

Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
September 13, 2023

Present

Mark Turner
Jason Floyd
Steve Taylor
Jason Holt
Jason Floyd
Lawton Tinley

Absent

Other

Kyle Cook
Christina Justice
Kathy A. Young
Mike Dinnerman
Melissa Dark

Vice Chairman, Mark Turner called the September 13, 2023 meeting to order at 12:24 pm.

Minutes from the July 2023 meeting were reviewed. Steve Taylor made a motion to approve. Jason Floyd seconded the motion. With a note to correct an error in the attendance log, the motion was carried unanimously.

Christina Justice presented the financials for July 2023. Jason Holt made a motion to approve. Steve Taylor seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Christina Justice also presented the financials for August 2023. Jason Floyd made a motion to approve. Jason Holt seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Executive director, Jason Dunn gave the following report:

The documentation for Peachtree Business Park has been submitted. The Development Authority will begin advertising for an engineer and then the final design will begin.

The building at 808 E. Oconee Street needs improvements, especially additional insulation, at a cost of around \$200,000. The Development Authority will potentially make these improvements and amend Advanced Aluminum's lease moving forward pending a decision from BTS.

The Development Authority, in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce and FHSCCA, is planning an Industry Roundtable to introduce industry leaders to an employment app that we've created with students from FHSCCA. The day will also include a tour of the new Industrial Systems Lab at Wiregrass.

Wiregrass Technical College has been awarded a \$950K grant for a new CDL training center. The Development Authority will be working with Wiregrass to get the project underway.

The Hungarian Delegation has another visit scheduled for October 18th. The tour will be focused on agriculture. A special lunch is planned at Cafe Budapest and a reception that evening at The Fitzgerald Pillars. The objective of the visit is to build a working relationship between Fitzgerald and the country of Hungary.

Millex hosted an open house on July 14th that was a success. They are scheduling another open house/hiring event later this year.

Mana Nutrition purchased some property downtown and have begun renovating the space.

Mana is also beginning a substantial solar project that will benefit them and the community. ECG and Fitzgerald Utilities will be collaborating with Mana on this project. **Jason Dunn recommended that the Development Authority convey .06 acres of land to Mana for the project. Steve Taylor made the motion to approve. Jason Floyd seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.**

Jason Dunn proposed that the board approve an easement to Fitzgerald Utilities. Jason Floyd made a motion to approve the easement. Jason Holt seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Polar Beverage continues to grow. Their employee count is up to 250 and they are actively pursuing a third warehouse. Plans for the truck staging area continue. The bids that have been received are over the original estimate of the cost of construction. **SGRC is pursuing a grant to cover the overage but Jason Dunn asked for Board approval for FBHCDA to cover the overage if the grant is not awarded. Jason Holt made a motion to approve covering the overages. Steve Taylor seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Continuing to work with the USDA Rural Prosperity Network, the P25 Communication Improvement Project will commence the week of October 23, 2023. Senator Warnock's office has added this project to their funding priority list.

Public Works is making great progress in tearing down blighted buildings around town.

Jason Dunn met the executives from Jet Fuel, which will begin construction soon. They will employ approximately 35 people.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Dark