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Published on *The Observer News Enterprise* (<http://www.observernewsenterprise.com>)

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Created 06/06/2011 - 7:30pm

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A local manufacturing company is considering an expansion that will bring 19 new jobs to the area.

Dalco Nonwovens, which manufactures non-woven textiles for automotive, landfill and furniture applications, is planning a \$9 million expansion to its current facility in Conover. The expansion would retain 33 jobs and create 19 more.

Catawba County Commissioners approved an economic incentive agreement with Dalco on Monday that will grant the manufacturing company about \$57,780 during three years.

"It's always wonderful to have new business coming to the county," said Catawba County Commissioner Dan Hunsucker. "But it's even better to help out an existing business that's local."

The county's incentive agreement with Dalco will be performance-based, meaning that Dalco must meet minimum thresholds of investment and job creation each year before receiving incentive payments, said Nathan Huret, existing industry coordinator at the Catawba County Economic Development Corporation.

The investment requires repayment to the county if the performance levels are not sustained.

Huret said Dalco's expansion will double its production output, which is currently not meeting the company's growing demand. About \$7.3 million will be used to purchase a new nonwovens production line, while \$1.7 million will fund a new 55,000-square-foot warehouse.

"This area is very entrepreneurial, especially with furniture and textiles," Huret said. "They were started by people in this area. The Target and the Apple plants — we are happy that they are here. But so often, we forget about the local companies that got us here and sustain us here. They don't have millions of dollars to fall back on. It's them on their own."

Huret added that he is personally excited about the expansion and looks forward to the long-term benefits it will bring.

"The people that have grown up here and started a company, the chances that they would just get up and leave are small," Huret said.

Other business discussed at the commissioners' meeting included:

--Catawba County Commissioners appointing members to the Juvenile Crime and Prevention Council, as well as the Mental Health Partners Board.

--The approval of a request from Catawba County Schools for the transfer of \$25,000 remaining in the budget for a completed storage facility to a new project to build an expansion to the system's transportation office.

--The approval of a travel policy for the Catawba County Alcoholic Beverage Control Board. The North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission now requires that the Catawba County ABC Board provide proof that its appointing authority approved its travel policy. The ABC Board developed its policy after reviewing the county code, and a review of the proposed policy shows it closely mirrors that of the county's.

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CATAWBA COUNTY, N.C.  
O-N-E Staff Writer  
Observer News Enterprise  
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