

**CAMDEN COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
WORK SESSION**

**DISCUSSION REGARDING THE JOINT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2009 5:30 PM  
200 EAST FOURTH STREET, WOODBINE, GEORGIA 31569**

**The Camden County Board of County Commissioners held a Work Session at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 20, 2009, in the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Chambers of the Government Services Building, Woodbine, Georgia.**

**Chairman Rainer called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.**

**Present: Chair David L. Rainer; Vice-Chair Katherine Nisi Zell; Commissioner Willis R. Keene, Jr.; Commissioner Stephen L. Berry; Commissioner Charlene Sears; County Administrator Steve Howard; County Attorney Brent Green, County Clerk Jodi Gregory, and Deputy Clerk Katie Bishop.**

- **Work Session - Joint Development Authority**

County Administrator Steve Howard explained that the board members of the Joint Development Authority asked for a Work Session to be held to answer questions pertaining to hiring of the position of Joint Development Authority Director, and who the Director will report too.

County Attorney Brent Green stated that there is *State Law* in regards to the Joint Development Authority and some language suggests that there can be a partnership in hiring the Joint Development Authority Director.

Attorney Michael Perry (*Speaking on behalf of the Joint Development Authority Board of Directors*) stated that the same legislation that County Attorney Brent Green is referring to gives the Joint Development Authority board members power to hire employees and reimbursements as well.

John McDill, Chair of the Joint Development Authority, stated that during some discussion with Commissioner Steve Berry prior to this work session, Commissioner Berry suggested that the Joint Development Authority budget come back to the Board of County Commissioners and the Director be hired and report to the County Administrator. He further stated that he researched this by talking to other counties within the Southeast region.

Chair Rainer asked if any other counties in Southeast Georgia had this structuring in place.

John McDill explained the structure of the Joint Development Authority Department and how the department previously operated.

Pat Brown, Vice-Chair of the Joint Development Authority, stated that the board wants the new director to work closely with the County and the Cities as well as, the Planning & Development departments.

Attorney Michael Perry stated that he does not believe the County can have the authority over the Joint Development Authority Board of Directors. He explained that Georgia Legislation states that the Board of Directors hires and fires employees. He further explained that this information can be found in the bylaws stating that the powers and duties are specifically carried out by the Joint Development Authority Board of Directors.

Chair Rainer stated that at this time he would open the floor to the Board of County Commissioners to have the opportunity to speak.

Commissioner Keene stated that he was not in favor of doing away with the Joint Development Authority, but he further explained that some changes could be made to it.

He stated that ideally at a cost effective perspective it should be a joint effort and a qualified director is needed as well as, a trained Board of Directors with education requirements. He stated that well defined and realistic goals should be established; also, the Joint Development Authority needs to focus not just on new businesses, but businesses that are already in Camden County.

Vice-Chair Zell stated that she appreciated the presentation the Joint Development Authority gave her a while back, and that put a lot of her concerns at rest. She stated that Camden County should be proud, but certainly changes can be made to improve.

Commissioner Sears stated that her concerns for the Joint Development Authority relate to the budget process. She explained that every Director comes and presents the Board of County Commissioners their department's budget. She went on to state that the Joint Development Authority does not provide status reports and the County needs to account on where the money is spent. She stated that the Joint Development Authority needs a strategic plan as the County. Commissioner Sears stated that she knows that the Board of Directors has served unselfishly and worked hard, but she urged that now is the time to make changes. She stated that the communication between the Joint Development Authority and the Board of County Commissioners needs to be improved.

Commissioner Berry stated that his intention was not to get rid of the Joint Development Authority. He explained that it probably needed to be bigger, and the issue was with accountability. Commissioner Berry went on to state that the Joint Development Authority would remain in place. He explained that the Director would take the title of Economic Development Director and would still work with the Joint Development Authority Board.

Commissioner Berry further stated that the budget would be under the control of the Board of County Commissioners. He stated that the sole reason for this change would be all about accountability and has nothing to do with anything else.

Chair Rainer stated that at this time there would be a consensus of the Board taken to decide whether to Board of County Commissioners will hire the Executive Director to the Joint Development Authority and restructure the funding to bring the budget back to the Board of County Commissioners:

Commissioner Keene - nay, but likes the concept of the funding structure coming back under the Board of County Commissioner's control.

Vice-Chair Zell - nay, but agrees that the budget restructuring is necessary.

Commissioner Sears - yea

Commissioner Berry - yea

Chair Rainer - nay, but agrees that the budget restructuring is necessary.

It was the consensus of the Commissioners to not hire an Economic Development Director but to restructure the funding to bring the budget back to the Board of County Commissioners.

Chair Rainer asked County Administrator Steve Howard to work out the details of the budget restructuring for the Joint Development Authority.

Commissioner Berry stated he would like the minutes to reflect that he disagrees with the Joint Development Authority Board of Directors hiring an Executive Director.

Chair Rainer adjourned the Work Session at 6:05 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,

*David L. Rainer*  
David L. Rainer, Chair

*Kathryn A. Bishop*  
Kathryn A. Bishop, Acting County Clerk