Abbeville's loss is Oconee's gain

Those who know Moulder sing his praises

BY CARLOS GALARZA
THE JOURNAL

ABBEVILLE — As Scott Moulder gets ready to move his young family to Oconee County, there is a common refrain coming from the community he's leaving: "Our loss is Oconee's gain."

Moulder signed a contract this week to begin June 1 as county administrator. He is honoring a 30-day notice clause in his contract with Abbeville County.

Oconee County Council officials hired Moulder after an almost year-long search. They point to his youth, energy, communication skills and ability to bring people together as some of the reasons they unanimously voted to offer him the job.

People in Abbeville say Oconee won't be disappointed.

When Moulder took over as Abbeville County director, the county already had fallen behind on audits by two years. Under his leadership, Abbeville completed three audits in a year-and-a-half and submitted the county's

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MOULDER: Helped improve economy in Abbeville

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first ever on-time audited financial statement to the South Carolina Budget and Control Board.

Abbeville Economic Development Director Steve Bowles recalled his first encounter with Moulder.

"He told me he would hold my feet to the fire," Bowles said. "Moulder told me he was results-oriented, and I told him I liked that kind of management."

Bowles said Abbeville has done more economic development in the past three years than in the previous quarter century.

He said the crown jewel of recent investments was Prysmian Power Cable building a $46 million, 16-story plant in Abbeville. The project marked the first extra high voltage power cable built by Prysmian, a global leader in the operation of high and extra high voltage power cables, in North America.

Additionally, Bowles said several industries in Abbeville have had $1 to $7 million expansions in recent years.

Bowles said that although Oconee County Economic Development Director Jim Alexander is the state's Economic Development Director of the Year, he thinks Alexander will benefit from Moulder's "wealth of information."

"Jim (Alexander) is results-oriented, and I think they'll forge a good relationship," Boyles said.

Patrick Davenport, co-director of the Upper Abbeville Athletic Association, is also among those who hate to see Moulder leave.

Davenport said Moulder was instrumental in the financing of an almost $500,000 rural park in the county. He added that Moulder helped find grants and worked out a $175,000 bond issue to help complete the project.

"Without his help, it wouldn't have gotten done," Davenport said.

Calhoun Falls Mayor Lee Garrett said Moulder knows the plights of small towns in getting support from their County Council.

"He's helped us get seed funds," Garrett said. "His leadership has had an impact on our community. We'll miss him."

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This week, Scott Moulder signed a contract as Oconee County's new administrator, effective June 1.

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