

Unsealed by the Board of Commissioners on 11/13/2023.

**MINUTES**  
**TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**February 28, 2022 – CLOSED SESSION**

Per N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (4) To discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, a closed session was entered into at 8:43 p.m. Present were Chairman Chappell, Commissioners Chapman, Dalton, Guice and McCall, County Manager Jaime Laughter, County Attorneys John Kubis and Patrick Scott, Finance Director Jonathan Griffin, representatives from the Transylvania Economic Alliance, and Clerk to the Board Trisha Hogan.

Closed Session #1 – Project Vital Forest

Transylvania Economic Alliance Executive Director Burton Hodges presented information to the Board of Commissioners on Project Vital Forest, formerly known as Project Peacock. He was joined by Sam Powers, who has been serving as the Interim Director until Mr. Burton was hired, and Chair of the Alliance’s Board of Directors Amber Webb.

Project Vital Forest represents an existing pharmaceutical manufacturing business in Transylvania County. The business has been located in Transylvania County since the 1970s. The company is located in a 20,000 sq. ft. facility and employs 28 full-time employees. In 2018, the business was sold to a publicly traded pharmaceutical development and manufacturing company headquartered in India, which currently operates 26 manufacturing facilities across the globe.

Under this new management and leadership, Project Vital Forest is considering a multi-phase two-part expansion of the Transylvania County facility that will enhance its operations and manufacturing capabilities to serve US-based customers. Phase 1 involves the initial construction of a pilot manufacturing facility which is tentatively scheduled to begin operations in late 2022 or early 2023. Once that facility is completed, phase 2 will commence and involves the construction of an 80,000 sq. ft. commercial pharmaceutical manufacturing facility. By the end of phase 2, the project will create 57 full-time jobs (in addition to the current 28) in Transylvania County at an average wage of over \$60,000. The project will result in \$57 million in new taxable investment. In addition to working with local and state support, the Alliance is also working with partners to pursue infrastructure extension that supports the company’s expansion. Project Vital Forest scored 95 out of 100 points on the Transylvania County Economic Incentive Policy scorecard.

The Alliance and County staff will need to continue working with the City of Brevard on the infrastructure component, as well as with EDPNC on navigating a state incentive package.

The Board considered a performance-based incentive grant package based on job creation, capital investment, and scorecard. Commissioners acknowledged that the overall investment and the impact on the local economy are significant and considered extending the investment period. The current policy allows up to six years of investment period to be considered, but due to the sheer impact this project could have on the local economy, the Board extended the investment period to nine years. With all the other partner relationships necessary to ensure the expansion is successful, the incentive would show the County’s desire for the company to remain and expand in Transylvania County.

ATTEST:

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Jason R. Chappell, Chairman

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Trisha M. Hogan, Clerk to the Board

02/28/2022

Transylvania County Board of Commissioners