



BAXTER DEPARTS AS COMMISSIONER; FISCHER NAMED SUCCESSOR

Bill Baxter, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development since 1997, has departed the post to return to his family and business in Knoxville.

Appointed commissioner by Governor Don Sundquist in 1997, Baxter has seen the state achieve three record years of private capital investment and job creation. Investments reached \$5 billion in 1998, \$6 billion in 1999, and \$7 billion in 2000 and resulted in over 34,000 new jobs. Tennessee was chosen, for the first time, as "State of the Year" for outstanding economic accomplishments in 1999.

"Our outstanding private investment growth is the direct result of a statewide team working hard to earn expansions and new business locations that are providing high-paying, high-quality jobs to Tennesseans," stated Baxter during a recent interview. "As I return to my family and business in Knoxville, I look forward to continuing to support Tennessee economic development efforts in any way I can."

Bill Baxter is a graduate of Duke University (cum laude) and the University of Tennessee School of Law. He is married to Ginger and they have four children: Elizabeth, Jennifer, Joe and John.

Baxter's successor, Alex Fischer is a native of Hendersonville, Tennessee. He graduated from the University of Tennessee in

Knoxville with a bachelor's degree in economics and a Master's degree in city planning.

Prior to joining ECD in December 1997, Fischer served as director of planning for the non-profit Technology Foundation, a technology-based economic development organization. Fischer was also founder and executive director of Technology 2020, a public private telecommunications partnership in Oak Ridge. Fischer also previously worked with Akins & Tombras Public Relations in Knoxville.

"I am pleased to have the opportunity to continue to work to foster economic development in Tennessee," Fischer said recently. "I look forward to building on the dynamic growth we have seen and working to ensure a bright future for all Tennessee families."

Alex and his wife Melissa reside in Brentwood with their son Ethan and daughter Anna.



by Janet Miller

The state legislature is back in session, and a number of bills impacting economic development in the state are on the docket for discussion this session. The TIDC legislative reception in February provided a great opportunity to network with legislators, and the turnout for the event was record-breaking - from an overall attendance standpoint and from a number of legislators attending standpoint.

TIDC's work is not done, however, and members should continue to lobby their legislators for the following legislative points through the session:

- * Fully fund the request for \$20 million for the Tennessee Industrial Infrastructure Program to continue the momentum of this very successful program which has averaged a 100 to 1 return on capital investment over the past five years;
- * Fully fund the requested budget items for the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development;
- * Support Senate Bill 39 to extend the sunset of the Department of Economic and Community Development.

Tax reform, of course, is back on the front burner this legislative session, with no indications at the time of this report of the direction those discussions will take. Bills have been introduced which would allow a sales tax on services, an increase in the state sales tax, a graduated income tax, and legislation which removes many of the tax exemptions that are in place in the state. The Tennessee Association of Business is keeping a close watch on any legislation that will impact the economic development climate in the state. The TIDC board is poised and ready to engage the membership in lobbying efforts, so please keep a watchful eye and be ready to take action should the request be made.

Other bills impacting economic development include:

- * Extension of the Tennessee Jobskills program until 2006;
- * Several bills regarding brownfield redevelopment;
- * The cost / benefit analysis bill for PILOT programs introduced by Senator Rochelle (the TIDC board has been working closely with Senator Rochelle on this bill);
- * Triple weighted sales factor for excise and franchise taxes;
- * Local option realty transfer tax.

For more information on these bills or other ongoing legislative initiatives, please email Dave Goetz at the Tennessee Association of Business at dave.goetz@tennbiz.org.

ECD Update

**Commissioner
ALEX FISCHER**



The Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD), has hit the ground running in 2001, setting our sights toward a record-breaking \$40 billion total in private capital investment in Tennessee to round out Sundquist's administration.

Our momentum is strong throughout Tennessee and we will continue to work hard assisting existing businesses and recruiting new ones. I'm very optimistic with the cooperation of our economic development partners statewide we will continue to outpace our competition.

We have already begun working with the Tennessee Economic Partnership to launch a nonprofit fund focused on bringing together existing state marketing funds with new public and private sector resources to increase awareness of Tennessee's pro-business environment and bring new capital investment and jobs to the state. The Millennium Fund, as it is called, officially kicked off in January.

We also plan to develop a statewide program for young business executives to become successful by networking and learning from key leaders and by becoming familiar with state and federal programs.

We want to set Tennessee's economic development efforts on a solid long-term course for the future. By mobilizing Tennessee's young business leaders, we feel that we can lay the groundwork for a statewide business network.

Moving forward, we will also continue to focus our efforts on making Tennessee a leader in the new technology-based economy.

Fond Farewells and New Beginnings



By Janet Miller, TIDC President 2000-2001

TIDC is faced with a fond farewell and with new beginnings as the year 2001 opens before us. We bid a fond farewell to Commissioner Bill Baxter, who resigned his post with the Tennessee Department of Economic

and Community Development in December to return to the private sector and his family in East Tennessee. Bill has been an absolutely extraordinary coach and salesperson for the state of Tennessee for three years, and during that time, was a staunch supporter of TIDC and all of its members. We've all grown to admire him professionally and to just plain like him personally, and his face will be sorely missed. Our new Commissioner Alex Fischer promises a wild and exciting economic development ride for the next few years though - so hang on to your hats...we're sure that Alex and his staff have incredible things in store for us all and we're behind them all the way.

One initiative that you will all be hearing more about in the coming months is the Millennium Fund, which really is Alex's

brainchild. State ECD leadership has spearheaded the fundraising for an unprecedented public/private partnership for economic development in the state, and as a result, you'll all see more extensive special-events marketing from the State of Tennessee in the year 2001. The TIDC board has been deeply involved in the programming for the fund, to be managed by the Tennessee Economic Partners board, so keep your eyes out for more exciting news as the year unfolds.

Finally, this newsletter represents our leap into the information age, as the TIDC membership voted to take the TIDC newsletter to an online format this year. Please let us know your thoughts or issues with the format, as we'll be working the kinks out this year. Our goal is to set up an email network for all TIDC members that will make the exchange of information and news on economic development issues in the state more instantaneous and interactive.

Comments - email me at: jmiller@nashvillechamber.com or the general TIDC mailbox at tidc@tennbiz.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 4-8	Society of Automotive Engineers Show, Detroit
May 2-4	TIDC Spring Conference, Destin, FL - Holiday Inn
May 6-8	AEDC Annual Conference, New York - Marriott Marquis
May 12-16	IDRC Spring Conference, Seattle, WA
September 12-14	TIDC Fall Conference, Chattanooga
September 22-25	NACORE International Symposium, Nashville - Opryland Hotel
September 22-25	SEDC Annual Conference, Kansas City, KS
October 20-24	IDRC Fall Conference, Dallas, TX
November 13-14	Governor's Conference, Nashville - Hilton Suites

People On The Move...

Alex Fischer

Named the New Commissioner of Economic and Community Development for State of Tennessee

Bill Baxter

Returned to Private sector to run Holston Gases, his family owned business in Knoxville, TN

Drew Kim

New Associate Director, Tennessee Technology Development Corporation

Mark Herbison

New Marketing Manager for Economic Development at the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce

A. Hardeman Seaborn

Sr. Vice President for Barge Waggoner Sumner Cannon, 211 Commerce St. Nashville, TN 37201
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Walter Sprouse

President & CEO of Partners Economic Development Corporation, the ECD organization for Horry County, South Carolina

John Clark

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TIDC Spring Conference Agenda - *Holiday Inn, Destin*

Wednesday, May 2, 2001

3:00 - 5:30 pm Check In
Registration Desk Open

3:30 pm TIDC Board Meeting

5:30 - 7:00 pm Early Bird Reception

Thursday, May 3, 2001

8:00 - 9:00 am Registration Desk Open

8:30 am Continental Breakfast

9:00 - 11:30 General Session I

9:00 - 10:00 Speaker (TBA)

10:00 - 10:15 Golf Announcements

10:15 - 10:30 SEDC Update

10:30 - 10:45 Break

10:45 - 11:00 Tennessee Economic Partnership Millennium Fund Update

11:00 - 11:30 Tennessee Valley Authority

11:30 General Session Adjourns

12:00 Beach Time
(Fishing, Boat Rides, etc.)
Golf Luncheon

1:00 Shotgun start for golf tournament

6:30 pm Reception "On the Deck" - Holiday Inn

7:30 pm Seafood Buffet Dinner - Holiday Inn
"On the Deck"

Friday, May 4, 2001

8:30 Continental Breakfast

9:00 - 12:00 General Session II

9:00 - 9:30 TIDC Business Meeting & Elections
Janet Miller, President

9:30 - 10:45 Keynote Speaker (TBA)

10:45 - 11:00 Break

11:00 - 11:15 Legislative Update

11:15 - 12:15 Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development
Commissioner Alex Fischer

12:15 Farewell Reception

New TIDC Members

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Coming Soon...

***The new and improved TIDC
website. Check it out at
www.tidc-ecdev.org***