



WALKER COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

101 South Duke St.
P.O. Box 445
LaFayette, GA 30728
706-638-1437

Andy Arnold (Chair)
Max Morrison (Vice-Chair)
Jim Cole (Secretary/Treasurer)
Evitte Parrish

Mark Chandler
Shannon Whitfield
Stephanie Watkins (Executive Director)

Minutes of the Regular Meeting **April 12, 2022**

- I. Call to order at 10:16 a.m. by Andy Arnold**
Present: Chair Andy Arnold, Secretary/ Treasurer Jim Cole, Mark Chandler, Evitte Parrish (teleconference), Executive Director Stephanie Watkins. Others present: see attached sign-in sheet.
- II. Invocation given by Chairman Andy Arnold**
- III. Approval of the Agenda**
Motion: Jim Cole made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Mark Chandler, 3 ayes and 0 nays, motion carried.
- IV. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. March 17, 2022**
Motion: Evitte Parrish made a motion to approve, seconded by Mark Chandler, 3 ayes and 0 nays, motion carried.
- V. Financial Report**

Jim Cole presented the March financial report. He stated there were two deposits made; one from Nissin for their 2021 PILOT of \$365,801.84 and one from Labrie for their 2021 PILOT in the amount of \$31,097.63. He mentioned that both our CD's renewed in March and our total checking and CD balance is \$1,868,047.70.

Motion: Mark Chandler made a motion to approve, seconded by Evitte Parrish, 3 ayes and 0 nays, motion carried.
- VI. Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director Stephanie Watkins stated that GIS WebTech recently launched a new recruit tool called *Guru* that allows communities to showcase their local data, to better tell their story when pitching to a prospective business. And, as a current customer, we have access to this new technology and its features.

She stated that there has been an increase in industrial recruitment activity and that she received a Request for Information (RFI) from the Georgia Department of Economic Development for Project Melange, an international automotive supplier, regarding potential

interest in 30-40 acres of the Walker County Business Park to build a 200K SF building. The project would result in a \$35 million investment and the creation of 70 new jobs. She also received a request from the Greater Chattanooga Economic Partnership for Project Green Leaf which would result in a capital investment of \$40-50MM and the creation of 40-50 new jobs. She is reviewing the project needs before submission.

Mrs. Watkins also mentioned that she has received several inquiries regarding the former Coats American Building and is working on a potential mixed-use development project for the Peerless Mill in Rossville.

In regards to other economic development activities, such as existing industry visits, Mrs. Watkins stated that she had met with Audia and was able to obtain some of the information needed to complete the REBA grant project; and that she had a virtual meeting with Labrie to discuss their PILOT invoice. She mentioned speaking at the Walker County Chamber Leads Group meeting, attending a Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership workshop, "Becoming an Employer of Choice", and that she had visited LaFayette High School's College and Career Fair. Mrs. Watkins noted other upcoming economic development conferences.

Lastly, Mrs. Watkins made the board aware of an opportunity that we have to apply for a grant from TVA that would be for workforce development initiatives in our county. This is a new program that TVA has just rolled out called TVA Workforce Invest. The program is designed to provide support for educational and workforce development improvements, to prepare a community's workforce. The plan is to partner with our local school system to assist with the expansion of their LAUNCH program. This is a matching grant whereby TVA will consider funding requests up to \$100,000 and no more than 70% of the total project cost. We would be responsible for securing the 30% match, managing the grant funds, and record keeping. We would seek the required matching funds from our economic development partners in the county. The initial application is due April 29th.

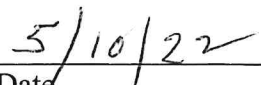
Motion: A motion was made by Mark Chandler and seconded by Jim Cole to approve application for the grant funds, 3 ayes and 0 nays, motion carried.

A copy of the Executive Director's Report is attached.

VII. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 10:36 a.m.


Secretary


Date

Minutes prepared by: Executive Director, Stephanie Watkins