

# Haywood County “Toeprints”

January 15, 2023

Vol. #14 Issue #3 (Subject: Economic Development Council (EDC) Dissolved.)

[www.haywoodtp.net](http://www.haywoodtp.net)

## What’s Happening?

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform Haywood County Taxpayers of what transpires at the bi-monthly County Commission Meetings. This newsletter will be written from the perspective of a casual observer, myself. Any opinions expressed will be mine.

## Economic Development Council (EDC) Dissolved.

Well, I thought I kept up with things. My bad.

The EDC was dissolved over a year ago, and had been reported in the smn tabloid by my pal, **Cory Vaillancourt**. You remember **Cory Vaillancourt**, the guy that wrote some spoof’s a couple of weeks ago -

2022: A Look Back, Written by SMN staff, Wednesday, December 28, 2022 -

<https://smokymountainnews.com/news/item/34885-2022-a-look-back>



whom he referred to Concerned Citizens of Haywood as concerned simpletons?

Yeah, that’s the guy.

Well, he wrote a couple of articles over a year ago with the complete scoop on this incestuous cesspool - the Haywood Chamber of Commerce / Economic Development Council / **David Francis** debacle, with Haywood County Taxpayer dollars being funneled over to the Asheville Chamber of Commerce.

He wrote two (2) relevant articles, one on January 12, 2022, and the second on January 26, 2022.

Many of the questions now being asked, and refused to be answered by **CeCe Hipps**, President of the Haywood Chamber of Commerce, were all laid out.

[**Editor’s Note:** Notice that **CeCe Hipps** is now in bold.]

Here are the articles by **Cory Vaillancourt**:

- Haywood EDC board evolves, Written by **Cory Vaillancourt**, Wednesday, January 12, 2022

<https://smokymountainnews.com/archives/item/32884-haywood-edc-board-evolves>

- Haywood reboots economic development arm, Written by **Cory Vaillancourt**, Wednesday, January 26, 2022

<https://smokymountainnews.com/archives/item/32972-haywood-reboots-economic-development-arm>

In the first two (2) paragraphs of the first article, **Cory Vaillancourt** writes:

“Details are scarce, but a Jan. 4 letter from the Haywood Chamber of Commerce is clear: the Haywood Economic Development Council is about to undergo massive change.

“As we begin the post pandemic recovery, the Chamber and the County wish to create a new economic development board to reflect the current challenges of workforce, affordable housing and broadband,” reads the letter, signed by EDC Chair Jason Walls, Haywood Chamber President **CeCe Hipps** and Haywood County Manager **Bryant Morehead**.”

Let’s absorb a little of what is going on...

- There is a letter dated Jan. 4, 2022.
- This letter was signed by:
  - Jason Walls, EDC Chair
  - **CeCe Hipps**, Haywood Chamber President
  - **Bryant Morehead**, Haywood County Manager.

Heretofore, it has been nearly impossible to pry out of anyone who was on this mysterious EDC. Now we find that a guy named Jason Walls, Duke Energy, who is currently on the Executive Committee of the Haywood Chamber of Commerce, was Chair of the EDC!

[Haywood County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. 1/9/2023...](https://www.haywoodchamber.com/the-chamber/leadership/board-of-directors/)

<https://www.haywoodchamber.com/the-chamber/leadership/board-of-directors/>

Here is the forth (4<sup>th</sup>) paragraph of the second article:

[“As first reported in The Smoky Mountain News, a Jan. 4 letter from the Haywood Chamber of Commerce informed members of the EDC, a Chamber entity since 2014, of its dissolution in favor of a new county-run entity.”](#)

This tells us the exact date of the dissolution of the EDC!, Jan. 4, 2022.

Yet, Haywood County Taxpayer funds seem to be continued to pour into the Chamber of Commerce, ostensibly to be used to go the Asheville Chamber of Commerce.

[WTF? Have county commissioners been pouring hundreds of thousands of dollars into the Economic Development Council \(EDC\) for five \(5\) years, going to the Asheville Chamber of Commerce to advertise the David Francis Dirt Spreading Project \(J. Creek Property\)? My title should be changed to "The Six-and-a-half Million Dollar Man"! 1/7/2023...](#)

<https://www.haywoodtp.net/pubII/230106EDC-Site-Jonathan-Creek-2021.pdf>

To get to the bottom of this fiasco, I have made two (2) Requests for Public Information, both to **Bryant Morehead**.

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Subject: Request for Public Information - County revamps economic development program - contracts.

Date: Tue, 10 Jan 2023 23:09:03 -0500

From: Monroe Miller

To: Bryant Morehead

<bryant.morehead@haywoodcountync.gov>, Amy Stevens <Amy.Stevens@haywoodcountync.gov>, Kristian Owen

<kristian.owen@haywoodcountync.gov>, Frank Queen <Frank.Queen@haywoodcountync.gov>

CC: CeCe Hipps <chipp@haywoodchamber.com>, Terry

Ramey <terry.ramey@haywoodcountync.gov>, Brandon Rogers

<brandon.rogers@haywoodcountync.gov>, Tommy Long <Tommy.Long@haywoodcountync.gov>

Mr. Morehead,

Please refer to the following article by Vicki Hyatt, "County revamps economic development program", 7/29/2020, [https://www.themountaineer.com/news/county-revamps-economic-development-program/article\\_994f6dce-cca9-11ea-b243-63809c5c7e82.html](https://www.themountaineer.com/news/county-revamps-economic-development-program/article_994f6dce-cca9-11ea-b243-63809c5c7e82.html).

Two (2) contracts are mentioned:

- One in 2018, a three year contact signed between commissioners and the Chamber of Commerce,
- A second, an amended contract, signed in July of 2020.

Please provide a copy of both of those "signed" contracts. This is a Request for Public Information.

Also provide a copy of funds delivered to the Chamber of Commerce during those contract periods, to present, a period of five (5) years, so that I can compare it with IRS Form 990 for the year 2020 - "Greater Haywood County Chamber", and prior Form 990's.

[2020 Form 990, Haywood County Chamber of Commerce \(now on the radar\), CeCe Hipps President. Check out the Directors... 1/7/2023...](#)

Thank you,

Monroe A. Miller, Jr.

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Subject: Request for Public Information - January 4 2020 letter from Jason Walls and CeCe Hipps.

Date: Sun, 15 Jan 2023 12:36:25 -0500

From: Monroe Miller

To: Bryant Morehead

<bryant.morehead@haywoodcountync.gov>

CC: Frank Queen <Frank.Queen@haywoodcountync.gov>,

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<jkey@themountaineer.com>

Mr. Morehead,

This is a Request for Public Information for a letter you signed dated January 4, 2022 by the Haywood County Chamber of Commerce. Let me refer you to an article written by Cory Vaillancourt on January 12, 2022

<https://smokymountainnews.com/archives/item/32884-haywood-edc-board-evolves>

where he says:

" Details are scarce, but a Jan. 4 letter from the Haywood Chamber of Commerce is clear: the Haywood Economic Development Council is about to undergo massive change.

“As we begin the post pandemic recovery, the Chamber and the County wish to create a new economic development board to reflect the current challenges of workforce, affordable housing and broadband,” reads the letter, signed by EDC Chair Jason Walls, Haywood Chamber President CeCe Hipps and Haywood County Manager Bryant Morehead. ”

Since the letter was also signed by you, that makes it Public Information.

Please forward me the letter.

Monroe A. Miller, Jr.

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Let’s see where this goes.

Legend: If any name is in **bold**, it can’t be a good thing.

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*Si vis pacem, para bellum*