

**WORK SESSION MINUTES**

**July 2, 2013**

1:00 p.m.

Commissioners' Office Conference Room

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Kathy George, Mary P. Stern, and Allen Springer

**STAFF:** Laura Tschabold, Chuck Vesper

**GUESTS:** Jeff Lorton, Duke Joseph Agency; Amy Herudin, Amity High School intern; Nathalie Hardy, News-Register

**TOPIC:** Economic Development

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Kathy called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m.

Jeff Lorton discussed with the group the county's vision for economic development and his interest in providing part-time consulting services for the county. Mary expressed support of hiring Jeff's agency to work with the county on either a portion or all of the economic development efforts. She said that tourism is an important element of economic development that needs to be embraced.

Mary stated that one of the things that came out of the GROW Economic Development Plan that she really likes and wants to keep is the concept of a regional development team with representatives from each city. She said that 20% of economic development efforts should be focused on attracting new businesses and 80% on supporting and retaining existing businesses. Jeff suggested picking some sectors, taking some examples of businesses in those sectors, and telling their stories on the web through images and words, which could be done at about 20% of the cost of putting together a video.

Kathy expressed appreciation for Jeff's enthusiasm and flexibility. She said that coordination among communities will be important to avoid duplication of effort. Jeff agreed, stating that the county should take a leadership role and act as a facilitator. Kathy added that some financial buy-in from the cities would be needed to maintain this economic development structure. Jeff said that the key to that would be to have a very clear mission that cities would want to be part of.

Laura said that putting together a recommendation for a communication plan is something that Jeff could do after he is hired and has had a chance to get out in the communities and talk to people. The commissioners asked him to study the GROW plan and put together a proposal.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Anne Britt  
Secretary