

Economic Development Meeting Notes

7/30/15

April McDuffie – Education & Workforce and EDO Focus groups need to coordinate.

Kendall Adams – Where can Utilities go under?
Where can hospital go under?

Scott Spivey - What is timeline?

Philip – 30-60 days

Scott - We need to come out of this with goals and priorities. What will happen then?

Philip - Results will be considered public mandates.

Carol McDonald - We need to root out duplication of services across community, not just City/County;

We need to consolidate money and resources for most productivity;
We need to develop community pride;

Most of our educated kids are not coming home; we need to tap into the resources they develop to benefit their hometown.

Previous plan was not a living document; This one needs to be.

David Chaney - What kind of progress made over last six weeks?

Mayor - We are still developing a plan, not yet trying to implement.

Philip - A lot more cooperative discussion is going on. A lot of progress has been made in joint services.

John Croley - MEAG reps came down and proposed a new rate structure for Kendall based on increased load.

Bond issues for Hatch, Vogle, & Schearer will be retired in 2018.
Power costs then limited to maintenance and operations costs and not debt service.

Municipal Competitive Trust money originally put up to fight electricity deregulation.

Sold interest in Vogle 3 & 4 for first 20 years. Can sell again after that or use power and make payments from trust.

MGAG hedges against gas futures.
Highly dependent on National policy;
Shaw cut back caused excess supply.

Jim Casper – We need to hear Chico's story.

Chico Serranno – Not asking for anything. \$2K/mo. Light bill jumped to \$2.6K, then \$3K over two months. WL&B energy analyst walked through. Sent a stack of papers indicating Chico was doing pretty good not to have a higher bill. Then bill dropped back to \$2K/mo. For no apparent reason.

John Croley - WL&B meets 1st Thursday after first Monday. Entire body will consider any problem presented.

Linda Hatcher - Speaking for Tommy – hope you understand how complicated this all is. Tommy is happy to talk with you. You made need in depth study.

Lisa Stone - Students and residents are all our responsibility. Visited drop-out w/ only one class left to graduate. Trashy trailer out in country. Four kids peeking out window should have been in school. Mother attempted to run them off property. Girl came out to to avail.

Mothers like that are community problem. How can we reach unemployed?

Jim Casper – Need to support CIS through funding cuts.

Courtney Whitman- BHCDA has county employee wrking w/ unemployable through license restoration training.

Philip - Toilet paper story.

Brandy Elrod - Lots still right with this community.

From GMA: Arts have direct impact on economic development; more so than construction, tourism, or transportation; 4.3% of GDP. Fed Res. Bank study shows \$1 investment yields \$2.20 return.

Arts should look the same as other EDOs when planning.

Steve Pair -

Windstream central office mega switch major resource for Fitzgerald. DSL expansion in works.

Arts huge everywhere you go. We look but don't see potential that outsiders do. Fitzgerald has more potential tourism than Williamsburg did before Rockefeller. We can build our story from within. What if we had gotten serious as Williamsburg after 1965 celebration? Where would we be today? It is all our responsibility to make Fitzgerald a place people want to be.

Becky Gay -

CIS 23rd year connecting students to resources even to replacing stinky shoes. 50% pregnancy reduction since CIS programs. Struggling readers become honor grads via volunteers and mentors.

Isaac Miles -

Invest in entire community. All money seems to be spent in one part of community. Lack of focus anywhere else.