

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Leveling the Playing Field

Jobs are vitally important to our community. When considering economic development questions, Andy Anderson prioritizes fairness, favorable cost-benefit ratios, and leveling the playing field for local people and businesses. As a small business owner, Andy understands the concerns and needs of local businesses. While he will work within the current economic development system, Andy would support a comprehensive review of their efficacy and possible restructuring.

Brevard County Commission voted yes on a recent economic development package shrouded in secrecy known as Project Jaguar. Brevard County's portion of the total tax incentive and cash basis totaled \$1.8 million. The projected employment opportunities totaled 200 jobs by 2011 at an expected rate of \$50,000 per employee. The Economic Development Commission projects an additional 332 indirect jobs to be created as a result. (Economic Development Commission News - 13 May 2008) Meanwhile, another large firm was seeking to relocate in Brevard County. They were offering to bring 446 jobs at an average wage of \$60,000 with an additional 3,600 jobs at a lower wage by 2010. They wanted to locate on Merritt Island which would have significantly helped to absorb the impact resulting from the lost jobs at Kennedy Space Center. The Brevard County Commission never attempted to negotiate with them. Andy would have taken a more accountable approach and examined each package and the cost-to-benefit ratio involved. Exemptions and incentives must be examined on a case-by-case basis.

It is obvious that we need good, sound economic development in Brevard County. We are competing in a tough economic situation nationwide. Unfortunately for us, it appears that in Brevard County, the larger the business, the larger the subsidy per job created. Generally, Andy would consider exemptions and incentives for local businesses more readily than for large corporations who are here today, gone tomorrow.

TAX EXEMPTIONS, INCENTIVES, & OTHER SUBSIDIES:

It All Depends on the Business

In Approving Tax Exemptions and Incentives, Andy Will Consider:

- The type and pay scale of jobs, and the likelihood that local people will be hired. While Brevard County cannot specify that locals must be hired, certain businesses are more likely than others to bring in outside workers.
- The full cost to the community: infrastructure, services, tax waivers etc. compared to the number of new jobs created. There must be a clear net benefit to the community.
- The likelihood of the business remaining stable over the long term, and the risks to the community if the business fails, downsizes or moves, as larger companies often do.
- Alternatives that might achieve similar benefits with less risk and/or lower cost.
- The Brevard County Commission needs to look at implementing a moratorium on impact fees for building new businesses

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