

**JOINT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
OF  
FRANKLIN, HART AND STEPHENS COUNTIES**

**Minutes of Meeting  
April 28, 2014**

**The quarterly meeting of the Joint Development Authority of Franklin, Hart and Stephens Counties was held Monday April 28, 2014 at the Casa Grande Restaurant in Hartwell.**

**The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman Doug Cleveland. The invocation was given by Vernon Cape.**

**Members present were: Cary Bennett, Vernon Cape, Doug Cleveland, Roy Crocker, Vernon Edwards, Bob Evans, Don Foster, Bill Leard, Ralph Owens and Dean Scarborough. Others attending: Economic Developers Lyn Allen, Dwayne Dye and Tim Martin; Attorneys Andrea Grant and Walter Gordon; Treasurer Jack Edmunds. Guests were: Kathy Papp, Georgia Department of Community Affairs; Stami Williams from Senator Chambliss' Office and Ilka McConnell, Hart County Archway Partnership.**

**The minutes of the January 27, 2014 meeting had been mailed or e-mailed. No additions or corrections were noted and they were unanimously approved following a motion by Mr. Owens and seconded by Mr. Evans.**

**Mr. Cleveland asked Mr. Martin to present a proposal for further extension of our Broadband Project. Mr. Martin explained that the current phase effectively connects Habersham County to Hart County. The proposed extension would be a 75 mile loop, creating a "backbone" broadband connecting the present termination point in Royston to a fiber optic network point in the Atlanta area. Mr. Martin's work on this indicates a OneGeorgia grant of \$495,000 may be available for this project. No local matching funds would be required. Mr. Martin and his staff will prepare the application for submission. In anticipation of the proposal, Mr. Gordon had prepared a required Inducement Resolution from the Joint Development Authority for the OneGeorgia Authority Equity Fund. Following a discussion of the proposal, on a motion by Mr. Edwards, seconded by Mr. Evans and approved unanimously, the Inducement Resolution was approved and the Joint Development Authority Chairman and Secretary were authorized to execute any documentation required to complete this application. (A copy of this resolution is attached.)**

**Mr. Cleveland reported on the status of the refinancing of our USDA debt with Pinnacle Bank. This is very close to completion and he asked Mr. Gordon to present certain documentation required by Pinnacle Bank. He presented and explained a resolution authorizing the refinancing. The loan with Pinnacle will be in an amount not to exceed \$460,000.00 payable over a 15 year period with a fixed interest rate of 3.5 percent. On a motion by Mr. Crocker, seconded by Mr. Owens and passed unanimously, the resolution for refinancing was approved, including the authorization of the Chairman and Secretary to execute the Promissory Note, the Security Agreement, the Loan Agreement and any other documents required by Pinnacle Bank. (A copy of this resolution is attached.)**

**Mr. Gordon also recommended, due to the time elapsed, that the Authority reaffirm the original resolution to seek refinancing, approved at the October 8, 2013 meeting. This reaffirmation was unanimously approved on a motion by Mr. Edwards and seconded by Mr. Owens.**

**Mr. Edmunds presented a financial summary as of March 31, 2014 compared to the previous quarter. On a motion by Mr. Scarborough and seconded by Mr. Foster, the report was unanimously accepted.**

**Mr. Martin gave a report on the current Broadband Project and indicated it should be complete by year end. He also reported the Veterans Parkway Infrastructure Project was progressing nicely.**

**Mr. Dye reported on the presentation that he, Ms. Allen and Mr. Martin made to 25 project managers at the Georgia Resource Center in Atlanta. They stressed to this group the benefit in looking at our three counties as an economic region rather than as three separate counties. He indicated their presentation was well received.**

**Dr. Iika McConnell, Archway professional in Hart County, explained the purpose of the Archway Partnership, an initiative of the Public Service and Outreach Division of the University of Georgia. She gave examples of some of the projects currently in progress.**

**Mr. Cleveland appointed a nominating committee to propose a slate of officers at our July meeting. Those named were Roy Crocker, Chairman, Gerald Voyles and Greg Roach.**

**County economic development reports were given by our economic developers. In all three counties, activity on new projects is very slow. However, there is positive activity among existing industries. Ms. Allen reported that Franklin County had been granted a Tier I status waiver through the end of 2014. She reported they were also looking to start on a spec building.**

**Mr. Martin indicated Stephens County's application to be recognized as an Opportunity Zone had been rejected. He reported on the progress of the highway 17 four lane expansion and expects it to be completed by spring of 2016. There are 18 industries in Stephens County currently in some state of expansion. Mr. Martin also advised the group that this years' runner-up as State Star Student was from Stephens County.**

**Mr. Dye reported TI Automotive, a Hart County industry, was nominated as the State's Mid-size Manufacturer of the Year but was not chosen. He said Hart County was still experiencing an unemployment rate of 8.3%. However, those being hired were finding higher paying jobs. He cited numbers showing that since 2006 salary, wages and benefits had experienced a 17% compounded growth rate. He commented on the Lavonia sewer grant which, if approved, would be a great benefit to the Gateway Industrial Park.**

**Kathy Papa commented on a new DCA initiative, Plan First, a program that rewards communities involved in strategic planning. She also talked about the Georgia Academy for Economic Development. The next class is scheduled to begin on August 14, 2014.**

**Stani Williams reported on issues in Washington that Senator Chambliss is currently working on.**

**Chairman Cleveland announced the next meeting will be on Monday July 28 in Stephens County.**

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.**

**Jack Edmunds  
Acting Secretary**