

Peter Lear

From: Debbie McDowell
Sent: Thursday, August 16, 2018 10:18 PM
To: Peter Lear
Subject: Sarasota EDC

Pete -

As we discussed earlier ... Here are my notes from today's EDC board meeting. I am only going to share the discussion about North Port which lasted about 45 minutes to an hour. I'll share the rest of what transpired during Commissioner Comments.

Thank you for putting this on the August 21 agenda.

If you have any questions, I'll be available for another hour or anytime after 7am tomorrow morning and will be traveling to Hollywood for the conference. Have a nice evening.

Debbie

Feedback from other board members about North Port withdrawing from the EDC include:

- * What could the EDC do better to communicate with North Port and visa versa
- * This discussion and action is diverting attention from the EDC's goals and mission
- * Fairness to other government entities if North Port withdraws and the EDC still promotes NP without any contributions paid to the EDC
- * North Port is a consumer of the EDC. As a consumer if they don't believe they are getting anything of value, it is understandable why they want to withdraw.
- * There is strength in numbers to promote the county. Presenting as a unified front.
- * The value is spread countywide
- * The "optics" of North Port withdrawing is affecting other entities (ie MPO, Chambers etc) and leaves them wondering why and if they're next
- * Having a voice is an investment
- * Sarasota County was surprised by this move
- * It was suggested that North Port continue as a member and the EDC is "on notice" for one year to show specific ROI (direct and indirect). Spend this next year making everyone stronger.

At this point I was invited to speak and explain why North Port was withdrawing. My talking points included:

- ** a brief description how the entire conversation of withdrawing started ... at a budget workshop, with a simple question, "what is our ROI on the \$65,000 contribution"? Since no real ROI could be explained it was decided with a 5-0 vote to withdraw the money and out of the EDC to focus on North Port
- ** We have spent approx. \$500,000 since 2005 and based on the presentation given by Mr. Huey our ROI is 1,200 North Port residents work for the companies they've brought to the county.
- ** The county withdrew from the RPC for the same reason, lack of value and little ROI
- ** North Port Businesses should still have the EDC advocating for them because these businesses are required to pay the business tax receipts. Those monies are allocated to the EDC.
- ** The interlocal agreement is basically useless because some of the "players" don't exist and the required reports are not being shared with our staff.

Mr. Rob Lewis introduced himself. He is Jeff Matsby's replacement. Mr. Lewis assured the board that nothing has changed at the County level in the EDC department. The revamping was only a change in personnel and there is no change in the County's commitment to the EDC. He will be reaching out to Ms. Ruth and the rest of North Port's Commissioners.

The board expressed appreciation for my comments and requested time to get everything worked out. Including more interaction with Ms. Ruth and the City Manager.

EDC Board direction - to work with all parties to increase communication, revise the interlocal agreement and strengthen the relationship with NP and other government agencies. Passed unanimously.

I gave them our next meeting dates including where we are in the budget process. They expressed an interest in attending our August 21 meeting

Sent from my iPad

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