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Manatee Chamber of Commerce appoints new EDC executive director

BRADENTON, FL, May 6, 2009 – Bob Bartz, president of the Manatee Chamber of Commerce, announced today that Eric Basinger, an economic development professional from Alabama, will be taking over the reins as the new executive director of the Economic Development Council effective June 1 from Nancy Engel, who announced last September her desire to phase out of her role as the Executive Director after 25 years in this position.

“After a national search and in-depth discussions with Eric, we are convinced he will effectively lead our economic development efforts in this very challenging time,” Bartz said. “We are grateful that Nancy is going to stay on with the EDC as a team member, focusing on business retention and workforce services, and be available to facilitate Eric’s introduction to the community and the region.”

Basinger, an 11-year veteran of economic development, most recently served as executive director of the Elmore County Economic Development Authority in Wetumpka, AL, an organization he helped to create. In that post since 2003, he worked to generate 1,292 jobs and more than \$97 million of new capital investments in the community through corporate relocation and expansion of local businesses. Basinger worked extensively with domestic and international corporate relocations and has successfully integrated tourism and business expansion opportunities. He has earned the professional designation of Certified Economic Developer (CEd) from the International Economic Development Council. Basinger received his Masters in Public Administration with specialization in Planning and Economic Development from Auburn University and his Bachelor of Science degree with a major in history and minor in international relations from the University of West Alabama.

“Manatee County is well-positioned to attract and retain high-wage jobs, and the EDC’s track record in making that happen is indisputable,” said Basinger. “The EDC’s strong, collaborative relationships with local governments, regional stakeholders and state resources provide a foundation for us to expedite local economic expansion as the global economy recovers. On a personal note, my wife, Amy, and I are looking forward to making our home in Manatee County and becoming part of this wonderful community.”

“Eric is arriving at an exciting point in Manatee County’s journey toward greater economic diversity and prosperity,” said Bob Turner, EDC chairman. “He is well qualified to lead the development of a new, three-year strategy for economic development. With Nancy continuing to serve as part of the team, we believe Eric will be able to move quickly into this vital position of leadership in Manatee County.”

About the EDC

The Economic Development Council, a division of the Manatee Chamber of Commerce, is the sole organization responsible for developing and implementing programs designed to attract new value-added businesses and to assist in the retention and growth of targeted existing businesses in Manatee County. Information: www.ManateeEDC.com.

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