

Alliance's new leader has been all over the map

An economic official at the Tulsa, Okla., chamber of commerce has been chosen to lead the Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance, a public-private group charged with bringing business leads to the region.

Darryl Gosnell will begin his role as president and chief executive of the local group on Oct. 27, according to a news release.

Gosnell joined the Tulsa Metro Chamber of Commerce three years ago and was most recently its senior vice president of economic development.

A West Virginia native, Gosnell has held economic development roles in Des Moines, Iowa; Dayton, Ohio; and in cities throughout the Southeast.

He replaces C. Jones Hooks, who was chosen earlier this year by a Georgia state authority to manage Jekyll Island, a barrier island in the midst of a major redevelopment.

Hooks had spent nine years with the alliance.

Amy Parkhurst, a senior vice president who has been with the organization for more than a decade, served as the alliance's interim president and chief executive after Hooks left.

Michael Barrett, chief executive officer of developer Runnymede Corp. and chairman of the search committee formed to find a replacement for Hooks, said Gosnell's experience in economic development was the basis for his selection.

"His experience in several regional economic development agencies was very similar in nature to ours in Hampton Roads," Barrett said.

An executive search firm was hired to find a replacement and presented the search committee with more than 30 candidates, Barrett said. The pool was reduced to seven finalists, and Gosnell was chosen unanimously by the committee.

"Darryl is coming into a relatively well-oiled machine," Barrett said. "We're operating in a very competitive environment right now. Darryl's role will be to evaluate what are the elements of our area need to be emphasized the most."

Gosnell said in an interview that he looks forward to continuing to strengthen the alliance's role in attracting businesses to the area.

"Regional economic development programs have always been the most logical way to attract economic development," he said.

"Each region together is stronger than the individual cities within the community."

Josh Brown, (757) 446-2318, josh.brown@pilotonline.com

Source URL (retrieved on 10/14/2008 - 12:46): <http://hamptonroads.com/2008/10/alliances-new-leader-has-been-all-over-map>