Leaders in luring jobs to area probe how to make best case

BY SUSAN DANYAR

One of the most important nes those fostering ecos- nomic development should ask a company considering ex- pansion or relocation to Miami-Dade is what are the three issues driv- ing the decision.

That’s the advice Del Boyette, president and CEO of Boyette Stranigial Advisors, had for municipal officials and community stakeholders who attended a workshop on bringing jobs and investment to the county that was co-hosted by the Bea- con Council and Florida Power & Light this week.

Mr. Boyette and Chief Oper- ating Officer Tracy Sharp, both part of FPL’s economic develop- ment team promoting our state to new and expanding busi- nesses that create jobs for Flori- da, shared best practices on how to recruit businesses and encourage investment on state, regional and local levels.

Whatever is driving the deci- sion—factors such as labor, property taxes, incentives as five factors—is vital to know, Mr. Boyette said. For the most part, he said, community mem- bers and groups vying for the company’s relocation will get involved when the request for information or proposals is put together for a site.

“It’s the first opportunity to make the business case for a company to invest in Miami- Dade County,” Mr. Boyette said. “If you understand the important factors behind the decision, your marketing and re- searching efforts can put together a good package for you to go out and sell.”

Local economic development is more important in Miami- Dade than ever, has been said by former mayor and CEO of the Beacon Council, who recruited Crystal Walls, manager of economic development at FPL. “This is the begin- ning of a dialogue on how to combine efforts for what it takes to compete today.”

The workshop was titled “The Serious Issue of Economic Development: What does it take to win?” The name indicates the process has never been more competitive, Mr. Williams said, and communities must be prepared to successfully vie for projects.

Companies will have a strategy that you need to under- stand, Mr. Boyette told stakeholders. This involves partnering with a good economic develop- er like the Beacon Council for advice; taking a strategic ap- proach much like One Com- munity/One Goal, which was a rigorous, thorough process, understand the critical compo- nents such as the site selection process from the company’s point of view; and have a good relationship with site consult- ants. Marketing is vital. Whatever you’re thinking, think bigger, Mr. Boyette advised. “This means having the strongest web presence you can and coming up with robust, current infor- mation,” he said. “It’s essential to have a social media presence; use Twitter, but be sure what you’re sending out is relevant.”

It’s definitely important to reach out via social media, but the challenge is getting through the clutter and noise of it, said Susan Greene, chief marketing officer for the Beacon Council.

Attendee Peter England found the discussion about social me- dia interesting but said Miami- Today he doesn’t use it, both because he never learned how and isn’t used to it.

And he’s not certain it’s al- ways necessary. “It depends on the age of the person in the company who is making the decision about relocation,” Mr. England said. “Perhaps that individual is older, not comfort- able with social media, which means you won’t be reaching out that way.”

Mr. England serves as chairman of the Palmetto Bay Part- nership, a relatively new 13- member group founded by the village council to explore the community’s economic develop- ment potential.

He said he’s grateful to the Beacon Council and Florida Power & Light (FPL) for pro- viding the opportunity to attend.

Dyan Brasington, Beacon Council’s new executive vice president for economic development, and Javier Betancourt of Coral Gables at meet- up with robust, current information, he said. “It’s essential to have a social media presence; use Twitter, but be sure what you’re sending out is relevant.” It’s definitely important to reach out via social media, but the challenge is getting through the clutter and noise of it, said Susan Greene, chief marketing officer for the Beacon Council.

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EX-MAYOR HONORED: Donald B. Sheets, Jr., honorary consul of Australia and partner in the law offices of Steiner & Casey who has been in private legal practice since 1976, is to receive the American Bar Association Sola, Small Firm and General Practice Divisions’ Lifetime Achieve- ment Award May 13 during an evening at the Key West Marriott Beachside Hotel. Mr. Sheets was mayor of Coral Gables for 10 years ending in 2011.

DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY: This marks the 24th anniversary of the Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and the 25th year of the HOME Investment Partnerships Program. They provide grants to hundreds of local governments to help them improve the physical, economic and social conditions of their communities and to create safe, sanitary, and affordable housing. This year’s program year the City of Miami will allocate $64,945,000 in HOME funds, 75% of which will be used for Community Development Block Grant and 25% of which will be used for Community Development Block Grant. The City of Miami will use $14,945,000 in HOME funds, 75% of which will be used for Community Development Block Grant and 25% of which will be used for Community Development Block Grant.