

Rotary
Club of
Charlotte



REPORTER

February 27, 2018

BOB MORGAN

President and CEO – Charlotte Chamber



He lauded economic growth, mused on missing the Amazon headquarters cut and on keeping the Carolina Panthers after Jerry Richardson sells, but transportation was top-of-mind for Bob Morgan as he spoke to Rotary.

The president and chief executive of the Charlotte Chamber was decidedly upbeat on Charlotte's growth prospects as he outlined challenges ahead.

Numbers tumbled off his tongue. More than 1,000 Mecklenburg companies announced nearly 13,000 new jobs in 2017. County firms invested \$817 million in capital improvements. Allstate, with 1,300 jobs here, highlighted insurance sector growth with its intention to add 2,250 positions. Unemployment fell to 4.3 percent.

On Amazon: "I'm still a little bit surprised and disappointed that Charlotte didn't make the list of the 20 finalist cities." Amazon executives liked much about Charlotte, he said, including the tech labor pool's rapid growth. The caveat: "The base of our tech labor pool is smaller" than most finalists. "We have no choice but continue to grow that."

As questions abound on the pending Panthers sale, Morgan said, "It is important to educate ourselves. What have they done in Atlanta? What have they done in Minneapolis to keep themselves competitive?"

Charlotte succeeds because "we invest and we build things," Morgan said, moving into transportation issues, highlighted by the imminent opening of the Blue Line light rail extension from center city to UNC Charlotte.

In sharing an as-yet-unpublished op-ed on transportation, Morgan pondered how to pay for additional rail transit connecting Matthews, center city and Charlotte-Douglas International Airport. He wondered about commuter rail links for center city with Lake Norman and the Eastland Mall property with Johnson C. Smith University.

On highway travel: "Construction proceeds on a major portion of I-85 in Cabarrus County. Later this year, the Monroe Bypass will open; offering a parallel alternative to Highway 74 through most of Union County...I-77 will open new, managed toll lanes on a 26-mile stretch from Charlotte's center city through Lake Norman and into Iredell County. This project will offer needed additional capacity decades ahead of traditional financing methods."

Morgan mentioned managed lanes planned for Independence Boulevard and for I-485 near Ballantine, and pointed to an envisioned new bridge across the Catawba River near

the airport.

Charlotte is investing \$2.5 billion over 10 years, he said, to upgrade and expand the airport. “The intermodal yard (at the airport) is a critical link in the distribution network of the southeast. We have additional opportunities to increase access to ports along the east coast to better serve our manufacturers and the distribution sector.”

He didn’t forget neighborhoods. “In November, the voters of Charlotte will have the opportunity (to approve) the third installment in a 10-year capital investment program that includes funding for housing, neighborhoods and streets,” he pointed out.

Finally, he said, Charlotte should figure out how to connect the Queen City with Atlanta as well as with points north with high-speed passenger rail. Needed will be federal investment and public-private dollars. Meanwhile, construction starts soon on the uptown Charlotte Gateway Station passenger rail terminal.

“As we continue to grow,” Morgan said, “funding a comprehensive transportation infrastructure will be an ongoing challenge and an opportunity for our city and region.”

Speaker Write-Up: Elly Clary; *Head Table:* David Zimmerman, Katie Tyler, Karen Price, Julie Haack; *Invocation:* John Snyder; *Visitors & Guests:* Susan Evans; *Photos:* Bert Voswinkel; *Piano:* Em Syrewicze

CLUB NEWS

5th annual tree planting will take place March 17 at Community House Middle School, 9AM-Noon. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! **Phil Volponi** is your point of contact and can be reached at volponipc@gmail.com.

Two new members were introduced on Tuesday. **Andy Dinkin** has sponsored **Gabrielle Weekly**, regional sales consultant with TriNet, a full service professional employer organization. Gabrielle (aka Gabbie or Bre) is from Wilmar, Arkansas and graduated with a business management degree from Cardinal Stritch University. Gabbie loves billiards and is looking for a game with someone in the club! Reach out to Gabbie at gabrielle.weekly@trinet.com.

Next up, **Bill Gill** introduced **Helen Verkamp**, who is a former member of the 500+ Cincinnati Rotary Club. Helen was the second woman admitted into that club and is also a past president. She has served as administrator for Indian Hill Historical Society, owned a home inventory company that included the preparation of photographic CDs and video DVDs, and performed research and wrote reports for feasibility, patents, design & construction. She is married to Richard and holds a BA from Wheaton College and MA from the University of Cincinnati. Add Helen to your contact list – verkamphk@gmail.com. Two good additions to the Rotary Club of Charlotte.

David F. Furman has been selected as the 29th recipient of the Excellence in Leadership Award. **President Katie** thanked **Mac McCarley** and his committee for their review and consideration of several viable nominees. The award will be presented at the March 13 meeting – look for the ¼ page ad in this week’s Charlotte Business Journal.

Condolences to **David Head** and his family. David’s father, Allan Head passed away February 17, 2018 after a three-year battle with cancer.

DecisionPath (**Tom Gibson**) has won Inavero’s 2017 Best of Staffing Client and Talent Award. **Kandi Deitemeyer** will be participating in Dancing with the Stars this weekend and the charity she is supporting is Central Piedmont Community College’s Opportunity

Scholarship Initiative. You can vote/donate here: <http://www.cpcfoundation.org/opportunity>.

Volunteer opportunities are received almost every week. The latest is from a student at Northwest School of the Arts in need to help with their school garden. They need help with planting, weeding, site prep, plant dividing, soil/mulch pick-up and spreading. Dates are March 10 & 24 (9am-Noon) and April 21 (9am-Noon). Willpill202@gmail.com.

MEMBERSHIP

07/01/2017 309

02/27/2018 294

Net Increase: -15

New Members: Richard Mialik, Gabrielle Weekly, Helen Verkamp

Resignations: Cindy Wolfe, Bob Moore

Visitors 16

Club Members 146

Total 162 (59.6%)

PROPOSED FOR MEMBERSHIP *(comments to the Rotary office by 03/6/18)*

Suzie Ford

NoDa Brewing Company *(Production, Brewery)*

Sponsor: Em Syrewicze

Endorsed: Phil Volponi and George MacBain

Todd Ford

NoDa Brewing Company *(Production, Brewery)*

Sponsor: Em Syrewicze

Endorsed: Phil Volponi and George MacBain

Keith Carn

Kingdom City Church *(Religion, Nondenominational Pastorate)*

Sponsor: Cheryl Banks

Endorsed: Irwin Carmichael and Nikki Keith

Christy Majors

Queens University of Charlotte *(Higher Education, Private, Finance)*

Sponsor: Lee Tabor

Endorsed: John Tabor and John Nicolay

Visitors & Guests: Savannah Turner, Allie Hanson, Frank Mueller, Cheryl Richards, John Galles, Dick Beatty, Belinda Kendall, Brian Carn, Matthew Nobles, Raymond Joe Williams, Jennifer Braun, Patti Whittaker, Ervin Duggan, Jackson Lohrer, Rodney Faulkner

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS *(03/08/18 – 03/14/18)*

03/08 Lindsey McAlpine, Mary Vickers-Koch

03/10 Luther Fincher

03/11 Tim Chappell, Ranjay Sarda, Devon Cains

03/12 Bill Bartee

03/13 Dumont Clarke, Sam Ryburn

03/14 Fred Wagner

UPCOMING ANNIVERSARIES (03/08/18 – 03/14/18)

03/11 Bonnie & Wes Jones

03/14 Sandi & Hank Donaghy

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

03/06 Dr. Cheryl Richards, CEO, Northeastern University

03/13 Excellence in Leadership Award

03/20 Paul Cozza, Executive Director, NC Ports

03/27 Matt Olin, Founder, Creative Mornings Charlotte

Photos from our luncheons and other events can be found on Flickr [Click here](#)





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