

**Habersham County Development Authority
Thursday, October 7, 2021 @ 3:30 pm
Executive Floor Conference Room
130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA 30523**

Members Present: Gail Thaxton, Bryan Ferguson, Brent Edwards, Jeff Bruns

Members Not Present: Bill Duff, Debbie Purcell

Others Present: Mike Beecham, Alicia Vaughn, Janney Sanders, Wade Rhodes, Charlie Fiveash, Bruce Palmer, Alan Nesmith, Jim Woodward, Rope Roberts

Call to Order and Invocation

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm and invocation given by Gail Thaxton.

Approval of Agenda

A MOTION was made by Brent Edwards, SECONDED by Bryan Ferguson, and voted unanimously to approve the order of business.

Approval of Minutes

A MOTION was made by Bryan Ferguson, SECONDED by Brent Edwards, and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of September 2, 2021.

Monthly Activity Report

Mike Beecham presented the Monthly Activity Report. September YTD represents 25% of the Fiscal Year. Current revenues are .02% and current expenditures are 4.6%. The Wells Fargo account transfer has been completed and should begin earning more interest than the previous account.

A MOTION was made by Brent Edwards, SECONDED by Bryan Ferguson, and voted unanimously to approve the monthly financial report as presented.

The HCDA Annual Strategic Plan/Retreat is scheduled for Thursday, February 17, 2022. The location is to be determined.

New Business

- Discussion with Bond Attorney Jim Woodward – Jim Woodward is a bond attorney who Alicia Vaughn has worked with in the past. He works with many cities, counties, and Development Authorities. He explained that as more businesses and industries begin to expand into Habersham County, the HCDA needs to have a policy in place for offering tax incentives. Having bond counsel will help to make our documents more consistent and understandable. HCDA is not obligated to offer tax incentives to every business; however, the incentives we offer need to be consistent. Alicia recommended that the HCDA work with Mr. Woodward going forward. The members agreed by consensus.
- Resolution of Support for Cornelia Wastewater Improvements – Charlie Fiveash spoke in favor of the HCDA supporting the City of Cornelia in its requests for State and Federal grants for water and wastewater improvements. A Resolution was presented stating that the HCDA will establish a partnership with the City of Cornelia and the Cornelia Water Authority for EDA assistance

through the Build Back Better Challenge Program. The funds will be essential in the development of future industrial parks. Mike Beecham recommended HCDA's support.

- A MOTION was made by Jeff Bruns, SECONDED by Brent Edwards, and voted unanimously to approve and offer support of the EDA Build Back Better Challenge Program.

Old Business

- Airport Business Park Update – Mike attended the City of Baldwin meeting this week to request a variance for the stormwater ponds in the business park to be grandfathered. The stormwater ponds were built to 2016 requirements. The City of Baldwin is now requiring that they are brought up to their current requirements.
 - o The as-built survey was completed and turned in to EMI. EMI is wanting detailed reports rather than the summaries they were given. The additional information will be sent to EMI by the surveyor. No new surveys will be required.
- Other Property Updates – Rope Roberts spoke on behalf of Georgia Power. He is the Economic Development Manager for our area. He works to provide funds to assist with development needs. Georgia Power will reimburse the HCDA for the cost of modifying the outlet structures in the stormwater ponds at the business park, in the amount of \$6,412. Charlie Fiveash asked about the status of the streetlight project. Mike explained the history of the discussions with City of Baldwin regarding cost sharing. The HCDA can afford the up-front costs to install the lights and have asked the City of Baldwin to pay the monthly fees. The City of Baldwin declined to share the cost. Janney Sanders said that the covenants state that expenses for maintenance and common areas of the business park can be imposed on property owners. Mike suggested that rather than impose a fee on property owners, we should calculate the percentage that each property owner should contribute and ask them to commit to sharing the cost. Mike will work on the proposal.
- Partnership Habersham – Charlie Fiveash had positive news to share. A large manufacturing company has expressed interest in building a facility in Habersham County. He suggested that the Reed property may be a good option for the company's needs.

Other Reports

None

Executive Session

A MOTION was made by Brent Edwards, SECONDED by Bryan Ferguson, and voted unanimously to enter Executive Session at 4:37 pm.

A MOTION was made by Bryan Ferguson, SECONDED by Brent Edwards, and voted unanimously to exit Executive Session at 4:54 pm.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is Thursday, November 4, 2021 @ 3:30 pm, Habersham County Administration Building.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 4:55 pm.



Dr. Gail Thaxton, Chair



Attest: Mike Beecham