



For Immediate Release

May 11, 2010

First of its kind joint regulatory workshop held in Palm Beach County to enhance the local business climate by promoting positive working relationships.

West Palm Beach, FL – In a unique collaboration by local public and private sectors, the results of opinion research to identify best management practices were presented at a May 11 workshop. A balanced audience of professionals from the building, engineering, planning, design, zoning, contracting, and architectural fields were invited to attend.

In 2009, the Economic Council of Palm Beach County, Inc. commissioned a nationally recognized community and economic development consultant (MarketStreet Services, Inc.) to perform an independent competitiveness analysis. The study indicated Palm Beach County suffered from the perception of being an expensive and difficult place to do business. Representatives of local government and business subsequently discussed a mutual desire to bring new business and development opportunities, jobs, and increased tax revenues to Palm Beach County while preserving the highest quality of life. The parties agreed to an impartial research project to:

- Understand the effects of the Regulatory Review Process on business development, both in the public and private sectors;
- Identify the best application and review practices in the public and private sectors;
- Improve communication between the public and private sectors.

An equal number of volunteers from units of local government, private businesses, and professional disciplines who are directly involved in every aspect of the growth management and development process conducted personal interviews of peers. The research results were objectively collated and presented to representatives from all sectors.

"The results of interviews have shown there is room for improvement in both the private and public sectors. The workshop is not about placing blame. Instead, it offered an opportunity to create streamlined approaches that prove mutually beneficial to both the private and public sectors" said **Jim Brindell**, partner in the Gunster law firm and Co-Chair of the Regulatory Climate Task Force.

"The public sector must be willing to listen to the needs and suggestions of the private sector - they are the customer and they are individuals bringing business to the individual departments of county and city government" said **Kurt Bressner**, a city manager and another leader for this project. "At the same time, businesses and their representatives acknowledged they can also improve the methods used to achieve their goals" said another project leader, **Doug Wise**, a city official.

"We believe this combined effort and united front will give Palm Beach County the competitive edge it needs when the local economy begins to recover" said **Don Hearing**, partner in the Cotleur & Hearing, Inc. and Co-Chair of the Regulatory Climate Task Force.

Background

The complete results of the research were circulated at the meeting and can be found at http://www.economiccouncilpbc.org/clientuploads/Final%20Workshop%20Doc%2005_11_10.pdf.

Volunteer members of the Committee who developed and organized the survey were: Private Sector - **Chris Roog, Gold Coast Builders Association; Jeff Brophy, Land Design South; Aimee Craig Carlson, and Josh Long, Gunster;** and Public Sector - **Kurt Bressner, City of Boynton Beach; Doug Wise, City of West Palm Beach; Barbara Alterman, County Government; and Lula Butler, City of Delray Beach.**

The Regulatory Climate Task Force was organized by the Economic Council of Palm Beach County, Inc. The Committee is made up of members of the Economic Council and other volunteers from the business community and local government. The workshop underwriters are:

Associated Builders and Contractors, Florida East Coast Chapter, Inc.
Associated General Contractors of America, Inc. Florida East Coast Chapter
Building Officials Association of Palm Beach County
Business Development Board of Palm Beach County
Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches
Coulter & Hearing, Inc.
Economic Council of Palm Beach County, Inc.
Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association of Florida (FAPA)
Gold Coast Builders Association
Gunster Law Firm
JOHNSTON GROUP Land Development Consultants, Inc.
Land Design South
Keshavarz & Associates, Inc.
Palm Beach County City Managers Association
Palm Beach County Planning Congress
Realtors ® Association of the Palm Beaches, Inc.
The Urban Land Institute, SE FL/Caribbean District Council

Founded in 1975, the Economic Council of Palm Beach County, Inc. has been serving the citizens of Palm Beach County for 35 years. It is a not-for-profit, non-governmental, nonpartisan, private business organization. Its mission is to create an environment to help business prosper. More information about the Economic Council of Palm Beach County, Inc. may be found at www.EconomicCouncilPBC.org.

Contacts

Jim Brindell, Regulatory Climate Task Force Co-Chair
(561) 650-0511
jbrindell@gunster.com

Don Hearing, Regulatory Climate Task Force Co-Chair
(561) 747-6336 , ext. 102
E- Mail: dhearing@coteleur-hearing.com

Kurt Bressner for the Palm Beach County City Managers Association
(561) 742-6010
E- Mail: bressnerk@bbfl.us

Doug Wise for the Building Officials Association of Palm Beach County
(561) 805-6650
E- Mail: DWise@wpb.org

Mike Jones, President and CEO
Economic Council of Palm Beach County, Inc.
(561) 684-1551 Ext. 225
E- Mail: MJones@economiccouncilpbc.org

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