

MINUTES – NOVEMBER 9TH

BROOKS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Chairman Jack Harrell 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 Director Stephanie Mata.

Organizational Business

Ratification of Economic Director's position on October 21, 2020. Marie Horne made a motion to accept Stephanie Mata as Economic Development Director; seconded by Ulysses Marable; unanimously accepted.

Minutes and Financials

Copies of the minutes of the monthly meeting and Executive Session meeting held October 12th were reviewed. Marie Horne motioned to approve the minutes of the meeting as presented; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously accepted.

Copies of the minutes of the Special Called Executive meeting held October 19th were reviewed. Marie Horne motioned to approve the minutes of the meeting as presented; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously accepted.

The financial reports for October 2020 were provided to the board for review and approval along with the checking account balances. Director Stephanie Mata explained to the Board that there remains a discrepancy on the Ameris Escrow account for October 2020 that will be cleared up once the financial audit is complete, possibly this week.

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

Old Business

Director Mata took the opportunity to review all Old Business items. Regarding the downtown skyline project, Chairman Harrell advised the board that the contractor failed to create a successful prototype, and that we need to seek contractors outside of Brooks County.

Engineer Mr. Ben DeVane delivered to the Board a single quote for the Industrial Park signage. Discussion regarding the necessity for putting out formal request for bids in the interest of equal opportunity. Ulysses Marable made a motion to put out a request for bids; seconded by Marie Horne; unanimously accepted.

Director Mata informed the Board that the IGA between the Development Authority and Brooks County was ratified 10/19/2020 in a Special Called meeting.

New Business

Chairman Harrell moved to new business. Director Mata explained that a potential commercial interest in the commercial property that the County is acquiring. It has no benefit to the Development Authority; Director Mata simply wanted to relay the information. Director Mata went on to relay a potential industrial interest in Project Stone, but due to confidentiality could not state more than that. Director Mata moved to discuss Cine Vantage and the Non-Profit associated with the company. She explained their venture in workforce development and their interest in purchasing the old Suwannee Swifty building, its disrepair, and the potential costs to get it up to

code. She further explained that she would be addressing the Tax Assessor's Board on the 11th to discuss possible incentives.

The Director and Board then discussed the Community Grant Applications and Guidelines. Motion to ratify acceptance of the Community Beautification Grant applications was made by Dr. Marie Horne; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously accepted.

The Board then discussed Chairman Jack Harrell's idea to find a way to assist local businesses impacted by COVID with operating costs, including loans. Attorney Luke Mitchell discussed that while it is not illegal, per se, to do such a thing, it is not our primary focus and it's best we do not get into that. Director Mata suggested that when needs such as these arise, we can direct them to the Small Business Administration or perhaps start looking into private investors.

Chairman Jack Harrell moved to the Community Grants. First on the list was the motion to ratify the acceptance of the City of Barwick's funding for Christmas lights in the amount of \$7,163.86. Motion carried by Marie Horne; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously accepted.

Director Mata updated the Board on her conversation with the Thomas County Payroll Authority regarding Morven and Pavo's needs and our projects. Thomas County is not interested in helping our shared sister cities, but Director Mata stated that sometime in the beginning of the year, she will try to speak with their Commission directly. Requests for funding and quotes provided for the City of Morven's Christmas lights in the amount of \$7640.00. Motion made by Dr. Marie Horne; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously accepted.

In light that there were six non-profits which had applied for the Community Beautification Grants and the Board needed time to fully review the applications, the Board moved table the six grants until a Special Called Meeting on November 16th. Motion was carried by Derren Yearby; seconded by Ulysses Marable; unanimously accepted.

The proposal for the Development Authority's new website was reviewed and discussed. Director Mata answered questions and explained the functionality and limitations of the current provider versus Civic Plus. Motion to accept the proposal and fund the new website in the amount of \$19,811.00 was made by Marie Horne; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously accepted.

The proposal for GIS Planning was reviewed and discussed, but it needed further review. Motion to table vote until Nov. 16th Special Called Meeting carried by Marie Horne; seconded by Ulysses Marable; unanimously accepted.

Reports

Director Mata reported that the first Newsletter "Progressive Measures" was well-received in the community, and that the mailing list is growing. No other reports.

Motion to go into Executive Session carried by Marie Horne; seconded by Derren Yearby; unanimously accepted.

Motion to end Executive Session carried by Derren Yearby; seconded by Ulysses Marable; unanimously accepted.

Motion to end Executive Session carried by Derren Yearby; seconded by Ulysses Marable; unanimously accepted.

Respectfully Submitted:

Secretary