

Habersham County Development Authority
Thursday, May 14, 2026 @ 3:30 p.m.
Executive Conference Room
130 Jacob's Way Clarkesville, GA 30523

The Habersham County Development Authority held a regular meeting on Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room of the Habersham County Administration building located at 130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA, 30523.

Members Present: Jim Butterworth, Sidney Roland, Mike Franklin, Jeff Bruns, Allen Whitener

Members Not Present: Bryan Ferguson, David Lovvorn

Others Present: Tim Sims (via Teams) Kiani Holden, Patti McLarty, Matt Skilling, Alex Robinson

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Jim Butterworth.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were led by Jim Butterworth.

Approval of Agenda

A MOTION was made by Sidney Roland, seconded by Allen Whitener, and voted 5-0 to amend the agenda to add "Discussion of By-Laws" to Old Business, and to approve the agenda as amended.

Approval of Minutes

A MOTION was made by Jeff Bruns, seconded by Sidney Roland, and approved 5-0 to approve the minutes of the April 9, 2026 Regular meeting and the April 9, 2026 retreat.

Quarterly Financial Update

Finance Director Kiani Holden gave the update. The South State account balance was \$11,233 as of March 31, 2026, and the GA Fund 1 account balance was \$1,359,521. Kiani reminded the board that funds had previously been moved from Wells Fargo investments into GA Fund 1 to allow easier access to the funds when needed, and to hopefully earn more interest. The Development Authority has earned approximately \$12,400 in interest since the investment transfer to GA Fund 1. Some discussion took place regarding the ongoing streetlight charges by HEMC, and this matter will be discussed in detail at the next meeting.

Old Business

1. Airport Business Park Update – Alex Robinson reported that construction activity has begun on pads 5 and 7. Survey flags, equipment, trailers, and materials were seen on site. Alex stated that the owner advised that the properties are intended for lease, not sale, even though the signs say, "For Sale". The long-term plans include construction of two 16,000 square foot buildings and possibly an additional 30,000 square foot building on pad 7. The owner told Alex that additional phases depended upon securing tenants and related financing approvals. Alex also reported that the property at 230 Industrial Park

Road is currently under contract and Alex provided her contact information to the potential buyer's agent in order to stay informed regarding future plans for the property. Alex said another industrial property owner is currently attempting to sublease 18,000 square feet of available space. Alex said that the market still lacks larger heavy manufacturing facilities but there are smaller industrial spaces throughout the county. Alex has spoken with City of Baldwin regarding maintenance of the grass and shrubs around the business park sign. They told Alex if it's their job to continue to do the maintenance, they'd rather just pull the bushes up because the county had planted them. Alex told them we will figure something out and to please not pull them up. City of Baldwin did trim the bushes this time. One of the businesses in the park contacted Alex about putting their company name in the sign display for the business park. Alex said the sign marquee is currently full and she reached out to Mike Beecham to see who manages the sign or who originally built the sign. There are many opportunities for new businesses to put a sign in the marquee, including several companies under SteelCell/Vital Space currently working in their buildings. This topic will be discussed in greater detail at the next meeting.

2. Phase II Business Park Update – Alex said there are some prospects interested in Phase II property but those will be discussed more in Executive Session.
3. Executive Director Update – Alex headed up the E-SPLOST campaign and encouraged everyone to vote. Alex partnered with Franklin County Industrial Authority and Stephens County Development Authority on April 23rd for a Northeast Georgia Regional Women in Economic Development Day. She said it was our chance to get site selectors, business development managers, and statewide project teams together here at home. GlobalTech was highlighted for their internal expansion (burn lab), which has added more jobs to that existing industry. Alex has reached out to the new owners of Apple Mountain Resort, and she will be touring that site on June 1st. She said the new owners are breathing new life into the resort with their marketing efforts, which include geofencing. Workforce Development Update – Alex reported that the Habersham Works students graduated earlier in the day. Nineteen students participated in the pilot program and each student obtained at least one certification during the program. The graduation ceremony was very well-received by the students and their families. Alex attended a recent job fair at Habersham Central that included 50 students and 11 employers. Alex also gave an update on the ongoing strategic planning process. She thanked the board for attending the strategic planning retreat in April. Georgia EMC is compiling the information from the retreat, and Alex's goal is to provide a draft strategic plan to the board by mid-summer.
4. Discussion of By-Laws – The HCDA by-laws were previously revised, but they were never formally finalized or adopted. Matt Skilling will review and update the document and send out to the board for review before the next meeting.

New Business

None

Public Comment

None

Other Reports

Patti McLarty reminded the members that the county IT department is ready to meet with them individually to fix their e-mail issues and reiterated the importance of using the county e-mail for Development Authority business.

A MOTION was made by Jeff Bruns, seconded by Sidney Roland, and voted 5-0 to enter into Executive Session at 3:56 p.m.

Executive Session

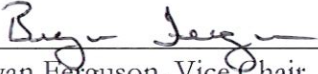
A MOTION was made by Sidney Roland, seconded by Allen Whitener, and voted 5-0 to exit Executive Session at 4:44 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting is Thursday, June 11, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room of the Habersham County Administration building.

Adjourn

A MOTION was made by Mike Franklin, seconded by Allen Whitener, and voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 4:51 p.m.



Bryan Ferguson, Vice Chair



Attest: Sidney Roland, Secretary