

Unsealed by the Board of Commissioners on 2/12/2024.

MINUTES
TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 23, 2017 – CLOSED SESSION

Closed Session #2

Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of business in the area served by this body. Present were Chairman Chapman, Commissioners Chappell, Hawkins, Lemel and Phillips, County Manager Jaime Laughter, Transylvania Economic Alliance Executive Director Josh Hallingse, County Attorney Tony Dalton, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

Transylvania Economic Alliance Executive Director Josh Hallingse provided an update on several potential economic development projects and received direction from Commissioners.

Project Cocoa (part 2 of closed session #2)

Project Cocoa is a resort user to be located on approximately 75 acres of property located in unincorporated Transylvania County. The project will include renovations to existing buildings and property amenities and the construction of a branded, 124-key balcony suite hotel building. The development will include an outdoor amphitheater, activities barn and a separate spa/wellness center. The development plan will also include quarter-shares, cottages and residential uses. Given the project's focus on preserving Transylvania County's unique sense of place, the resort will be built on the property in a way that maximizes view sheds while also preserving existing greenspace. The branded resort will be managed by a professional resort company and will offer unique enrichment classes, adventure programs, spa treatments and utilization of the community's existing network of outdoor amenities including horseback riding, fly fishing, mountain biking, and rock climbing/repelling, all offered in the surrounding State and national forests.

The resort will create 100 direct, new full-time jobs and 50 direct part-time positions. Real property investment is projected at \$40 million, which will include hotel rooms, a spa facility, and convention/meeting space.

Mr. Hallingse has been working with the City of Brevard and the developer to address the biggest component of this project which is water and sewer utilities. The City's policy requires voluntary annexation for sewer utilities; however, the parties are working toward a compromise allowing a 5-year delay on annexation. The City has agreed to move forward and will assist with drafting a developer's agreement outlining restrictions on roads, lighting, etc. in an effort to avoid future maintenance and public safety concerns for annexation acceptance. The City's current UDO does not have zoning designations for resorts.

Because this is a complicated project, Mr. Hallingse has been trying to put together a framework for an incentive package in order to give confidence to the developer while he pulls together financiers. In order to do that, Commissioners will need to draft a letter confirming what has been agreed upon in closed session. This will cause the project to become public knowledge, but it allows the developer to continue to move forward with the next phases of the project. Mr. Hallingse stated that the letter should disclose the details of the project and define the terms of the County's expectations in order for the developer to qualify and receive incentives. The period of time should not be open-ended (3 to 5 years is reasonable) and should pressure the developer into moving the project along. Mr. Hallingse reported that he has engaged a development specialty attorney to draft the letter and help the City think through their UDO and identify areas they can forego. If agreed, a public hearing is required prior to approval of such a letter.

Mr. Hallingse stated that the uniqueness of this project has forced him to think more creatively about an incentive package. He sees great value in it, and stated that if it comes to fruition, it could be transformative for Transylvania County.

Commissioners discussed the proposal and agreed that 3 years was a reasonable time frame with the understanding that making this project known to the public is agreeable to the developer. Mr. Hallingse will work with the specialty attorney on drafting the letter and keep the Manager and Commissioners informed of next steps.

Larry L. Chapman, Chairman
Transylvania County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board