

**Minutes of the
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
Committee Meeting
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council**

December 22, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Staff called roll and announced a quorum was present. The following members and staff were present:

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Martin County | Tammy Simoneau Ed Maxwell Kathie Smith Tim Dougher |
| Palm Beach County | Paul Skyers |
| St. Lucie County | Michael Corbit Harold "Buzz" Smyth Howard Fein Teri Pinney |
| Indian River County | Helene Caseltine Randy Riley |
| Staff | Stephanie Heidt Penny Myszkowski Greg Vaday |
| Visitors | Linda Hake, Gunster Yoakley Toby Overdorf, Crossroads Environmental Glenn Heran, HFB, LLC |

AGENDA

Ms. Teri Pinney moved approval of the agenda. Mr. Tim Dougher seconded the motion, which **Motion** carried unanimously.

MINUTES - NOVEMBER 10, 2011

Ms. Helene Caseltine moved approval of the minutes of the November 10, 2011 meeting. Mr. Paul **Motion** Skyers seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**COMMITTEE REORGANIZATION – MEMBERSHIP APPOINTMENTS AND
ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Ms. Tammy Simoneau, thanked the Vice chairs for their service in 2011. Staff read the following names into the record as the newly appointed and/or re-appointed CEDS Committee members for 2012:

Palm Beach County

Sherry Howard
Gary Hines
Tony Brown
Seabron Smith

Indian River County

Mark Mathes
Rich Stringer
Helene Caseltine
Randy Riley
Glenn Heran

Martin County

Members

Tammy Simoneau
Anthony Parkinson
Tim Dougher
Pauline Becker
Linda Hake

Alternates

Debbie Lewandowski
Ed Maxwell
Tobin Overdorf
Kathie Smith
Melissa Corbett

St. Lucie County

Members

Derek Moore
Teri Pinney
Michael Corbit
Harold “Buzz” Smyth
Nate Bray

Alternates

Howard Fein
Larry Pelton

The following nominations were made for the 2012 Officers:

Chair - Mr. Gary Hines, Palm Beach County
1st Vice Chair - Teri Pinney, St. Lucie County
2nd Vice Chair - Helene Caseltine, Indian River County
3rd Vice Chair - Tim Dougher, Martin County

Mr. Corbit moved approval of the nominees. Ms. Helene Caseltine seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. It was noted that staff will provide all members with a copy of the 2012 membership.

Motion

2012 MEETING SCHEDULE

Committee members were provided with the following 2012 CEDS meeting schedule:

| | |
|------------|--------------|
| January 12 | July 12 |
| February 9 | August 9 |
| March 8 | September 13 |
| April 12 | November 8 |
| May 10 | December 13 |
| June 14 | |

CEDS REWRITE

Mr. Vaday explained the process for the CEDS Rewrite plan for the benefit of the new members. The plan covers a five-year period and focuses on projects that have the greatest economic impact on the region, evaluates how the economy has changed since the last rewrite, and identifies opportunities and challenges within the Treasure Coast Region. The rewrite of the plan is due September 13, 2012.

With respect to industry trends, Mr. Vaday made a presentation to the Committee on Industry Clusters, which are groups of industries that share common or complementary markets, suppliers or workforce skills. Analysis of industry clusters helps to identify networks of business that are creating wealth in a region, reveals emerging industries in a region, and creates regional identities and improves marketing strategies. Mr. Vaday explained that industry clusters are the economic drivers of a region and the development of these clusters is very important for governments and the private sector. He outlined the seventeen major industry clusters and showed where there is specialization of certain clusters in the Treasure Coast Region. Mr. Vaday noted that Biomedical/Biotechnical is the one cluster that is shown to have specialization in all four counties of the region.

Mr. Vaday stated that it is important to look at economy and growth, but innovation is the critical component for regional economies. He stated innovation turns knowledge into useful products and services and one of the most important keys to a strong economy is continuous innovation. He noted that the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is supporting research into mapping innovation across the country and they have developed a cluster research and data website with an innovation index. This index is a tool for comparing regional innovation performance with that of the United States, a single state or another region. The innovation index comprises two broad categories: inputs to innovation, which measure innovation capacity, and outputs of innovation which measure results. Mr. Vaday showed how the Treasure Coast Region compares with the state, California and the nation on Economic Well-Being, Productivity and Employment, Economic Dynamics, and Human Capital. He illustrated how there is a critical gap with respect to Productivity and Employment between the Treasure Coast Region and the other three.

With respect to upcoming meetings, Mr. Vaday noted the rewrite of the plan is being coordinated with the ten other regional planning councils in the state to develop plans that will be uniform. He

noted there have been discussions of incorporating the Six Pillars concept into the plans. Mr. Vaday said some projects presently in the CEDS plan will continue, some will be eliminated, and new projects will be added by the committee. Ms. Simoneau suggested he provide an evaluation of the present projects to the January meeting for analysis. Mr. Vaday noted that by the May meeting the list of projects to be included in the plan rewrite will need to be identified.

Mr. Smyth asked that a copy of Mr. Vaday's PowerPoint presentation be sent to committee members. He commented on the uncertainty involved in a five year economic projection for the CEDS plan and asked if there would be a contingency plan in the event economic factors change. He cited the collapse of the citrus and construction industries as examples. Mr. Vaday said that if the primary clusters that are exhibiting the highest growth fail, then there would be a second tier group that would be targeted next. Mr. Howard Fein noted that the plan will not be set in stone, but will be a guide for the region to become more prosperous and organized. He said that there may be things that occur contrary to the plan, but better planning is better than no planning.

Ms. Linda Hake noted it is important to have diversification in the plan. Mr. Vaday agreed, stating there needs to be diversification into industries such as bio tech, energy and conservation, and not just rely on agriculture and construction. Ms. Hake asked if there are plans to retrain individuals to work in these other industries. Mr. Corbit noted there are currently several training programs available. Mr. Vaday noted that the workforce development boards in the region are very knowledgeable regarding the programs available, and that there are several grants that offer varied training and retraining opportunities. He noted that it is critical that the process of developing the plan be collaborative because that will determine how the various local governments work together within the region to complete projects.

Helene Caseltine noted that the CEDS plan is only a guideline for economic development in the region. She stated that it is not written in stone, such as a local comprehensive plan.

Tammy Simoneau noted that one of the key roles of the CEDS members is to bring back the information in the CEDS Plan to their local elected officials to help them modify their respective comprehensive plan to better enhance the region. Mr. Vaday noted that many municipal leaders are realizing it has become important to have economic development professionals on staff in order to advance economic development within their local governments.

Mr. Glenn Heran asked if the plan will help capture federal grants. Mr. Vaday explained the CEDS Committee is funded by the U.S. EDA, which is the primary federal agency that provides funding for these projects. He stated that the plan needs to be broad enough and flexible enough to incorporate several concepts such as alternative energy, new industries, job retraining, quality of place, and increased communication capabilities. The challenge will be to identify those projects that will have a good proportion of job creation and regional impact, as well as projects that are ready for implementation. Mr. Heran asked if the plan was mandated by the EDA. Mr. Vaday stated in the affirmative, noting Council has been partners with EDA since 1998.

Ms. Simoneau asked if the September 13, 2012 date was the final date for the Committee to approve the plan. Mr. Vaday indicated that would be the date the committee must vote on the plan. It will then be forwarded to the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council to be ratified at its September 21, 2012 meeting, and then transmitted to EDA by the September 30, 2012 deadline.

Mr. Ed Maxwell stated that it is very important that there be proactive monitoring built into the plan as technology changes very rapidly. Mr. Vaday stated that was one of the challenges of the plan,

because the plan is only a snapshot of data and is developed making educated guesses and projections based on the current data. He noted that there has been much discussion of the concept of big data, which relates to all the fact that so much data is being aggregated on a daily basis from different sources. He stated those industries that are able to access the data, shape it, and use it will be in a leadership position moving forward.

Mr. Maxwell noted that jobs in these technologically advanced industries are high level jobs, but the count in terms of employees is low. He noted that there could be a major data center that only has fifty employees. Mr. Vaday stated these types of industries will, from a workforce development standpoint, leave a whole generation of individuals behind if they are not able to be retrained for these types of jobs.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

CEDS COMMITTEE COMMENT

None.

STAFF COMMENT

Mr. Vaday thanked everyone for their participation on the committee in 2011. He stated that the next meeting will be on January 12, 2012. He noted that this year Council staff is intending to install more high tech equipment that could allow for web meetings.

Tammy Simoneau suggested it would be helpful to have paper copies of PowerPoint presentations available at meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.