



117 Putnam Drive ♦ Eatonton, GA 31024 ♦ Tel: 706-485-1884
www.putnamdevelopmentauthority.com

Minutes

Tuesday, April 13, 2021 ♦ 4:30 PM

Putnam County Administration Building – Room 203

The Putnam Development Authority met on Tuesday, April 13, 2021 at approximately 4:30 PM in the Putnam County Administration Building, 117 Putnam Drive, Room 203, Eatonton, Georgia.

PRESENT

Chairman Walt Rocker III
Member Patty Burns
Member Brice Doolittle
Member Mylle Mangum
Member John Wojtas

OTHERS PRESENT

Attorney Kevin Brown
Interim Economic Development Director Pat Topping
County Clerk Lynn Butterworth

Opening

1. Call to Order

Chairman Rocker called the meeting to order at approximately 4:37 p.m.
(Copy of agenda made a part of the minutes.)

2. Introduction of New Board Member - Mr. Brice Doolittle

Chairman Rocker welcomed new member Brice Doolittle and introduced him as the Project Manager at ESG/EPWSA.

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Regular Business

3. Report from Paul Simonton

Mr. Paul Simonton was not able to attend the meeting.

a. GRAD application

EDD Topping says Mr. Simonton has two studies that need to be updated for the SIP site GRAD application (Stage 1 and wetlands). He noted that the requirements for GRAD keep changing. He further advised that he has requested quotes from other companies to assist with these studies but hasn't received anything back. EDD Topping reported that all supporting letters are in and everything else is ready for the application. These are typically awarded at GEDA Spring Workshop in May; however, our application probably won't be ready by then.

Motion to authorize EDD Topping to get quotes for Environmental Stage 1 update and Wetlands Study and choose the lowest proposal not to exceed \$8000.

Motion made by Member Mangum, Seconded by Member Burns.

Voting Yea: Chairman Rocker, Member Burns, Member Doolittle, Member Mangum, Member Wojtas

b. SIP Project

Not discussed since Mr. Simonton was not there.

4. Approval of quote from P.C. Simonton & Associates for additional GRAD Certification work

Not discussed since Mr. Simonton was not there.

Minutes

5. Approval of Minutes - March 9, 2021 Regular Meeting and Executive Session

Member Wojtas advised that a change is needed on page 3 of the minutes to change the number of members of the Leadership Class to 18.

Motion to approve the March 9, 2021 Regular Meeting minutes with the above correction and approve the March 9, 2021 Executive Session minutes as written.

Motion made by Member Wojtas, Seconded by Member Mangum.

Voting Yea: Chairman Rocker, Member Burns, Member Doolittle, Member Mangum, Member Wojtas

Financials

6. Approval of Financials - March 2021

Member Burns reviewed the March 2021 financials. She also requested permission to set up auto pay with Tri County EMC for the small monthly payment for the Technology Parkway entrance that is owed to them. There were no objections.

Motion to approve the March 2021 Financials.

Motion made by Member Mangum, Seconded by Member Burns.

Voting Yea: Chairman Rocker, Member Burns, Member Doolittle, Member Mangum, Member Wojtas

(Copy of financials made a part of the minutes.)

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Reports

7. Economic Development Director's Report

Interim EDD Topping reported the following: (copy of report made a part of the minutes.)

- Georgia is the #1 state for business for the 8th consecutive year by Site Selection Magazine
- For the first half of FY21:
 - 163 new projects statewide
 - 16,000 new jobs
 - \$6B total investments
 - Project Breakdown
 - Food Processing, Manufacturing, Logistics and Distribution – 70% of all projects
 - Automotive, Information and Technology – 5,000 new jobs
 - Expansions – 78% of investment and 53% of new jobs
- Business & Industry Company Contacts
- Project Status
 - Project Legacy – Active status - Private developer looking at Historic Hotel Eatonton; prospect developing LOI; investment and jobs to be determined; working with developers for 6+ months
 - Project Gum – Active status – Existing manufacturing company looking to expand and add 45 jobs, investment to be determined; looking at existing building or expanding current location; monthly contact
 - Project Anchor – Active status – Private developer developing site for a lakefront hotel; has hired a hotel consultant to identify potential hotel operators; 175 jobs; \$50 Million investment; met with Josh in March
 - Project Solar – Active status – Private developer looking to develop mixed use project on approximately 100 acres; met with Planning Department to discuss zoning; met with DDA; developer has Civil Engineering company working on Master Plan; PDA and DDA will work project jointly; update from developer last week
 - Project Hand Up – Active status – Goodwill – Helms College in Middle GA and the CSRA has plans to make a \$6 million investment to build a multi-purpose center in the Lake Country; local developer
 - Project Club – Manufacturing project on hold; prospect cannot find suitable building; still in contact
 - Project Connect – Closed on 8,848 SF facility in Putnam County; meeting with contractors and workforce partners; 50-70 new employees; plan to be operational in June 2021; Patty Burns, Realtor
- Marketing Activities
 - Eatonton-Putnam Chamber of Commerce – Article in Chamber newsletter
 - MGEA Board Meetings – Workforce Platform; building and site database; GRAD site promotion
 - Messenger article – every 5 weeks
 - EPTAH Board Report
 - Georgia Trend, April edition
 - Project Managers back in business

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- Scheduling visits to Eatonton/Putnam
- GEDA Spring Workshop – May 19-21, 2021
- Board Activities
 - Welcome new PDA Board Member, Brice Doolittle, ESG, Manager of Putnam Water/Sewer Operation
 - Central GA Joint Development Authority
 - New member, Kevin Beasley, Putnam resident, works with Strictly Mechanical, HVAC firm, Madison
 - Lake Oconee Area Development Authority (LOADA) – 2 Putnam County appointees rolling off, Robbie McNeill and Michael Feldman; county has sent out solicitations for new members; EDD Topping will contact both when named
- MGEA Works – Existing Industries Increasing Workforce
 - 8,826 – 11 counties
 - 1,044 – Putnam
 - 1,083 – Baldwin
 - www.mgeaworks.com
- MGEA Metrics (MGEA Works website)
 - 2,434 users since August 11, 2020
 - 8,455 page views since August 11, 2020
 - 95.9% of users are from USA and 78.6% of those users reside in Georgia
 - Out of county users could be bots from other countries or they could be international companies working projects within the region doing research on the labor market to see what jobs are available and how that might affect their operations; same can be said for out of state users looking to relocate professionally to Middle Georgia or companies reviewing the labor market; Florida, Texas, Ohio and South Carolina lead the out of state searches with Destin, Florida being the largest user location for a city outside of Middle Georgia and Atlanta
 - Mobile and tablet devices make up the majority of searches followed by a desktop
 - 60% of users are between the ages of 18 and 34
 - 54% of users are Males
- Website Visitor Sessions
- Website Visitor Stats
 - 701 sessions
 - 1967 pageviews
 - 87% new visitors
- Social Media
 - 646 Facebook Followers
 - 96 Linked-In Followers
 - 347 Instagram Followers
 - 43 Twitter Followers
- Virtual Meetings & Events Attended
 - 3/9 – SEDC Economic Forecast
 - 3/11 – MGA Foundation Board
 - 3/12 – MGEA Board
 - 3/18 – Web site Review with MGRC

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- 3/24 – Broadband Funding Webinar
- 4/1 – Strategy Meeting with GA Power
- 4/13 – Solar Energy, Electric Mobility and GA’s Economy
- Upcoming Events and Projects
 - Web Site Review, Revamp
 - Industrial Park Sign Program
 - Strategy Session facilitated by GA Power
 - GRAD Application
 - 900 sites
 - 60 GRAD sites
 - 8 GRAD Certified
- Area Development Survey Results
 - What has, however, increased dramatically in importance...is Quality of Life
 - Many companies choosing smaller cities with a good quality of life rather than larger metro areas
 - Quality of Life/Place – attracts skilled labor, reduces overall labor costs
 - Costs and Mitigating Risk major considerations
- Member Burns added that the old BoJos is going to be a steak & seafood restaurant opening at the end of the month, called Legends
- EDD Topping distributed copies of sign proposals for SIP
- Strategy session is needed to look at how we are moving forward, who we are, etc. (branding) – EDD Topping would like to focus on what our target industries should be

Next Meeting Items

8. Next Meeting Items

None

Executive Session

9. Enter Executive Session as allowed by O.C.G.A. 50-14-4, if necessary, for Personnel, Litigation, or Real Estate

Motion to enter Executive Session as allowed by O.C.G.A. 50-14-4 for Real Estate and Litigation.

Motion made by Member Wojtas, Seconded by Member Mangum.

Voting Yea: Member Burns, Member Doolittle, Member Mangum, Member Wojtas

Meeting closed at approximately 5:37 p.m.

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10. Reopen meeting and execute Affidavit concerning the subject matter of the closed portion of the meeting

Motion to reopen meeting and execute the Affidavit concerning the subject matter of the closed portion of the meeting.

Motion made by Member Burns, Seconded by Member Mangum.

Voting Yea: Member Burns, Member Doolittle, Member Mangum, Member Wojtas

(Copy of affidavit made a part of the minutes.)

Meeting reopened at approximately 6:19 p.m.

11. Action, if any, resulting from the Executive Session

No action taken

Other Business

12. Other Business

Member Wojtas commented that a fulltime Economic Development Director needs to be hired for EDD Topping to train and mentor and make appropriate introductions. He requested that the board start seriously working on this. EDD Topping advised that he had worked on a job description and that he could finalize that, circulate it to all members, and look at a milestone mentoring process. Member Wojtas commented that he thought the position should be filled by a local person and asked if this should be a requirement. Chairman Rocker commented that the perfect solution is two people: a deal maker and paperwork person. Attorney Brown advised that the board should decide on the desired skills and traits and not necessary require experience in economic development. Clerk Butterworth was asked to send out the advertisement once it is finalized.

EDD Topping's relationship with the Board of Commissioners was also discussed. It was recommended that a quarterly presentation be made to the BOC.

Motion to move forward with the application process for a fulltime Economic Development Director.

Motion made by Member Wojtas, Seconded by Member Mangum.

Voting Yea: Chairman Rocker, Member Burns, Member Doolittle, Member Mangum, Member Wojtas

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Closing

13. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion made by Member Burns, Seconded by Member Mangum.

Voting Yea: Chairman Rocker, Member Burns, Member Doolittle, Member Mangum, Member Wojtas

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:41 p.m.

ATTEST:

Lynn Butterworth
County Clerk

Walt Rocker III
Chairman

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