

MINUTES – OCTOBER 12, 2020

BROOKS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Dr. Marie Horne called the meeting to order. Board members Derren Yearby, Marie Horne, Ulysses Marable, and Chairman Jack Harrell attended, along with Engineer Ben DeVane, Attorney Luke Mitchell and Interim Director Stephanie Mata.

Organizational Business

Ratification of Appointed Officers from remote appointment on September 9, 2020. Ulysses Marable motioned to accept Derren Yearby as Treasurer; seconded by Marie Horne; unanimously approved. Derren Yearby motioned to accept Dr. Marie Horne as Vice Chairman; seconded by Ulysses Marable; unanimously approved.

Minutes and Financials

Copies of the minutes of the monthly meeting held August 10th were reviewed. Marie Horne motioned to approve the minutes of the meeting as presented; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously approved.

Copies of the minutes of the Special Called meeting held August 25th were reviewed. Marie Horne motioned to approve the minutes of the meeting as presented; seconded by Ulysses Marable; unanimously approved.

The financial reports for August 2020 and September 2020 were provided to the board for review and approval along with the checking account balances. Interim Director Stephanie Mata explained to the Board that there are some minor discrepancies between the 2019 and 2020 financials that will be cleared up once the 2019 financial audit is complete; however, all balances on the Financial Report are accurate and up-to-date. New general ledger codes had to be created in order to accurately report late fees and interest paid on the credit card, as well as those expenses pending classification. Because these line items were not budgeted for and in the interest of transparency and accountability, these line items were explained.

Marie Horne motioned to accept the financial reports as provided, understanding that they will be amended once the financial audit is complete; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously accepted.

Old Business

Interim Director Mata took the opportunity to review all Old Business items. There were no updates on Project Lemon or Project Kitchen, and until there is an update, they will fall off future Meeting Agendas. Update regarding Project Samsung was provided and discussed. I.D. Mata reported to the Board that she had already updated Commissioner Exum, as she is the liaison and Commissioner for that District. I.D. Mata informed the Board that the next update will be in later March 2021, and that she will follow up with them at that time.

Engineer Mr. Ben DeVane will get information regarding the Industrial Park signage to the Board next week, or by the November meeting, at the very latest. Mr. DeVane mentioned that the previous quote for the signage was roughly \$40,000 a few years ago. Marie Horne instructed I.D. Mata to also conduct research regarding signage for the Industrial Park as well.

New Business

Chairman Harrell moved to new business. The Intergovernmental Agreement was discussed, as this was sent to the Board October 9, 2020. Chairman Harrell discussed the meeting with the I.D. Stephanie Mata, County Administrator Jessica McKinney, County Attorney, James Burchett, Commissioner Chairman James Maxwell, Commissioner Exum on September 28, 2020 to discuss the Intergovernmental Agreements. Chairman Harrell discussed that we had come to a consensus regarding the IGA for funding and that the Land Agreement had been

withdrawn by the Commission since we could not come to an agreement on terms and conditions. There were no questions or concerns discussed. Marie Horne motioned to accept the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Brooks County Development Authority and the Brooks County Board of Commissioners; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously accepted.

I.D. Mata opened the discussion regarding a Financial Policy and Procedures Manual for the Development Authority; its need and place in the administration. I.D. Mata provided a rough draft of the policy to the Board for review and asked for any recommendations or suggestions to be relayed to her so that the proposed final draft can be reviewed at the November meeting. I.D. Mata also stated that BCDA CPA Gary Zeigler was also reviewing the policy and making suggested edits as well.

Chairman Jack Harrell moved to the Economic Grant Applications and Processes for New and Established Businesses. Chairman Harrell discussed the maximum amount of \$7500 on both grants to be equal among both grants. I.D. Mata informed the Board that per Attorney Luke Mitchell's advisement, a General Purpose Statement was added, a line under Terms and Conditions regarding fraudulent applications, a line to be added on the Agreement "under penalty of perjury" and a place for Notary. Chairman Harrell stressed that the Development Authority Board will review applications and award funds according to fair and equal practices. Marie Horne motioned to approve both applications as presented; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously accepted.

I.D. Mata moved to discuss a set of guidelines that she is drafting regarding local municipalities and unincorporated areas within Brooks County for the purpose of the Beautification Grant. Chairman Harrell discussed an annual cap of \$25,000 per city, as funding allows. Local cities will be required to submit projects to the Development Authority by January 31st in order to be considered for the following year's budget. (For example, projects for 2022 need to be delivered by January 31, 2021.) I. D. Mata will have the guidelines ready for review by the November meeting.

Vice Chairman discussed the meeting with I.D. Mata and the Quitman City Council where we discussed working with the City and offering our Beautification Grant. I.D. Mata also reiterated that it was well-received by all, and that they were interested in utilizing this opportunity.

Treasurer Derren Yearby discussed meeting with I.D. Mata and the City of Morven, the need to show a continuous presence in the community. Mr. Yearby explained how they had never spoken to anyone from the Development Authority and that they were eager and interested in participating. I.D. Mata affirmed this sentiment and explained that there were similar reactions in both Pavo and Barwick, and they are eager to engage with the Development Authority with future projects. I.D. Mata informed the Board that the Cities of Morven, Pavo and Barwick are all gathering price quotes on Christmas lights and will deliver them as soon as possible.

I.D. Mata delivered the cost of signage for the City of Barwick to replace the old signage, remove the old signage and installation. Total cost of \$2,307.45. Marie Horne motioned to approve the expense for the Community Project for the City of Barwick's signage at a cost of \$2,307.45; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously accepted. Derren Yearby also suggested that I.D. Mata also develop a monthly flyer to be delivered to the City municipalities to remind them that we're here.

I.D. Mata updated the Board that the Development Authority is involved with a joint project with the Quitman-Brooks Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Commissioners "Christmas at the Courthouse." The estimated costs of a Christmas tree, garland and lights are \$1,198.60. I.D. Mata explained the tentative festivities and that the Board of Commissioners has funds set aside to also assist with this project as well. Chairman Harrell suggested funding the entire amount, rounding up to \$1200.00. Marie Horne motioned to approve the cost of \$1200.00 for Christmas at the Courthouse"; seconded by Ulysses Marable; unanimously accepted.

I.D. Mata discussed a previous conversation with Derren Yearby regarding bicycles for the children for Christmas. The Board suggested that I.D. Mata take the lead and delegate territories or areas in which to talk to local businesses, NPOs and industries. Derren Yearby also suggested that if there were to be vendors at the Courthouse celebration, perhaps they might also donate a bike to the cause in lieu of a fee.

I.D. Mata also informed the Board that the Chamber is also putting on Halloween on N. Court Street. The Chamber needs funds for this as well, but they are also seeking funds from local businesses. The Board discussed the priority of funding the Christmas celebration as opposed to Halloween. Marie Horne motioned to deny funding for the Halloween celebration; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously denied.

I.D. Mata reported that as of September 2020 Broos County has been listed as a Rial Ready site by OmniTRAX and the Georgia-Florida Railroad, and she relayed the importance of such an announcement. I.D. Mata then informed the Board that the Industrial Park was once GRAD Certified by the GA Department of Economic Development but that has been expired since 2008/2009 when it was last applied for by previous Dir. Tina Herring. I.D. Mata also informed the Board that she has been discussing this with an Engineering firm in Athens, GA, to redo the entire certification application. As technology has changed, so too has the methodology and scope of data obtained in this process. I.D. Mata informed the Board that once she has more details from the firm reviewing the old application, she will have the gentleman from the firm explain it to the Board, in detail, as well as answer any questions. Furthermore, I.D. Mata informed the Board that she is researching grants that might assist with the expense of the certification.

I.D. Mata reminded Derren Yearby and Marie Horne about their upcoming Development Authority Training on October 22nd. She gave them an itinerary and explained that once the class is complete, the certificate will be emailed to them the following day, which they can then forward to I.D. Mata to be printed and stored in their file for record.

Marie Horne motioned to open the Executive Session; seconded by Ulysses Marable; unanimously approved.

Reports

Chairman Harrell moved to reports. At the request of the Board, Stephanie Mata and Sue Ramsey will be called for an interview in a Special Called Meeting on Monday, October 19th at 6pm.

I.D. Mata reported that the groundbreaking for the New Ag Building will be Monday, October 19th at 4:30pm.

No other reports. Derren Yearby motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Marie Horne; unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted:

Secretary