

Habersham County Development Authority
Thursday, June 1, 2023 @ 3:30 pm
Executive Conference Room
130 Jacob's Way, Clarkesville, GA 30523

Members Present: Gail Thaxton, Allen Whitener, Jeff Bruns, Bryan Ferguson, Jim Butterworth, Bill Duff

Members Not Present: Kelly Woodall

Others Present: County staff, Members of the Public and Media

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 Jeff Bruns, SECONDED by Bryan Ferguson, and voted unanimously to amend the agenda to remove item 6a (Approve/adopt new by-laws as amended) from the agenda. The amended agenda was approved by consensus.

Approval of Minutes

A MOTION was made by Bryan Ferguson, SECONDED by Bill Duff, and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2023 regular meeting.

Monthly Activity Report

The financial report was not available in time for the meeting. The May 31, 2023 financial report will be e-mailed to the board members when available and approved at the July meeting.

Old Business

Airport Business Park Update – Charlie Fiveash gave the update. The BOC voted in May to waive the right to oppose the annexation of Pad 10. There were some challenges involving the parcel numbers. Those issues have been resolved. Once the annexation is complete, the Development Authority will move forward with the process for grading pad 10. The bid opening is June 14th. Alice Venter from City of Baldwin added that the buyer is very satisfied with the process so far and hopefully will not need to extend the due diligence period again. Baldwin will have the second reading of the annexation at their June meeting. Bryan Ferguson said that HEMC and Georgia Power are still in negotiations with the customer for power opportunities and that may cause the customer to add the other 30-day extension. Charlie shared the unfortunate news that the potential customer from Commerce who had been interested in a 40,000 square foot spec building to be built by the owners of pads 5 and 7 have backed out due to time constraints. The company wanted to be in the building within 12 months, which is a very difficult timeline to meet. The Higgins building is within 30 days of being finished. Alice has a potential prospect for the building. Charlie said the building had not been properly marketed, but it is listed on the state's website. Charlie has been told that interest in buildings in the range of 25-50,000 square feet has declined some recently.

Courthouse Redevelopment Update – Charlie gave a brief update on the courthouse. Because of the grant application the county has submitted through DCA, we cannot officially put the demolition work out for a formal bid. Alicia Vaughn recently had a meeting with DCA and has also spoken with GMRC

regarding a Phase 1 environmental study which will be required to qualify for the grant. She also explained the grant “points” process – the more points we get, the more competitive our grant application will be.

Other Property Updates – Charlie discussed the development of the Reed property/Phase 2. The only quote that has been received for the cul-de-sac paving was \$535,000. James Irvin has prepared a preliminary plan for the layout of Phase 2. There is a large ravine that splits the property, which would enable us to do two phases of development on the property. If we can coordinate the timeline, Steelcell will be building a new road off Pyratech Drive that we could potentially tie into to save money. Therefore, it would make sense to develop that phase first. Charlie asked if the Development Authority is ready to start the bid process for grading? Bryan Ferguson asked how long that bid process takes. Gail Thaxton added that the Development Authority has been discussing this for a year or more. Bryan said he would like to move forward with the bid process. Jeff Bruns stated that it is not when we do it, it is how we do it. It must be done, and the Development Authority has the money now. There was a group discussion about whether we should offer raw property versus rough graded lots. Wade Rhodes said that rough grading helps sell the lots. Alice Venter made a suggestion regarding the stormwater ponds to pass along to Mr. Irvin. She said that in the airport business park, the initial ponds were sufficient to handle the first several pads, but as the final pads are being developed, the original ponds are not sufficient, therefore slowing down the process of developing the later pads as well as costing the customer more money. Charlie recommended that we bid out in phases and not the entire property at once. Mike Beecham said we could split the bids into three phases – (1) Grading and paving the cul-de-sac road off Duncan Bridge Road, (2) Rough grading of lots, and (3) Grading and paving of a second entrance near Steelcell. A MOTION was made by Bryan Ferguson, seconded by Bill Duff, and voted unanimously to begin the bid process, which will request separate bids for – (1) Grading and paving the cul-de-sac road off Duncan Bridge Road, (2) Rough grading of lots, and (3) Grading and paving of a second entrance near Steelcell.

New Business

None

Other Reports

Alice Venter asked to speak and share information on a new business coming to Baldwin, adjacent to the Airport business park. It is a bio-solids company called Rev Solutions, that previously was interested in the airport business park. This company will be flying high-profile clients into the Habersham airport. The owner of the company made a comment to Alice that the Airport business park was “absolutely mediocre”, referring to the way it looks. Rev Solutions makes compost in shipping containers using bio solids. Alice wants to reassure the Development Authority that the composting process will not have a bad smell or any negative impact on the local environment. The shipping containers will be behind a green buffer and won’t be seen. She also said that this company will be an excellent community partner. They will have a 3,000 square foot office and a 5,000 square foot shop in the front, where they plan to have local schoolchildren come to learn about the agricultural aspect of their business as well as letting the kids paint murals on the shipping containers. This company has offered to give compost to the business park to improve the landscape and plant flowers. This will also save the city of Baldwin \$3 million by not having to purchase a solar dryer for solid waste.

Next Meeting

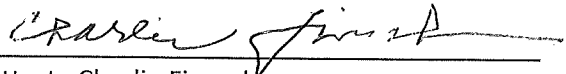
The next regular meeting is Thursday, July 13, 2023 @ 3:30 pm, Habersham County Administration Building.

Adjourn

A MOTION was made by Bryan Ferguson, SECONDED by Jim Butterworth, and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:19 pm.



Bill Duff, Vice Chair



Attest: Charlie Fiveash