

MINUTES – JANUARY 11TH

BROOKS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Jack Harrell called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Board members Marie Horne, Erin McKenzie, Ulysses Marable, Derren Yearby and Jack Harrell attended, along with Engineer Ben DeVane, Attorney Luke Mitchell, and Director Stephanie Mata.

Organizational Business

Director Mata opened the floor up to nominations for the Board Officers. Jack Harrell discussed his opinion that the Development Authority should consider the term of officers to be two-year appointments. Attorney Luke Mitchell stated that he was unaware of any term limits in the Georgia statute or elsewhere, but that he would check on it to make sure. Derren Yearby suggested that perhaps the Board should table the Board appointments until February when clarification can be provided. Derren Yearby made a motion to table the Board appointments until February; seconded by Erin McKenzie; unanimously accepted.

Minutes and Financials

Copies of the minutes of the monthly meeting held December 14th were reviewed. Erin McKenzie motioned to approve the minutes of the meeting as presented; seconded by Marie Horne; unanimously accepted. Financials to be submitted in February.

Old Business

Jack Harrell moved to Old Business, and he update the Board regarding the Skyline Project, which is still active and will be completed soon. (The first block, per the contract.)

New Business

Jack Harrell moved to new business. Director Mata provided an update regarding Project M. As we move further into the process of bringing in this industry, Director Mata has been conducting extensive research into the industry in order to gain a greater understanding of not only the industry but the impact it would have in our community. Director Mata expressed that she needs to do a site visit to a comparable location to lay physical eyes and ears on the project in order to better understand the scope of the project as well as gain valuable insight necessary for community buy-in. The Board discussed the necessity of the Director being able to travel when needed to “go after” target industries. The Director also updated the Board to let them know that there is a tentative public announcement for this industry toward the end of January/ beginning of February, and that she will be able to answer any questions at that time. Marie Horne motioned to allow the Director to pursue the interests of industry and appropriate the necessary funds as needed via remote vote; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously accepted.

Director Mata delivered the 2021 tentative Community Development Projects for the City of Barwick. Director Mata relayed their excitement to be able to revitalize their community, as well as their eagerness to work with our Board.

The City of Pavo requested additional funds in the amount of \$5698.00 which is the remaining balance of the initial quote of \$8975.00 to replace the doors on the Peacock Center. This Grant is the first of the 2021 fiscal year. Marie Horne motioned to approve the funds of \$5698.00 for the doors for the Peacock Center; seconded by Erin McKenzie; unanimously accepted.

Established Business: Neely Service Center requested Community Economic Development Grant funds in the amount of \$7500.00 to assist with the cost of updating the cathodic system and relocating the rectifier box to meet state requirements. Marie Horne motioned to approve the grant in the amount of \$7500.00; seconded by Erin McKenzie; unanimously accepted.

Nonprofit Organization: Calvary Christian Center requested Community Economic Development Grant funds in the amount \$7500.00 for the completion and upgrading of the fellowship hall of the church, a refrigerator, security system for the church and a computer lab for the tutoring program. Jack Harrell mentioned a previous conversation between himself and the Director regarding the funding of churches, which opened the discussion. Derren Yearby expressed his concern funding churches. Attorney Luke Mitchell voiced his concern, specifically referencing the separation of church and state, and the understanding of our objective of economic development. Since a site visit had not yet been obtained, the Board decided to table the grant application until a site visit is made and a better understanding of the project could be clarified. Derren Yearby made the motion to Table the grant, pending a site visit for clarification; seconded by Erin McKenzie; unanimously accepted.

Chairman Jack Harrell made a motion that NO GRANTS will be approved until a site visit has been made; seconded by Erin McKenzie; unanimously accepted.

Established business: Peak Performance Gym. Mr. Eric Peak with Peak Performance Gym failed to meet the Terms and Conditions and Requirements set forth in the agreement, through serious misjudgment on his part, and the Authority is left with no alternative but to rescind the Grant Award. Marie Horne wished to be recorded that she abstained from this vote. Derren Yearby motioned to rescind the grant; seconded by Erin McKenzie; majority approved.

Update to Community Grant Applications: Initial lines to be added next to Terms and Requirements in order to help ensure that applicants fully understand ALL the terms and requirements before they sign the agreement. Derren Yearby motioned to approve the update to the grant applications; seconded by Erin McKenzie; unanimously accepted.

Director Mata mentioned the YOT Waters Industrial Park's deteriorating and missing signage. It is apparent that a previous board had put signage there some time ago- specifically referring to the signage on Highway 84 and Highland Drive. The sign on Hwy 84 is missing, with only the arch remaining. The sign on Highland Drive is deteriorating and dilapidated. We have some new interest in the industrial area, and we need to improve the look of the Industrial Park. Marie Horne motioned to approve the replacement of the YOT Waters Industrial Park signage; seconded by Erin McKenzie; unanimously accepted.

Reports

Luke Mitchell reported that the Aviagen EDGE Lease had been completed. The Industrial Park roads have not been deeded back to the City of Quitman, and he will reach out to the attorney.

Ben DeVane reported that the Industrial Park signage is about 90 days from the project being started.

Motion to adjourn carried by Marie Horne; seconded by Erin McKenzie; unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted:

Secretary