

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

Attending: Brian Akin, Gail Fry, Rick Phillips, Tara Simmons, Fredda Wheeler, Christian Hamilton, Janney Sanders, Cassandra Wilkins, Brittany Ivey & Ellen Spencer.

Chairman Brian Akin called the meeting to order at 7:32 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 as presented [Phillips:Fry]. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made to approve the November 20, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes, [Fry:Phillips]. All in favor; none opposed.

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

Board Action Items: Akin thanked Fry for her service to the SCDA Board as Mayor in 2024.

Program Updates/Reports: Attraction: Project Bail sent a letter of intent to the owner of the building they want to secure. No updates from Project Bronze Sky. Project Castle paid property taxes. Project Next closing has been pushed to February and work is being done to clean up environmental issues on site. Project Pharma is still working with Hartwell Rail to secure an easement. The property Project Spring, a hospitality project, was interested in has sold as a Right of First Refusal was exercised. The City, at the request of Project Venture 2.0, is working on a letter to present to GDOT to lower speed limit on Big A Road. Following that GDOT will conduct a traffic study. Project Wright has a lease agreement signed for a downtown location. The city updated their BII zoning to allow Project Rent to operate in the city if they find a location.

Existing: Sage Automotives is continuing to work out of the Toccoa location. No updates on complete closure of that plant to date. SCDA has helped SRW Products as they consider the potential purchase of the building they are operating out of.

Product Development: Closing out the 200k grant for the sewer expansion at year end following submission of final report.

Signed contract from Avamar Farm for mowing contract was received.

President's Report: Existing: Hosted the second round of 8th grade industry tours.

Workforce Development: November and December work-based learning students were recognized. Students from the Advancement Academy toured 5 industries and will be touring Piedmont College & Toccoa Falls College in January.

Recruitment: The current hotel feasibility study is now listed on SCDA's Website. CTAE videos have been released and are being published on social media platforms. Roundtable lunch meeting to be held on January 8th with Salik Sohani from Senator Warnock's office. Phillips agreed to join Akin on behalf of SCDA. Plans are in motion to tentatively hold a Strategic Planning session following the February 19, 2025 board meeting.

Input from Others: Hamilton shared that the county voted in the new Chairman and Vice Chair for the County Commission. The search still continues for a new deputy elections supervisor.

Executive Session: A motion was made to enter Executive Session at 8:09 a.m. to discuss the future acquisition, sale or lease of real estate as provided by O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (4), [Phillips:Fry]. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made to exit Executive Session at 8:27 a.m., [Simmons:Phillips]. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made to pay the Carter & Sloope invoice owed to Wilcorp upon assurance that it is the final payment with funds being withdrawn from the Oconee Federal SPLOST account, [Simmons:Phillips]. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 a.m., [Simmons:Phillips]. All in favor; none opposed.

Submitted By:

Attested By:

Brian Akin, Chairman

Brittany W. Ivey, President/CEO