

Habersham County Development Authority
Thursday, February 12, 2026 @ 3:30 pm
Executive Conference Room
130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA 30523

The Habersham County Development Authority held a regular meeting on Thursday, February 12, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. in the Executive conference room in the Habersham County Administration Building located at 130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA, 30523.

Members Present: Jim Butterworth (via teleconference), Sidney Roland, Mike Franklin, Jeff Bruns, Bryan Ferguson, David Lovvorn

Members Not Present: Allen Whitener

Others Present: Tim Sims, Kiani Holden, Patti McLarty, Janney Sanders, Alex Robinson, Media

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Bryan Ferguson.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was led by Mike Franklin, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bryan Ferguson.

Approval of Agenda

A MOTION was made by Sidney Roland, seconded by Jeff Bruns, and voted 6-0 to amend the agenda to remove Executive Session. A MOTION was made by Mike Franklin, seconded by Sidney Roland, and voted 6-0 to approve the agenda as amended.

Approval of Minutes

A MOTION was made by Sidney Roland, seconded by Jeff Bruns, and approved 6-0 to amend the minutes by correcting two clerical mistakes and to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2026 regular meeting as amended.

Review of Quarterly Financials

Kiani Holden presented the year-end financials dated December 31, 2025. December 2025 represents 50% of the fiscal year. Therefore, expenditures should be less than or equal to 50% of the FY26 budget, while revenues should be 50% at a minimum. Actual revenues collected were 32% of the total budgeted revenues, while actual expenditures were 43%. The SouthState Bank balance as of December 31, 2025, was \$30,211. The Georgia Fund 1 account balance as of December 31, 2025, was \$1,352,116. MOTION by Mike Franklin, seconded by David Lovvorn, and voted 6-0 to approve the financials dated December 31, 2025. A \$20,000 invoice from Rochester & Associates was recently paid for master plan services, which accounts for the additional expenditures. Sidney Roland asked if the Rochester expense was paid by the county or the Development Authority. Jim Butterworth stated that Rochester has done a lot of work with the Development Authority in relation to the Lee Arrendale property and this is the first invoice we have received in a long time. Jim estimated we have received \$75k in services for the \$20k we spent and that we are getting our

money's worth by using Rochester. Jim added that we may be reimbursed by the county for some of these expenses further into the project, and Tim said that was correct.

Old Business

1. Airport Business Park Update – Alex Robinson began with an update on Pads 5 & 7. Alex has spoken with the owner to get a better understanding of the plans and the development timelines for these properties. It is her understanding that there should be some movement happening soon with one of the sites. Alex will keep in contact with the owner, and plans to have a meeting with the developers to make sure that the challenges that were discussed regarding permitting are addressed. Bryan Ferguson reminded the board that last month, the board asked Matt Skilling to send a letter to the owners of pads 5 & 7 reminding them of their obligations to construct a building within a certain timeframe. After Alex's meeting with Wilson-Hutchinson, Bryan thinks we should give them another month to see if they make any progress before sending them a letter. Alex has coordinated with Georgia EMC to capture new drone photos and videos of the Airport Business Park and Phase II towards the end of the month. Bryan Ferguson added that he received some information this morning that there is some activity at the Higgins building. Bryan is unsure whether it has been sold or is being leased, but a tenant is requesting updated utility services. The company manufactures window tinting.
2. Phase II Business Park Update– Alex has met with Clearview Enterprises and toured the site to learn more about their operations and workforce needs. There is one large site for sale in Phase II that Alex plans to have Georgia EMC get updated footage of, and possibly some 3D renderings as well.
3. Partnership Habersham Update – Alex Robinson began with an update on workforce development. The Habersham Works program kicked off January 15th and will conclude on May 14th with the certificate ceremony. Courses are instructed by staff at NGTC. 13 high school students are participating in the inaugural program and upon completion will gain 9 non-credentialed certifications that are recognized by local employers. Alex is working with Senator Ossoff's office to potentially fund the expansion of this program. The 10th annual Ninth Grade Academy Career Fair will be March 19th. The goal is to have at least 35 companies present to engage with students and showcase what future career opportunities are present in the county. Alex has also been working on the first Strategic Plan for Partnership Habersham and the Development Authority. This will outline the goals and objectives for the three strategic pillars: Business Attraction, Existing Industry Support, and Workforce Development, while identifying aligning strategies to meet those goals over the next five years. Alex has scheduled Georgia EMC to hold a workshop focused on establishing a step-by-step process following a land acquisition and identify future land opportunities in alignment with the county comprehensive plan. The workshop/retreat will be held on April 9th, and our regular meeting will be held before the workshop begins. Jim Butterworth would like to coordinate a road trip "county tour" on the morning of the retreat. Bryan agreed that it would be very beneficial. Jim stressed that he wants to be considerate of everyone's time, since this is a volunteer board.
4. Administrative Update – Patti shared information on a course through Carl Vinson that would satisfy the new annual 2-hour training requirement. The course is "Online Government Debt Methods", which is a self-paced course that will be completed on June 30, 2026.

New Business

- HR 97 was the resolution that conveyed the Lee Arrendale property to Habersham County. Jim said that we need to deal directly with the State Properties Commission, and not with the Dept. of Corrections. Mike Franklin stressed that we need to get this project moving along and we need a protocol. Jim said there is a protocol in place right now, but down the road we may need to change that protocol. We need to follow the legislation that is in HR 97. There was a copy of the resolution included in the meeting packets.

Public Comment

- Rope Roberts shared that he is a business owner in the county, and a Partnership Habersham member, and he cares about our community. Rope would like to offer to do our required training for us all at one time. He is qualified through DCA to do the training and recently conducted the 2-hour training for Dawson County and Upson County. Patti McLarty suggested having the training on a regular meeting day, perhaps beginning an hour or so earlier for a short regular meeting followed by the training. Rope is unavailable in May. Rope then encouraged us to promote industrial properties for sale in the county, even if they are not owned by the Development Authority. Rope then referred to the minutes from the last meeting where Commissioner Kelly Woodall mentioned unmanaged growth. Rope said as long as we have a minimum lot size of one acre with a well and a septic system, we're going to have that. As older people die and their farms are sold, more and more residential property will be sold off. Tim said the new UDC will add several categories to the current zoning, which will help to manage growth. Rope said that's what the Development Authority is for, to decide where the industrial growth needs to happen, which is near transportation corridors and where water and sewer are available.

Other Reports

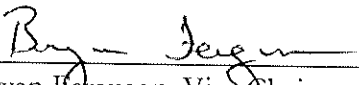
None

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting is Thursday, March 12, 2026, at 3:30 p.m.

Adjourn

A MOTION was made by Jeff Bruns, seconded by Mike Franklin, and voted 6-0 to adjourn the meeting at 4:14 p.m.


Bryan Ferguson, Vice Chair


Attest: Sidney Roland, Secretary