

Hardee County Economic Development Council/Industrial Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2015
Hardee County BOCC

Vanessa Hernandez- Chair-P
Gene Davis- Vice Chair-P
Dottie Conerly-P
Diana Youmans-P

Donald Samuels-P
John O'Neal-P
Michael Prescott-P

Doug Jensen-P
Monica Reas-P
Lory Durrance-P

The meeting was called to order at 8:30am by Chair Hernandez.

Visiting: Rhonda Cole, Lex Albritton, Grady Johnson, Pam Belflower, Bob Belflower, Frank Kirkland, Robert Cole, Kenny Lambert, Benny Hash, Rhonda Cole, Alma Albritton, Casey Dickson, Horst Witschonke and Sharon Moye.

County Attorney: Ken Evers

County Commissioners: Mike Thompson, Colon Lambert, Russ Melendy and Sue Birge

Press: Michael Kelly

Staff: Bill Lambert, Sarah Pelham and Kristi Schierling

Agenda: Doug Jensen made a motion and was seconded by Dottie Conerly to accept the agenda as printed. Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes: Director Lambert asked Lory Durrance for a clarification on a motion that was made by him related to the Continuum Labs examination from last month's meeting. In the motion, Lory Durrance said that we would consider the additional information that was provided. Director Lambert asked Lory Durrance if by using the word "consider" he meant was that we would "accept" the additional information. Lory Durrance said that was what he meant. We will change the minutes to reflect the word accept.

Gene Davis made a motion and was seconded by Dottie Conerly to approve the minutes with the change. Motion passed unanimously.

Stream2Sea lease

Before any discussion took place, Lory Durrance abstained. He has a banking relationship with Autumn Blum. A conflict of interest form is on file.

Autumn Blum has requested to rent space at Tech River. She is needing to hire marketers, customer service and sales for her business. The area that she will be using is 790 square feet. It will be leased at \$10 sq/ft. She will be a tenant at will and that is documented in the lease. The lease amount comes out to \$658.33 a month.

The second space that Ms. Blum is requesting to rent is the 700 sq/ft in the front southwest corner of the Incubator for a pack and ship. She will retrofit the space herself. The EDO office looked into the marketplace for comparable amounts of rent to charge for manufacturing/warehouse space. There were a range of numbers and we met in the middle to \$3 sq/ft. This would make her rent for this space \$175 sq/ft.

Doug Jensen made a motion and was seconded by Monica Reas to approve the Stream2Sea Techriver lease. Motion passed unanimously.

Monica Reas made a motion and was seconded by Mike Prescott to approve the lease for the space at the Incubator. Motion passed unanimously.

IDA Updates/Open Discussion

Florikan is moving along. Director Lambert is meeting with Florikan later this week.

Director Lambert has met with Veronica Hurst of PFMAn. They have a new engine in the Dyno Room with the new metal. The remainder of the PRECO money has been paid. They are having to hand build 10 units. Once each of the units are done, the mold will be put into production in a mold plant somewhere else and will be shipped here for assembly. Sometime between now and June they should be in production.

The Commerce Park expansion lawsuit is still going on. Something should be done soon.

Fort Green LNG-A lease with Mosaic should hopefully be formalized soon. Director Lambert will be going to Tallahassee to meet with Legislators and others regarding this project.

Grand Jury Presentment-The State Attorney's office began in investigation in the Lifesync/Continuum Labs project. A presentment has been returned and there were no indictments. Attorney Evers said that he had filed a court order for each of the Board members to receive a copy of the presentment since only certain people received copies. That was denied. There was also an option to have some or all of the presentment redacted. An order was filed to have it repressed for an additional 6 months to have the investment protected. This was also denied. 30 days later the presentment was made public. Chair Hernandez feels that the board should provide a response. She has drafted a response and it was provided to the board today. She did note that it was not written on behalf of them, this is her response.

*A break was taken from 9:10am – 9:25am to pass out copies of the response.

Chair Hernandez went through her response. Board members felt that before anything is done, they should have time to review this and come back to discuss this further. A discussion about holding a special meeting to discuss the presentment, the responses and also Director Lambert would like to do a presentation at this special meeting related to Public Relations. He has been in contact with a firm and would like for them to come before the Board. Staff will get some dates together and once chosen, will advertise the special meeting.

No action was taken on this today. There were some comments from Board members related to the section about jobs for Hardee County citizens. Some felt that this section needed to be rewritten. Chair Hernandez said that she would redo this section based on the comments and bring back at the special meeting.

Financial Report

Sarah Pelham reviewed the EDC and IDA financials from the previous month.

A motion was made by Donald Samuels and seconded by Doug Jensen to approve the EDC and the IDA financials. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:28am by Chair Hernandez.