

**Tyrone Town Council
Workshop Minutes
May 6, 2021
5:30 P.M.**

Present:

Mayor, Eric Dial

Mayor Pro Tem, Gloria Furr

Council Member, Linda Howard

Council Member, Melissa Hill

Council Member, Billy Campbell

Town Manager, Brandon Perkins

Town Clerk, Dee Baker

Finance Manager, Sandy Beach

Town Planner, Phillip Trocquet

Town Engineer/Public Works Director, Scott Langford

Mayor Dial called the meeting to order with limited seating and broadcasted on YouTube Live at 5:30 pm, this was followed by the invocation. The public was invited to watch.

Approval of Agenda

Council Member Campbell made a motion to approve the agenda.

Council Member Hill seconded the motion. Motion was approved 3-0.

1. Economic Development Discussion. *Phillip Trocquet, Town Planner & Megan Baker, Fayette County Development Authority President.*

Mr. Trocquet shared that the topic of discussion was a topic that had been discussed many times prior, however, the guest speakers would give a more in-depth overview of the Land Development and Comprehensive Plan. He introduced Megan Baker, Fayette County Development Authority (FCDA) President, Mr. Greg Wright, Georgia EMC, Economic Development Division, Sr. Director, Community and Economic Development, Mr. Charles Stallworth, Georgia Power, Economic Development Division, Business Recruitment Director, and Mr. Ricardo Palacios - Georgia Power, Economic Development Division, Engineering Manager.

Mr. Greg Wright, Georgia EMC, Economic Development Division, Sr. Director began the session.

Council Meeting – Social Distancing/YouTube Live
May 6, 2021 Workshop

Mr. Wright began by sharing that he lived in Newnan and although his house was not damaged by the recent tornado, he thanked Tyrone for their efforts in gathering much-needed supplies for the heavily hit community. He shared that economic development was the practice of improving the community's economic wellbeing for a better quality of life. Tyrone has a plan. He added that one important role was to obtain jobs and to retain the jobs we had. He shared that some companies move their organization to other communities. They look for a good tax base, quality of life, and a nice image when transferring, is it a golf community for instance. Businesses look for good Town policies, infrastructure programs, and business improvement programs, such as the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce. The process would usually begin with the County Development Authority's site management team. Corporations seek different cities, states, and countries for their home base. If a phone call is received, usually the company has already researched the area, they also pay attention to local politics and news.

Mr. Wright explained that when in contact with a site location consultant, they needed to be treated the same as the business owner, we are their first contact. Another avenue companies may seek is the Georgia Department of Economic Development. He added that our regional contact would be Emily Poole. There were also tourism marketing managers, for instance, with the film industry. Georgia utility companies also had representatives for marketing communities. He shared that the FCDA played a critical role in the economic development process. The statewide economic developers provide information regarding labor, labor rates, training, utility costs, and incentives. They were essentially the concierge of the prospect. Their goal was the entire state of Georgia, they wanted to see our cities thrive.

Mr. Wright shared that prospects could ask any type of question about the community. He gave an example of one prospect inquiring of all bridges from point A to point B on the interstate and their height and width of each bridge. He added that we needed to always be prepared for the prospect, research to find what they are looking for, and have the information readily available. He also shared the importance of confidentiality. He added that the next step would be to choose a community spokesperson, stay open, be creative and look for a win-win. He ended by sharing that while closing the deal, keep the memorandum of understanding simple and non-threatening to the prospect, have a balance. Mayor Dial thanked Mr. Wright and shared that they had been friends for a long time and that he was a good man.

Mr. Charles Stallworth, Georgia Power, Economic Development Division, Business Recruitment Director spoke next regarding targeted industry sectors, and what are decision factors. He stated that it was an honor to live nearby, and his children attended Sandy Creek Highschool. He echoed Mr. Wright and stated the importance of confidentiality. At times company board members, and especially their competitors would not be privy to the information of a potential relocation. If customers or employees knew of the potential relocation, that could be detrimental to a project. Mr. Stallworth explained that the State's department of economic development was their primary recruiting arm. No incentives were offered without the Governor's approval.

Council Meeting – Social Distancing/YouTube Live
May 6, 2021 Workshop

All major utilities partner with the state to assist the growth in Georgia. He added, that Georgia Power did not just sell utilities, they sold Georgia utilities. When Georgia grows, everyone benefits. He then shared a table of Georgia target industries. Georgia's Targeted Industry Sectors are Aerospace, Advanced Manufacturing, Automotive, Contact Centers (call centers), Data Centers, Digital Media and Entertainment, Fabricated Metal, FinTech, Food Processing, Information Technology, and Warehouse Distribution. Georgia partners with these types of businesses.

Mr. Stallworth stated that they often get asked the question, why a particular company did not relocate to a particular location or Georgia. Why did they relocate elsewhere? He explained the site elimination process. Georgia's competition was mainly South Carolina and Tennessee. Nationally, the competition was Dallas, Chicago, and Nashville. He explained that 25%-30% of headquarters or corporations that relocate or expand to Georgia were international companies. When most companies look at Tyrone, they see Atlanta. They want to minimize the supply chain, where was their workforce coming from. Georgia also has a pretty good interstate system. The workforce usually tends to live within a 35-mile radius of the company. He added that labor, incentives, infrastructure, and leadership were very important factors. He asked Council, out of the four, which one was the most important factor? He shared that leadership was the driving force from an economic development perspective. He shared information from the targeted industry sector table. He gave the example of the quality of life being the most important factor for headquarters and financial technology businesses. Atlanta has a huge millennial population where they thrive in a live/work-type community. Regarding data centers, they look for low cost for utilities and low natural disaster rates, a stable environment. He added that food processing plants looked for easily accessed water and sewer connections. He shared that advanced manufacturing had changed drastically over the years. He gave the example of touring the newer Kia plant and stated that it was so clean that it represented a hospital atmosphere. Advanced manufacturing businesses were also asking for quality of life, good housing rates, low crime statistics. He added that Georgia benefited from a highly skilled training program entitled, "Quick Start", with technical colleges throughout the state which gave Georgia an added value. Mayor Dial asked since leadership was one of the more important factors, what type of leadership were they looking for? Mr. Stallworth shared that community leadership as a whole. Mayor Dial asked what characteristics would be needed for good community leadership when locating new businesses? Mr. Stallworth shared that a local community that was located 10 miles from the interstate continued to get awarded project, after project. Their secret was that they were always unified and remained focused. Unity made a big difference. He thanked Council for their time.

Mr. Ricardo Palacios - Georgia Power, Economic Development Division, Engineering Manager spoke next.

Council Meeting – Social Distancing/YouTube Live
May 6, 2021 Workshop

He stated that his team had a goal to help communities such as Tyrone, envision their future, especially regarding industrial parks. He shared their site assessment matrix. The matrix asked 117 questions of each parcel in the entire state of Georgia. For example, how far was the parcel from the interstate, water connection, sewer, and gas to name a few, then it received a grade? He added that there were essentially six buckets of questions; environmental, size and shape of the property, ownership, transportation, utilities, and zoning. Each property was graded individually on the series of questions. Did the property have one owner, was it close to utilities, and interstates, or airports, did it have the proper zoning, and was it located on wetlands? He shared several examples of local Tyrone properties and shared their grades according to the questions. The parcels chosen were graded from 74.8% to 100% of land marketed for an industrial park. The higher scores had one owner, available utilities, proper zoning, and were shaped well with good topography. The lower scores reflected family-owned properties with odd shapes, potential flood zones, and needed to be rezoned. Mr. Palacios shared that the vendor that uploaded their database was only 1-2 years behind updating to reflect current zoning maps. Mr. Palacios thanked Council for their time.

Council Member Furr arrived at 6:19 pm.

Mr. Stallworth shared resources that were available to the Town leaders and staff, Megan Baker with the FCDA, and Emily Poole, the Regional Project Manager for Region 3 with the Georgia Department of Economic Development. He added that Coweta Fayette EMC and Georgia Power also had project managers that the Town could reach out to with any questions.

Mr. Trocquet thanked all speakers (the “A-Team”) and Ms. Megan Baker for putting the presentation together. He then shared a high-level overview. He commented on Mr. Palacios’ matrix regarding a few properties on the north end of Hwy 74. Perhaps in the future, per past conversations, the properties could be annexed into the Town. He added that it would assist the Town as it moved forward with specific character areas of our Comprehensive Plan. The properties would be very desirable. It could also assist staff to form a better detail regarding zoning and specific uses such as; a business technical park, residential or industrial park. Council could also better decide what types of businesses they would like along the corridor.

Council Member Howard inquired about who would be the first contact for a potential business owner. Mr. Trocquet stated that from his understanding, essentially, they would contact the State first, then it would filter to one of the gentlemen that spoke this evening, then Megan Baker. Mayor Dial also asked if all of the Regional Economic Development Representatives would gather together to see where a new corporation would be best suited. Megan Baker shared that the search began at a multi-state level, then the state level, utility representatives, then the regional representatives, then the county. Projects come from different avenues; they may reach out to the utility companies first. Ms. Baker added that the FCDA also marketed Fayette County.

Mr. Stallworth stated that the database housed several different criteria. The database narrowed the search to what the prospect was specifically looking for.

Council Meeting – Social Distancing/YouTube Live
May 6, 2021 Workshop

It then indicated different communities that match that criteria. Mayor Dial mentioned the recently approved Business Technology Park (BTP) zoning district, and that it may not register with the database. Mr. Stallworth stated that regarding education, the area needed to be a draw for Emory or Georgia Tech. grads, regarding their living standards, especially millennials. Mayor Dial restated that if the Town wished to house a business technology park, staff also needed to ensure that housing was available. Mr. Stallworth stated that Ms. Baker and Ms. Poole would be great resources for that. He added that an Aircraft Maintenance Repair and Operations type business would be a great fit for the area. These were very high-paying jobs. Mayor Dial stated that they may be light industrial, but were they business technology? Mr. Trocquet shared that in terms of the nomenclature of the Town's zoning districts, the matrix categorizes zoning districts as a whole. A BTP was essentially light industrial. Mr. Palacios explained that when searching the matrix, the business may have a possibility for the area, however, Ms. Baker would then be called to see if that particular business would be able to fit into that particular parcel. Mr. Wright added that the Town needed to market itself. Let the consultants know exactly what you want.

Mayor Dial recognized Mr. Tracy Young in the audience. He added that Mr. Young was Tyrone's Representative for the FCDA, and thanked him for his service.

Adjournment

Council Member Howard made a motion to adjourn. Motion was approved 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:33 pm.

By: _____
Eric Dial, Mayor

Attest: _____
Dee Baker, Town Clerk