

# 2021 Program of Work



This year will be an important year as we continue to find ways to serve our membership during the lingering COVID-19 crisis. Business development and growth coupled with growing our virtual connections will support the work of our Chamber throughout the year. Our major goal will be to operate transparently with effective and efficient processes while serving and growing our membership.

## **2021 Chairperson Jess Edwards identified the following as the priorities for 2021:**

The Chamber will look to improve our online presence and enhance our Board Room to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our meetings. We will establish new financial tracking reports to give more insight into overall budget decisions. My goal is to increase membership and business engagement through carefully planned chamber events and skillfully applied Chamber resources. The Chamber will develop programming that will optimize opportunities for businesses and industry in our community to showcase their products and services while working to improve the quality of life for the Citizens of Kinston and Lenoir County. The Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce 2021 Program of Work is presented as follows:

## **Financial Affairs**

**Treasurer and Vice President of Financial Affairs: Laura Lang-Tribula, State Employees Credit Union**

**Staff: Craig Hill Executive Director, Donna Jones Finance Director**

**Committee Members include Board Chair, Jess Edwards, Chair Elect, Becky Whittington, and Past Chair, Judy Jones.**

- Monitor the Chamber's growth and financial accountability practices to ensure that procedures are revised and /or added as required.
- Modify our monthly reporting documents to improve revenue and expenditure tracking
- Track the budget closely to determine if mid-year revisions are needed.
- Focus on basic and enhanced membership growth and other revenue producing programs.

## **Membership Services**

**Vice President of Membership Services: Jamie Spruill, Greater Kinston Credit Union**

**Chairperson: Reding Pittman, BB&T-Truist**

**Staff: Craig Hill, Executive Director**

- Membership Services is responsible to the Board of Directors for activities and projects that will increase the Chamber's Membership and retain its current membership.

### **Membership Services Committee:**

- Will focus on membership retention through a multi-tiered program. This program will reach out to new members and will contact existing members multiple times during the year to share membership benefits and services to increase membership and eliminate non-renewals.

### **Ambassadors:**

- We plan to build an active group of 10-15 active Ambassadors. Ambassadors will assist with Ribbon Cuttings, Business Before and After Hours, and other events. Ambassadors work with new member engagement and will help communicate the mission and goals of the Chamber. Often, they will serve as greeters at our major events and will work with the Chamber staff to assist with details and programming.

### **Membership Development:**

- Membership development is a top priority with growth and quality of membership being primary goals. The membership committee will work with the Chamber staff to develop a list of potential members and former members of the Chamber to reach out to encourage growth in our membership. The membership committee will assist with the quarterly Business After Hours by inviting potential new members and encouraging existing membership to attend.

### **Membership Retention:**

- The retention program will keep all members and the public informed on the benefits of chamber membership. New strategic plans will be implemented to focus on business engagement and economic development through the implementation of a Business Expo, enhanced quarterly Business After Hours, and highlighted product and services of members. Additional touch points will be conveyed to all members throughout the year.

## **Special Projects:**

**Vice President of Special Projects: Jeffrey Williford, Belk**

**Staff: Craig Hill, Executive Director, Linda Whittington, Office Manager, Donna Jones, Finance Director**

- Special Projects is responsible to the Board of Directors for activities and special projects that give Chamber members an opportunity to network with other members and make valuable new business contacts. In addition, these activities generate non-dues income for the Chamber.
- This committee oversees the Chambers larger events and ensures these events align with the mission of the Chamber. The signature events include: Annual Banquet, Business Awards, Member Business Expo, and the Quarterly Enhanced Business After Hours.

## **Governmental Affairs:**

**Vice President of Governmental Affairs: Linda Rouse-Sutton, Lenoir County Board of Commissioners (Chairman)**

**Staff: Craig Hill, Executive Director**

- Governmental Affairs is responsible to the Board of Directors for activities and projects that address public policy issues that affect the business climate and business community of Kinston and Lenoir County. In addition, these activities will inform the Chamber membership of identified public policy issues and solicit input from the Chamber membership.
- Responsible for ongoing communications with City, County, State, and Federal governmental officials to increase awareness and build relationships. The goal is to work with officials to build a better community for all.
- Identify and share policies that have either a negative or positive impact on business and economic development. These may include but are not limited to education, housing, business incentives, transportation, etc.
- Wake-Up Lenoir series offering dialogue with different groups of elected or appointed officials in government on topics of relevance to the Chamber and our business community.

## **Diversity Affairs**

**Vice President of Diversity Affairs: Brian Black, Spirit AeroSystems**

**Staff: Craig Hill, Executive Director**

- The Diversity Affairs Committee is responsible to the Board of Directors for activities and projects that address diversity and minority concerns within the business community. In addition, these activities should promote increased membership and participation in the chamber from this sector of the business community.
- The Diversity Affairs Committee will work to develop a strategic plan to increase the number of minority businesses in the Chamber and minority inclusion in the governing body and committee structure of the Chamber.
- Equitable business opportunities, housing, education, and availability of medical resources and access to high-speed broadband are all topics that will be part of the discussion and plan of action for this committee.

## **Agri-Business**

**Vice President of Agri-Business: Tammy Kelly, Lenoir County Cooperative Extension Service**

**Staff: Craig Hill, Executive Director**

- Agri-Business is responsible to the Board of Directors for activities and projects that address Agri-Business and the Farming Business Community and associated industry. In addition, these activities should promote increased membership and participation in the chamber from this sector of the business community.
- Communicate with various agri-businesses including but not limited to Farm Bureau, Farm Credit Services, Cunningham Research Farm, etc.
- Educate public officials and business leaders and assist in the development of public policy to promote the support of local agriculture products as a part of the economic development of our community and region.
- Involvement and support of the annual Coastal Plains Livestock Show and Sale
- Communicate and be involved with the Farmers Market Season Opening Celebration, special events, Business After Hours, and year-long e-post updates and newsletter.
- Enhance the Got to Be NC involvement through collaboration with the BBQ Festival on the Neuse
- Strengthen Agri-Tourism awareness with collaboration with the Tourism Authority and [visitkinston.com](http://visitkinston.com)

## **Community Development:**

**Vice President of Community Development: Barbara Smith, FASCO**

**Staff: Craig Hill, Executive Director**

- Community Development is responsible to the Board of Directors for activities and projects, which lead towards improvement of the physical environmental elements of the community so that it will become a better and more attractive place in which to live, work, shop, and invest.
- The Chamber partners with other local partners with similar goals to work collaboratively toward positive outcomes.
- Continue the work with our local and State government entities on improved Housing, Transportation, Business Expansion, Technology Infrastructure, Public Safety, and Community Improvement projects.
- Provide Chamber Staff with content for the website that will highlight our local businesses and community and will make it attractive for others to become a part of our community.

## **Business Development:**

**Vice-President of Business and Tourism Development: Tonya Adams, Beauty Box, Home Towne Exchange, Leon Thomas**

**Staff: Craig Hill, Executive Director**

- The Business Development Committee's responsibility is to work towards improving the total economy directed toward commercial, retail, and industrial development as well as supporting agriculture and tourism.
- The mission of this committee will be to achieve economic growth for our community through quality of life and business development.

Projects for 2021 include:

- Develop a mechanism for gathering input from local business owners on new business development and using that input to work with Pride of Kinston, Lenoir County Economic Development, and the Lenoir County Committee of 100 as opportunities arise.
- Update the TLC (Think Lenoir County) and/or (Buy Local) program encouraging local shopping and purchasing of services and create a coalition of participating Lenoir County businesses that can, as a group, take advantage of opportunities to advertise under the TLC Banner or Buy Local Banner.

- Re-Visit the Red-Carpet Gift Card program that welcomes individuals relocating to our community by presenting them with a welcome gift card package. Expand the catalogue of participating businesses and promote this program to HR Managers, Realtors, and the public.
- Create awareness with Human Resources managers, realtors, and the public about the importance of a live locally program. Work with Committee of 100 on updating the ExecuStay list of available temporary housing to be available to HR managers.

## **Manufacturing and Industry**

**Vice President of Manufacturing and Industry: Todd Frideger, Plant Manager Crown Equipment Corporation**

**Staff: Craig Hill, Executive Director**

- The Manufacturing and Industry Committee is responsible to the Board of Directors for activities and projects that address the manufacturing sector of the business community and associated industry. In addition, these activities should promote increased membership and participation in the chamber from this sector of the business community.
- Provide manufacturers a list of Chamber benefits that will inform them on how the Chamber can benefit their employees. Also provide an updated list of temporary housing for their new employees.
- Work closely with the Lenoir County Manufactures Association (LCMA).
- Offer relocation packages and the Red-Carpet program to all manufacturers.
- Communicate to HR directors the wealth of local information on the Chamber 's Website.
- Continue to work with Lenoir County Economic Development and Lenoir Committee of 100.
- Develop the criteria for the new Manufacturing/Business Award for companies that employ over 50 employees in Lenoir County to be award at our Business Awards Program in the Fall.

# **Young Professionals of Lenoir County**

**Vice President of Young Professionals of Lenoir County, Tyndall Davis, Lenoir County Public Schools**

**Committee Chair: Austin Shackelford, Flatlands Jessup Insurance Group**

**Staff: Craig Hill, Executive Director**

- This Chamber-sponsored group's mission is to connect with young professionals, enrich their lives through leadership development and empower them to be leaders of tomorrow.
- The goal of the YPLC will be to cultivate a diverse leadership group that will benefit the Kinston/Lenoir County community by offering programs and activities that address professional development, social networking, personal growth, community outreach, and mentoring.
- Ignite active participation by developing a hard calendar of events that balance community service projects, professional development, team building skills, and social activities.
- Connect YPLC with Junior Leadership Lenoir, Kinston Teens & Rotaract to build a bridge of support and work together toward common goals.
- Provide the opportunity to connect with alumni business owners in the Kinston-Lenoir County community to provide mentorship and professional development to young professionals.
- Market and promote this group with a continued updated web presence on [www.kinstonchamber.com](http://www.kinstonchamber.com) and through various social media platforms.
- Plan and develop Leadership Lenoir for Young Professionals to be implemented in 2021.

# **Lenoir County Education Foundation**

**Chairperson: Chamber Chair-elect, Becky Whittington, Just Add Salt**

**Staff: Craig Hill, Executive Director**

- The Education Foundation Committee is a catalyst for educational excellence and an improved quality of life in Lenoir County by connecting the business community and all levels of educational community. Our purpose is to assist the education community with activities and resources that will enhance the quality of education offered in our community.
- Support and assist the Lenoir County Public Schools' vision, mission, and goals.
- Host the Adult Spelling Bee, The Super Ball Golf Tournament, and a speaker luncheon event to fund the annual mini grant program.
- Support school's awareness efforts connecting to community, work force development, and businesses.
- Provide a Junior Leadership program in collaboration with all local schools.