

Board Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2024
20 Doyle Street, Toccoa, GA

Attending: Brian Akin, Gail Fry, Lisa Lawson, Rick Phillips, Tara Simmons, Fredda Wheeler, Christian Hamilton, Jessica Waters, Kevin McCraney, Janney Sanders, Stacy Miller, Julie Paysen, Brittany Ivey & Ellen Spencer.

Chairman Brian Akin called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

Sanders opened with prayer & Akin led the Pledge of Allegiance and read the confidentiality & conflict of interest statement.

A motion was made to approve the agenda [Simmons:Lawson]. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made to approve August 21, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes, [Phillips:Simmons]. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made to approve the August financials as presented, [Fry:Simmons]. All in favor; none opposed.

Board Action Items: A motion was made to advertise a RFB for HBBP Hay Maintenance in the paper and on social media for two weeks, [Phillips:Lawson]. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made to authorize the President/CEO to move forward with opening and authorizing her & the secretary to sign the needed paperwork for 4-\$250k certificates of deposit at Northeast Georgia Bank for 7 months drawing 5% interest taking the money from SCDA's money market account at NGB, [Fry:Phillips]. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made to authorize the Chairman to Sign all Acceptance Paperwork for Project Castle/SungEel's REBA grant & authorize the President/CEO to open a non interest-bearing account at First Citizens for the grant, [Phillips:Simmons]. All in favor, none opposed.

Program Updates/Reports: Attraction: **Project Bail** is making progress with owner on reaching a lease agreement. Met local contractors at building for cost estimates on reopening the pits. **Project Bronze Sky** has still not released their short list of sites. **Project Castle** management looking for a house in Toccoa. Added **Project Coolmint**, a state project for a Chinese manufacturer of recycled plates and food containers is looking at an existing building. Dropped **Project Hospitality**, but added Project Lamar, another hospitality project. **Project Next** is working on environmental issues & still waiting on an easement. **Project Pharma** working on a building. **Project Venture 2.0** working with City to obtain needed permits to start on residential and retail space in their building. **Project Yellow Condor** has chosen a different location in Georgia to focus on. Akin & Ivey expressed their appreciation to the City, County, NGTC & everyone else that helped them with their last visit. **Project Wright** is a restaurant focusing on space in downtown. They would open in March if they move forward. Existing: Ivey reported that ASI's WBL program is receiving state recognition. She attended an event at ASI where they hosted several economic developers and the GDEcD Region Rep from NW Georgia to share about their program. Product Development: We will close out our \$200k grant for HBBP infrastructure once we submit the County's Audit from last Fiscal Year. Ivey reported on AlphaMaps training and thanked the Chamber for including SCDA in that.

President's Report: Existing: Ivey stated that the last lunch and learn was well attended and lot of our businesses had reached out the GMRC following it. We have sent the invoices for our PILOT agreements.

Workforce Development: Ivey said the first meeting with Advancement Academy students was well received and we have lined up tours for the 20 kids that can leave the campus to both the Clarkesville & Currahee Campus of NGTC. We recognized our first WBL SOM last week & agreed to let the WBL coordinators select our student of the from any Senior that has ever been recognized. They also asked us to consider giving two smaller scholarships in place of one large one.

Recruit New Industries. Ivey reported that the Good News Gathering was well attended & shared that the Sage Building is available at a listing price of \$11.4M. We connected the realtor they selected to GA Power for power information.

Input from Others: Hamilton reported that his board is continuously looking for ways to improve their land use ordinances. They are focusing on taking a closer look at lot width requirements currently. He also shared that the courthouse parking lot has been completed and that their Registrar's office has received state recognition for the job they are doing. Paysen shared that their awards ceremony is tomorrow night; Madison's on Main is backfilling the BW Threads space & Currahee Outdoors is expanding. McCraney shared that GPC is seeing an uptick in project activity all across the state. He reminded everyone that there is information about rate plans on their websites for those that need some extra assistance. The Mayor reported that the City has two open positions. They are hiring a planning director and a Chief of Police.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 a.m., [Phillips:Simmons]. All in favor; none opposed.

Submitted By:

Attested By:

Brian Akin, Chairman

Brittany W. Ivey, President/CEO