

**Development Authority of Columbia County**

Center for Trade & Tourism

1000 Business Boulevard

Evans, Georgia 30809

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**BOARD MEETING MINUTES – March 27, 2013**

John Deere Commercial Products  
700 Horizon South Parkway  
Grovetown, Georgia 30813

**Board Attendees (those absent indicated with an asterisk (\*) :**

Mark Wills, Chairman	Stan Shepherd	Sonny McDowell
Doug Duncan, Vice-Chairman	Jean Garniewicz	Hugh Hollar
Rick Evans, Secretary-Treasurer	Phil Gaffney	David Duncan*

**Staff (those absent indicated with an asterisk (\*) :**

Robbie Bennett, Executive Director  
Karen Eyink, Executive Assistant  
Douglas D. Batchelor, Legal Counsel

**Guests Present:**

Bill Morris, <i>Commissioner</i>	Paul Myers, <i>MAU</i>
Thom Tuckey, <i>CSRA Alliance Ft. Gordon</i>	Bunny Weeks, <i>John Deere</i>
Tammy Shepherd, <i>CC Chamber</i>	Michael Rorick, <i>Citizen</i>
Pat Brown, <i>John Deere</i>	

**I. Call to Order & Welcome**

Chairman Mark Wills called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. and declared a quorum present.

**II. Reading and Approval of Agenda**

Chairman Wills asked the Board to review and approve the agenda for the March 27, 2013 DACC board meeting. Motion made by Doug Duncan to approve the agenda. Motion seconded by Rick Evans. Motion carried.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Wills asked the Board to review and approve the minutes for the February 27, 2013 DACC board meeting. Motion made by Doug Duncan to approve the minutes. Rick Evans seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**IV. Financials – Rick Evans**

From the Statement of Net Assets – February 28, 2013, Total Current Assets are \$650,653.47 includes Investment in the Horizon South Industrial Bldg. (Spec Bldg.) of \$292,083.35. Total cash in Checking/Savings - \$355,425.95 and Total Liabilities - \$655.99.

Stan Shepherd made a motion to approve the February 28, 2013 financials. Hugh Hollar seconded the motion. Motion approved.

**V. Chairman's Report – Mark Wills**

Chairman Wills thanked John Deere for the opportunity to have the DACC board meeting at their facility in Grovetown. Chairman Wills also spoke on the appreciation that the Development Authority has for John Deere being in Columbia County and what they have done for the community. In addition, Chairman Wills introduced the Development Authority's new Executive Director, Robbie Bennett.

**VI. Committee Reports – Mark Wills**

Phil Gaffney, Chairman of the Existing Business and Workforce Development Committee thanked Bunny Weeks, Administrative Assistant to Plant Manager for organizing the board meeting at John Deere. Chairman Gaffney mentioned the DACC is available to listen, learn, react and respond to the needs of John Deere.

Stan Shepherd, Chairman of the Business Recruitment mentioned the committee would be re-organizing and will contact Robbie Bennett to re-focus the committee's efforts.

Rick Evans, Chairman of the Retail Development Sub-Committee reported on discussions for appointing members to the retail committee. The committee is focusing on bringing non-development authority board members to serve on the retail committee; the committee would like to assemble a good team with ideas and feedback from the retail sector. The retail committee meets the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30 am at the DACC office. In addition, the retail committee is looking at regional businesses instead of large national chains for upscale retailers and restaurants.

Doug Duncan, Chairman of Property Development Committee reported on the work being done at the retention pond in Grovetown. Doug Batchelor, Legal Counsel is waiting on the plat from the county.

**VII. Economic Development – Robbie Bennett**

Robbie Bennett gave an economic update on several existing industry expansion projects that the DACC is working on, a couple of retail opportunities and a local franchise prospect. In addition, Robbie will be traveling to Atlanta to meet with state project managers with both GA Power and GEDA.

The DACC received word on the Military Zone for Grovetown concerning the boundaries. The Military Zone boundary for Grovetown is Wrightsboro Rd., any existing industry south of Wrightsboro Rd. is in the Military Zone, north of Wrightsboro Rd. is not. The DACC is looking into what this means for existing projects.

Upcoming Events:

On April 3, Robbie will travel to Atlanta for the SEDC (Southern Economic Development Council) “Meet the Consultants” event. There will be eighteen consultants representing the southeast region; discussions will include the automotive industry and biotechnology.

2013 Augusta Showcase – Masters Tournament is April 8 – 14. The guest list is filling up nicely, waiting on additional confirmations for the golf tournament.

BIO International Convention will be held in Chicago, IL on April 22 – 25, DACC is collaborating with Georgia Regents University.

ICSC’s (International Council of Shopping Centers) 2013 RECON is scheduled for May 19 - 22 in Las Vegas, NV.

**VIII. Old Business – Mark Wills**

Doug Batchelor mentioned a church is collecting approvals from various owners to lease the Owens-Minor building in Grovetown.

**IX. New Business – Mark Wills**

Pat Brown, Plant Manager of John Deere welcomed the board and gave an update on the facility in Grovetown. Mr. Brown runs the Utility Tractor Factory; he has worked 22 years for John Deere. The board heard information about the various buildings supporting operations - includes the 1-5 tractor series, five buildings supporting the factories, a distribution center, and two warehouses behind Serta Mattress Factory. John Deere has two other companies that have over 100 employees supporting John Deere’s staffing. In addition, John Deere has 18 product programs taking place now through October 2013. John Deere is hiring now based on the volume changes.

**X. Calendar of Events – Mark Wills**

The Development Authority will send out a notice for the next DACC board meeting. The regularly scheduled board meeting for Wednesday, April 24, is the same day as the BIO International Convention in Chicago. In the past, the DACC has participated with the former Augusta Life Sciences; Robbie will be attending this convention. More information will be given later for the upcoming board meetings scheduled for May and June.

**XI. Public Comment**

Commissioner Bill Morris spoke highly about the three organizations that are located at the Center for Trade & Tourism building – CC Chamber of Commerce, CC Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Development Authority. In addition, Commissioner Morris commented on the quality of life at Columbia County’s facilities - major upgrades at Savannah Rapids Pavilion, the new Exhibition Center at Gateway in Grovetown and the Farmers Market held on Thursday’s behind the CC Library.

Michael Rorick, citizen of Columbia County talked about his full support for Doctors Hospital in Columbia County over University Hospital because of the tax structure; one hospital would be tax exempt and the other not.

Thom Tuckey, CSRA Alliance for Fort Gordon mentioned civilian furlough notices did not go out yet; a 20% reduction would affect the quality of life for the public – restaurants and stores.

Tammy Shepherd, Director of CC Chamber of Commerce gave an update on a few legislative bills – Downtown Renaissance Reinvestment Act for Grovetown did not make it out through crossover day, House Bill 188 passed – this bill affects licensing and certification for military personnel. Again, this year, the Chamber will be attending the CSRA Leadership trip to Washington, DC on May 7-9; six seats are available. Leadership Columbia County applications are open through the third week of April. Additional events taking place - Post Legislative Breakfast on May 15 at Savannah Rapids Pavilion at 7:00 am and SuCCessful Superwoman's Brunch on April 24 – Administrative Professional's Day at 11:00 am.

**XII. Closed Session – Mark Wills**

No closed session was noted.

**XIII. Adjournment**

Chairman Wills adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by:

Mark Wills, Chairman  
Development Authority of Columbia County