

Board Meeting Minutes
January 15, 2024
20 Doyle Street, Toccoa, GA

Attending: Brian Akin, Lisa Lawson, Tara Simmons, Fredda Wheeler, Christian Hamilton, Stacy Miller, Cassandra Wilkins, Julie Paysen, Janney Sanders, Brittany Ivey & Ellen Spencer.

Chairman Brian Akin called the meeting to order at 7:31 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 [Simmons:Lawson]. All in favor; none opposed.

A motion was made to approve the December 18, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes, [Lawson:Simmons]. All in favor; none opposed.

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

Board Action Items: A motion was made to appoint Simmons as Vice Chair and leave Akin as Chair, Phillips as Treasurer & Lawson as Secretary, [Lawson:Simmons]. All in favor; none opposed.

Consensus was to keep board meeting date & time the same. Board to pass on advertising in the Business Focus Magazine. The board requested to move Approving a New Employee Retirement Plan to next month's meeting agenda and asked staff to get at least 3 quotes before revisiting.

Program Updates/Reports: Attraction: Ivey shared that Project Bail and their consultant will be in town this week to look at the building. We are their only location in Georgia. Project Bronze Sky has still not share their list of finalists. Project Castle has not communicated with us since the first of the year. Ivey is working with the Mayor & Fredda on providing factual information on the 27 N Pond property. City has agreed to lease the parking on Railroad Street for a nationally flagged brand hotel. Project Lamar will drop. Project Pharma's construction has begun on the building. Efforts to reach Hartwell Railway have continued. Project Spring First Right of Refusal was executed. We declined to fill out an RFI for Project SunVest who wanted a long term lease to put solar panels in the industrial park. Project Venture 2.0 has a meeting scheduled with the City. Wheeler states traffic study has begun to asses lowering speed limit on Big A Road. Project Wright running behind but plans remain the same to move forward with opening the business.

Existing: MWL, LLC & Fieldale facing issues with employees and immigration laws. Ivey & Spencer visited Gem Plastics & Sark Wire with Salik Sahoni form Senator Warnock's office. Salik is assisting industries with issues presented at the meeting. Kerim from Sark Wire looking to start a non-profit to host Turkish events & asked for guidance. Sage Automotives is behind on their plant transition. SCDA to help find jobs for employee that are not planning to move.

Product Development: County audit was submitted to the Grant system. Ivey shared with Wheeler the Governor budgeted for \$1 billion for road, sewer, & infrastructure in the coming year. SCDA & City to watch for grant possibilities to help with upcoming city needs. Final payment was made to Wilcorp on sewer expansion in HBPP.

President's Report:

Existing: Successful lunch hosting Salik Sohani with great representation from community representatives.

Workforce Development: Seeking partnership with Sheriff's department to find jobs for repeat offenders.

Recruitment: Groundbreaking Ceremony to take place at 1pm for a multifamily apartment complex. Expected open date for the first 90 units is Spring 2026. Terry Carter bio & headshot has been added to the SCDA website.

Input from Others: Hamilton states the county is working on ordinance updates. Simmons informs they are going through public hearings on Floating Homestead Exemption before a decision is made. Paysen thanks those that attended the Pre-Legislative Coffee. Julie visited the Capital for the unveiling of the Ga Travel Guide showcasing Toccoa Falls on the cover. Plans are in effect to coordinate another Day at the Capital for Stephens County representatives. Shepards Hill to close their doors. The Venue at Broken Bridges is under new management. McCraney states there were no large issues with Storm Cora.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 a.m., [Lawson:Simmons]. All in favor; none opposed.

Submitted By:

Attested By:

Brian Akin, Chairman

Brittany W. Ivey, President/CEO