



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 21-197, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 2/17/2020

TITLE:

Defense Affairs Committee (DAC) Program Manager six-month report

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Presentation of six-month progress of the newly hired Defense Affairs Committee Program Manager

ITEM TYPE: Regular Information Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Henry

PRESENTER (S): Trevor Henry, Col. Lettie J. Bien (Ret.)

LEGAL REVIEW: Not Required

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: The Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) sponsors a Defense Affairs Committee (DAC). The DAC provides services to a unique network of academic, industry and government participants to position the region for growth in the defense and intelligence market. The DAC connects local defense industry contractors, veterans, local government, and service providers with interest in the defense and intelligence community who desire visibility and access to local federal government agencies and other support resources.

It is estimated by the Chamber there are more than 2,500 federal workers employed by the National Ground Intelligence Center (NGIC), Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) in the national government's defense/intelligence enterprise at Rivanna Station. The Chamber estimates that private defense/intelligence enterprises in the region now employ approximately 2,000 people. In addition to this substantial defense intelligence enterprise, the greater Albemarle-Charlottesville community has more than 14,000 veterans who are an integral part of our community.

The County's adopted economic development strategic plan, Project Enable, identified multiple Goals, Objectives and Strategies to further Economic Development in the County. Goal 3 is to lead the County's readiness to accommodate the business community. The first Objective of this goal is to lead the growth of targeted industries, existing primary businesses, and emerging opportunities. One of the strategies defined in support of this goal is to partner with the Chamber of Commerce through the Defense Affairs Committee on the retention and expansion of the targeted Defense industry.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Economic Prosperity: Foster an environment that stimulates diversified job creation, capital investments, and tax revenues that support community goals.

DISCUSSION: The mission of the Chamber Defense Affairs Committee is to foster economic vitality by further strengthening the alliance of relationships among the Chamber, the Chamber network, the Central Virginia community, the regional defense and intelligence community, and our veterans.

The activities associated with the successful operation of the DAC evolved beyond the capability of a volunteer committee and the Chamber of Commerce made formal requests to local industries, jurisdictions, and academic partners to fund a two-year pilot, full-time DAC Program Manager.

At its July 3, 2019 meeting, the Board reviewed this request and authorized use of one-time funding in support of the two-year pilot by the area Chamber of Commerce. As part of the funding authorization, the Board requested a six-month report once the new position was hired.

The position was advertised in the Spring of 2020, which drew a strong candidate pool and led to the selection of U.S. Army Reserve Colonel Lettie Bien. The press release of Col. Lettie J. Bien (Ret.) is included as Attachment A. Col. Bien has hit the ground running and respectfully submits the six-month DAC report, Attachment B. She will present the highlights of DAC accomplishments over the past six-month period since her hire, identify key work items planned for 2021 and address any Board questions.

BUDGET IMPACT: \$50,000 annually for a two-year period, totaling \$100,000, have been paid from the Economic Development Investment Pool to fund this pilot.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive the report and address any questions to Col. Lettie J. Bien (Ret.) and staff.

ATTACHMENTS:

A - July 2020 Chamber Press Release

B - DAC Program Manager six-month report