

FINAL MINUTES OF THE MAY 12, 2011, MEETING OF
THE MADISON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
HELD AND CONDUCTED ON THE 12TH DAY OF MAY 2011,
AT 8:30 A.M.
IN THE MCEDA CONFERENCE ROOM
OF THE MCEDA OFFICES AT 623 HIGHLAND COLONY PARKWAY,
RIDGELAND, MISSISSIPPI

The meeting of the Madison County Economic Development Authority was conducted on the 12th day of May, 2011, at 8:30 a.m. in the MCEDA Office at 623 Highland Colony Parkway, Ridgeland, MS.

Members Present: Jack Harrington, Calvin Harris, Lanny Slaughter, and Dick Hutchinson
Bill Guion and Baxter Strain

Also present were Tim Coursey, Lenita Knight,
Mitch Stringer and Attorney Andy Clark.

Guests: Gerald Steen, Issac Fowler, Bubba Weir, David Landrum and Jan Collins

At 8:34 a.m., Chairman Harris announced that the members present constituted a quorum and declared the meeting duly convened and directed that the notice for the meeting be filed with the minutes.

Mr. Harrington made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. After a second by Mr. Hutchinson, the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Hutchinson made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2011 MCEDA Board meeting. After a second by Mr. Slaughter the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Coursey presented Mr. Issac Fowler to the group for the purpose of providing a Broadband report. Mr. Fowler introduced Mr. Bubba Weir of MS Tech Alliance to the MCEDA Board. Mr. Weir will be assisting AbsoCom with the completion of the Broadband report and Feasibility Study. Mr. Weir stated that he has been involved in communications technology through economic development.

Mr. Weir reported that the team will be utilizing the Governor's broadband maps as a baseline to determine where broadband exists in the county and using surveys to validate this information. Mr. Weir stated that there is a role for MCEDA to play in broadband and the different associated technologies. Mr. Weir stated that the study should show that Madison County is globally competitive. The team is looking to present a completed report by May 26. It is the will of the MCEDA Board to schedule a committee meeting for May 26, 2011 to allow for the presentation of the completed Broadband report.

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Mr. Coursey presented Mr. David Landrum to provide an update on the Livingston project. Mr. Landrum reported that the Livingston group anticipates closing financing in the next 180 days and starting dirt work thereafter. Mr. Landrum reported that an assisted living facility has agreed to locate on the property. Mr. Landrum also reported that there will be a Farmer's Market established at Livingston. The Farmer's Market is scheduled to open with a soft launch on June 2, 2011 from 4:00 pm – 8: 00 pm. The grand opening will be held on June 9, 2011 with a preview on June 8, 2011. Mr. Tim Coursey has been asked to serve on the Board of Directors for the new Farmers Market.

Mr. Landrum also reported that Livingston will be home to an 8,000 square foot General Store, other office space, retail and restaurants. Livingston also has received resort destination status and has been designated as a hamlet.

Mr. Coursey introduced Mr. Gerald Steen to the MCEDA Board. Mr. Steen stated that he is a candidate for Madison County Supervisor for District 3. Mr. Steen stated that he has been a resident of Ridgeland since 1984. Mr. Steen feels that unity is important and stated that his vision is to work with all of the mayors, the Madison County Foundation, The Madison County Business League and MCEDA to work as one. Mr. Steen stated that his focus for District 3 is streets, roads, and drainage.

Mr. Coursey stated that he would like to suggest that MCEDA consider offering a marketing grant to the Livingston Township. The grant would be use to aid in the promotion of the Farmer's Market at Livingston. Mr. Hutchinson made a motion to allow the Livingston Township to submit a marketing grant application to assist with the cost of bags, banners, marketing and promotional materials for the Farmers Market to be approved by the MCEDA Board. After a second by Mr. Hutchinson the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Coursey stated that with the location of new retail in Canton, there will be a need to add additional traffic lanes in the Canton Industrial Park. Mr. Coursey stated that Mayor Truly has contacted MDA in an effort to secure funds for the road changes.

Mr. Coursey stated that he received a status report letter regarding Parkway East. Mr. Coursey stated that there were no major announcements reported.

Mr. Coursey presented an overview of the ad valorem tax exemption requests received by Madison County. Exemption request were received from Leavitt Tube, AT&T, Tower Automotive, Monsanto, Unipres Southeast, Johnson Controls, and System Electro Coating. Mr. Coursey shared the exemptions and the recommendations of Chancery Clerk Arthur Johnston and Tax Assessor Gerald Barber. Mr. Coursey stated that he concurs with the suggestions of the Chancery Clerk and would like to recommend to the Board of Supervisors the approval of the requests as per the recommendations of the Chancery Clerk with a letter of reprimand for those applications that were received after the county deadline.

Mr. Harrington made a motion to approve the ad valorem recommendations submitted by Chancery Clerk Johnston that include AT&T, Tower Automotive, Monsanto, Unipres Southeast and Johnson Controls. Additionally the MCEDA Board recommends the approval of the application of Systems Electro Coating with the stipulation that the late applicants should receive a letter of reprimand for the late submissions. After a second by Mr. Slaughter the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Coursey reported that he, Attorney Clark, Mr. Hutchinson and Mr. Guion met with MDOT representatives. MDOT informed the group that meetings with landowners will begin to take place in the upcoming months.

Mr. Coursey stated that he has communicated with representatives from University Medical Center, MS Tech Alliance and Livingston regarding business and technology incubators and is still working to gather more information on the best practices of incubators.

There was a motion by Mr. Harrington and second by Mr. Slaughter to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the need for an Executive Session to address possible land sales. The motion passed unanimously. There was then a discussion of the need to go into Executive Session to consider the aforementioned, at the conclusion of which there was a motion by Mr. Guion and a second by Mr. Slaughter to do so. This motion was adopted unanimously. Chairman Harris then opened the meeting to announce publicly that the Board was going into Executive Session to discuss possible land sales. Chairman Harris convened an Executive Session for this purpose.

Mr. Guion made a motion to adjourn Executive Session. After a second by Mr. Harrington, there was a unanimous vote to adjourn the Executive Session and reconvene the open session. The following actions taken in Executive Session were then reported by the Chair:

There were no issues to report from Executive Session.

Ms. Harris reported that the new MCEDA website is scheduled to go live Monday, May 18. Ms. Harris stated that the new website is more organized and includes quick facts, labor force information, a demographic data base and an integrated GIS system.

Mr. Strain provided a committee report for the Education Committee. Mr. Strain stated that an update was provided on Excel by 5 from Ms. Jan Collins who informed the committee that the Canton area will be the focus community for the project. Mr. Strain stated that the next meeting is scheduled for May 18 with Mr. Claiborne Barksdale as a presenter during this meeting.

Ms. Jan Collins provided an update for the Madison County Business League. Ms. Collins stated that she recently attended an Excel by 5 meeting with Bob Clay. Ms. Collins reported that plans are being made for the events for the fall. One of which will be a Technology Forum. Ms.

Collins stated that she has been communicating with Senator Cochran's office regarding a possible Coffee event and will be planning an entrepreneur event.

Ms. Collins also reported that is time to elect new MCBL Board of Directors.

Attorney Clark stated that all issues of legal aspect have already been discussed during new or old business.

Mr. Slaughter made a motion to approve the financial report as presented. After a second by Mr. Harrington the motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Lenita Knight reported that she continues to work with the tenants at the 152 Watford Parkway location. Ms. Knight has also worked with the Chancery Clerk's office gathering Ad Valorem applications and information. Ms. Knight is working with Purchasing Clerk Hardy Crunk to secure approval and language for the advertisement of bids to sell the Nissan Titan truck. Ms. Knight also reported that she will serve as Committee Chairman for the upcoming MS Women's Conference sponsored by the Canton Chamber of Commerce.

At 10:25, upon a motion made by Mr. Hutchinson seconded by Mr. Slaughter and unanimously adopted, the meeting was adjourned.

Calvin Harris, Chairman

ATTEST:

Lanny Slaughter, Secretary-Treasurer