Music,**
  - **Arts,**
  - **Winery,**
  - **Micro Brewery,**
  - **Tourism,**
  - **Sustainable Energy,**
  - **Environmental,**
  - **Etc.**

- **Determine some metrics for success**
  - Net Employment Added,
  - Average Personal (Family) Income,
  - Yearly External Revenue Contribution,
  - Normalized Tax Base,
  - Normalized Tax Revenue,
  - New Business Queries,
  - Etc.

- **Report on Economic Metrics** of Carroll County on a periodic basis. (This could be done by engaging our local colleges and universities through internships and/or funded projects.) … *"Without data you're probably just another person with an opinion." … W. Edwards Deming*

- *Develop a **Slogan** for business development ....*

Example1 : "Carroll County Virginia..... Where Ideas Come to Grow"

Example2 : "Carroll County Virginia … Where Ideas and Business Grow Together"

Section 2 --- Identify and Engage Local/Regional Stakeholders

Begin a conversation with **EVERYBODY**. The EDA should actively engage individuals and leaders at both the county and state levels in order to blend and maximize our efforts.

- **Business Leaders** -- Invite business and economic leaders to attend our meetings and tell us about what they are doing. Ask questions and listen. Encourage discussions about what kind of challenges they are facing.

- **Educators and Students --** Engage with local school systems and colleges.   Not just administrators. Engage with teachers, staff, board members, and students. What are the challenges they face? How can we combine the mission of Education with the mission of Economic Development? Have an EDA meeting periodically at the High School or Middle School and invite attendance from both

students and educators. What certifications are offered by our system? What certifications are needed? **(Start the conversation.)**

- **Workforce** – Talk about what our citizens want to see as far as training and assistance. What are the obstacles. What programs are available that can help assist workers who want to improve their opportunities? (Have community meetings and bring representatives from Crossroads, Community Colleges, etc.) How is the message being communicated?

- **Infrastructure –** The EDA should assess our local infrastructure and determine how to better leverage these areas.
    - Industrial Parks/Locations,
    - Electricity,
    - Gas,
    - High Speed Internet,
    - Mobile Phone Coverage,
    - Roads,
    - Aviation,
    - Media,
    - etc.

- **Private Foundations**

    A successful private foundation can be a very successful tool in changing the fortunes of a community. Private foundations can supplement government efforts, and in many ways accomplish what public government bodies cannot.

     Some direct advantages of a foundation would be to provide the following:

    - college scholarships,
    - entrepreneurial programs,
    - arts and cultural programs,
    - summer educational camps,
    - and general community marketing and promotions.

    A tremendous benefit is that a foundation can focus the county's message on **POSITIVE** actions without the negative attention that government sometimes brings. While the EDA should not direct a foundation's activities, there could be a communication process established whereby each group can benefit from the

total effort. The greatest benefit from a foundation is that the participation is **VOLUNTARY**.

Foundations Already Created in Our Area

twincountycommunityfoundation.org

Alleghanyfoundation.org (Covington, VA)

Wbfoundation.com (Wythe-Bland)

Wsfoundation.org (Winston-Salem, NC)

- Most importantly … Talk with and Listen to our CITIZENS

Begin an **ACTIVE** program to engage the people of Carroll County. Closed session topics cannot be discussed due to legal reasons; however, our strategic plan should be part of a marketing effort to our local citizens. Tell them what we're doing and why. Listen to them! Allow everyone to participate. We should not feel compelled to act on every conversation, but we should actively listen.

Section 3 --- Identify and Engage Professional and Governmental Resources

- **Programs and Agencies** -- We need to know what programs we have in our toolbox!
  - VJIP
  - VEDP
  - VA Governor's Opportunity Fund
  - VALET
  - BRCEDA
  - Virginia Trade Missions
  - Industry Trade Shows
  - Industry Networking Opportunities
  - Etc.....

It's not just important to attract new economic opportunities. We need to know everything that is available to help companies that are already here.

- **EDA Executive Director** – Carroll County needs a professional who is experienced and is skilled in the following areas:
  - Business and Economic Development
  - Entrepreneurship
  - Industrial Infrastructure
  - Training
  - Professional Networking
  - Marketing
  - Project Management
  - Finance
  - Passion for Economic Development

- Economic Development Staff and Projects
  - Work with Board of Supervisors to create an Economic Development Staff (Department).
  - Work with Board of Supervisors to fund necessary programs and projects.

  This doesn't have to be a tremendous budget item. For staffing to be effective; however, it must be a primary position. If it is important, it should be clearly defined and funded.

Section 4 --- Identify and Engage Our Brightest Young Talent at the Post-Secondary Level

Our education system produces some of the best young minds in our commonwealth. The EDA should actively seek out and build partnerships with these students as they enter nearby colleges and universities. This should be a bilateral relationship so that we learn what they are doing as they hear about our future plans for the county. This program can also engage non- area post-secondary students in the process.

The EDA should sponsor a program that would build a direct relationship with these students as they are attending our area Universities and Community Colleges. The following are some points, but obviously there could be more added:

- Host a **Business Technical and Entrepreneur Forum** at one of the colleges on a quarterly basis, Supply food and drinks (all college students will be interested

in a free meal),

- Pre-arrange one or more of the students to lead a presentation about an area of study or research that they are currently involved in,
- Make sure that we collect contact information in order to follow up with these students,
- Prepare a short presentation from the EDA featuring opportunities and businesses from this county,
- Focus on entrepreneurship,
- Work through local foundations to encourage and support research and entrepreneurship projects.

Section 5 --- Determine

Target Areas

Entrepreneurship --

Encourage small businesses, organizations and individuals with creative ideas to consider
Carroll County.

- Organize local educational/professional support groups to assist with small startups.
- Develop a pathway for financial and capital investments.

Industry --

What do we have already that can be attractive to a larger company looking to expand operations?

- Transportation
- Utilities
- Industrial Parks
- Nearby Partner Companies (Supply Chain)
- Nearby Technical and Engineering Companies
- Nearby Technical Colleges and Universities
- Flexible Multiskilled Workforce (Certified)

Service --

- Certified Workforce
- Training Programs in Place
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Tourism -

Develop a plan for this area that can be coordinated …

- Historic Courthouse and Museum, Sidna Allen House, Dramas, etc.
- Youth Sports Events (Weekend Youth Sports Tournaments)
- Music (Leverage traditional heritage, encourage entrepreneurs to open music venues in downtown areas, etc.
- Outdoor Activities (Fishing, Camping, Hiking Trails, etc.)
- Seek businesses that are related to outdoor tourism.

Section 6 --- Develop a Marketing Plan

The EDA should work with other interested stakeholders to coordinate an effective marketing plan for Carroll County. We should be able to describe ourselves differently (and better) than our neighboring areas (differentiate our message) ... Our neighboring counties are beautiful too and have hard workers. Here are some thoughts on how to begin the discussions:

The Message (It doesn't matter what comes second if we can't create the MESSAGE.)

- Why Carroll County?
- What is our uniqueness?
- What is our value added?
- How do we describe our future?
- What are we willing to do to prepare for our future?
- What about our values and heritage makes us better?
- How do we respond to a challenge?

The Method

- Video – Todays social media culture has become extremely visual. It is imperative that our message be visual as well. A professional quality video that presents our county in 30 seconds or less is vital.

- Social Media – Short, single focus messages.

- Billboards – I77 corridor (if allowed)

- Print Media – Regional and Statewide Markets

- Trade Missions and Trade Shows – Industry representatives that are looking to expand attend trade shows and trade missions.

Section 7 --- Communicate with our Local Stakeholders

Create an open dialogue with local county leadership, citizens and all stakeholders mentioned in Section 2. People should be given factual and clear updates so that we are able to make improvements along the way.

The proper approach is to invite them to our meetings. Welcome different
opinions and criticism, but then have the resolve to "do what's necessary".

Section 8 --- Make Course Corrections as Needed

The EDA should also be mindful that course corrections will be necessary. Some things will not work. Opportunities will present themselves that the EDA has not considered.

Successful business leaders and entrepreneurs are aware that "being opportunistic" is sometimes as important as the ability to guide an organization through a long- range plan. Another way of saying it is "I'd rather be lucky than good!"

However, in a strong organization "luck" happens more often to those that have created a strong plan and have the willingness and resources to adapt when necessary.

This plan should be challenged and reviewed periodically in order to focus more intently on the things that work, while removing the things that are not working.

Mr. Dalton stated that there are a lot of different things we can do, and this meeting is a great first step.

Mr. Thomas thanked everyone for attending tonight, we will be meeting on this again in the near future.

Mr. Dalton suggested setting up a working group between the EDA and the Board to continue working on the plan.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Martin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Robbie McCraw to adjourn the meeting.

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Chairman