

HARDEE COUNTY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
(INDEPENDENT BOARD)  
COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS  
412 WEST ORANGE STREET, ROOM 102  
WAUCHULA, FLORIDA 33873  
MARCH 25, 2008 8:30 A.M.

**MINUTES**

**Members:**

David Royal, Vice-Chairman, P  
Bill Beattie, P  
Paul Samuels, A  
Jama Abbott, P  
Roger Hood, P

Bridget Merrill, P  
Perry Knight, A  
Bill Lambert, Chairman, P  
Bobby Smith, P

County Attorney Ken Evers, P  
Office Manager Sandy Meeks, P

County Manager Lexton H. Albritton, Jr., P  
Janet Gilliard, Director of OCD & General Services, A

Chairman Lambert called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

**MOTION by Royal, second by Abbott to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.**

**MOTION by Royal, second by Beattie to approve the December 11, 2007, regular meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.**

- I. Acknowledge receipt of the Clerk's Financial Report for periods ending 11/30/07, 12/31/07, 01/31/08, and 02/29/08.

**MOTION by Merrill, second by Hood to acknowledge receipt of the Clerk's Financial Report for periods ending 11/30/07, 12/31/07, 01/31/08, and 02/29/08. Motion carried unanimously.**

- II. Acknowledge receipt of Project Status Reports from the Hardee County Board of County Commissioners, Industrial Development Authority, and the City of Wauchula.

Park Winter, Hardee County Director of Utilities, informed the Board the Wastewater Project was moving ahead of schedule, but the Water Project was being delayed because of site location. Merrill asked if the water site of the project was being delayed. Mr. Winter advised it was. Chairman Lambert advised there was a dilemma they were working through and wanted to make sure they made the right decision. Merrill asked for further detailed discussion. Chairman Lambert asked about the status of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) permit. Mr. Winter advised the well tags and use permit were already in hand for the site adjacent to the Wastewater Plant on county owned land and that design was reported by the engineers to be able to go out to bid within about two weeks of our notice to them. He explained the issue was SWFWMD's last request for additional information, before they received the permit, was the proximity of the site to a wetland and in their interpretation, made it questionable in out years (10 or 20 years from now) of going beyond the existing permitted quantity. He explained further that each well was designed for at least twice what the entire plants capacity was, so essentially the wells could produce four times what the plants design capacity was for growth, but if they cannot get additional capacity permitted then they would have to find an additional location. He advised a development going on two miles northeast of this site had donated in its

agreement, once it closed, five acres of land to actually site the water plant as an alternate site. He explained how it would be easy to relocate, but in order to move forward the site could also be used for other operations/maintenance and they were pursuing the potential of having two lots adjacent to the existed sited location. He went on to explain those two lots being adjacent land to the Commerce Park caused one member of the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) to question whether the zone of influence and restricted development zone around any given water well would have an impact on any adjacent lots in the Commerce Park and they requested a drawing of what could influence adjacent lots at the next IDA meeting. He stated they were in limbo until that time. Merrill asked how long it would be until they had the zone of influence. Mr. Winter advised they knew the Comprehensive Plan defined it as a 200 foot radius and you really could not put anything inside that radius and within 500 feet, there was a limit on chemicals. Merrill asked if the documentation that he was referring to had been requested. Mr. Winter advised it would be easy to obtain the information, but the discussion stopped there until the next IDA meeting. Merrill asked how far out he was on starting anything on the water site. Mr. Winter advised depending on how things went probably 60 days from April 8<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Lambert advised he had spoken to Mr. Bill Straw and he stated he was still optimistic that his site would become available in May. He further explained how the water was available from the City of Wauchula, but as an alternative for additional water supplies, the county chose to put in its own wells and have its own source for that area and at one point the City of Wauchula thought it was going to be short of water and there was a real urgency to accelerate this project and now with a slow down in the economy, they did not think the current volume of water the county was pulling from the city was creating any problems, so there was not any delay and it just involved where the water would be coming from. Mr. Winter added how they did not have to move as fast now and they could make a sound decision and this would not be hurting the Board.

Chairman Lambert updated the Board on the IDA Status Reports. He advised how they had purchased the property and it was in the possession of the IDA and they had a \$625,000 mortgage and they would be coming back to the Board requesting additional funds. He went on to explain how they did have alternate plans in the event funding did not materialize. He also advised they were working on what they were going to do with that site and how they had a tenant who was interested in purchasing the whole site and part of the Industrial Park and they would continue to work in that manner and how each member had a copy of the e-mail from County Attorney Evers advising the criteria set by the Board had been met. He then touched on the first project funded by the Board and how it was for infrastructure for expansion of the Industrial Park and they were now looking comprehensively at the residual property initially and the expansion property and the best way to facilitate use of the money. Merrill asked if she understood correctly that the IDA would be coming back before the Board requesting additional monies. Chairman Lambert advised that was correct.

Beattie provided the Board with an update on the City of Wauchula's Airport Project funded from Cycle One. He advised the airport should be out for bid in mid April to get the building started and how they had money coming in from Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) & Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for the grounds and surrounding area of the project and hopefully, the project will be finished by August and they could move on to Phase II.

Royal provided the Board with an update on the City of Wauchula's Electric Substation Expansion Project funded from Cycle Two. He advised how everything was moving forward thanks to the money received from the Board and the \$985,000 received from Congressman Vern Buchanan.

Chairman Lambert stated for the Airport Project they had identified a better site location for the hangar which delayed the permitting, but they had not lost any real time because a tenant was able to utilize another hangar on the property.

III. Discussion of rule modification for funding of public job projects.

Chairman Lambert advised he had met with the County Manager and had asked him to lead this discussion and offer some suggestions on how they could accomplish this and would like to poll the Board and make sure it was their desire to restrict funding for public jobs and if they allowed the public infrastructure to be available to the public then there was an avenue available for the public to take advantage of the monies; it was for economic development and it was sometimes a stretch to connect publicly created jobs to economic development. He then asked the Board how they felt regarding the last dilemma they faced. Royal asked did he mean with South Florida Community College. Chairman Lambert advised he felt they would continue to face the problems and it would be with educational institutions and with cities and there would be innovative and creative ways to place the money back in the public's hand and they were going to be the best stewards of the original intent of the money, they should look at restricting the job creation portion to private sector jobs. Smith asked County Attorney Evers would they need to attach a condition to accomplish this. County Attorney Evers advised they would need to make it clear in the Job Creation Guidelines and the Bylaws and he believed that was the original intent of the statute. County Manager Albritton advised there was nothing developed by the Board that was an absolute. Chairman Lambert advised if they chose to do that the appropriate motion would be to direct Staff and the County Attorney to develop a rule that restricts the job creation portion to private sector jobs. County Attorney Evers advised they would also need to prepare amendments to whatever documents they already had to implement that rule. Merrill advised they did not adopt by rule and elected not to go through the rule making process. County Attorney Evers advised he believed the Chairman was using the term rule in a non-Florida Administrative Code process. Chairman Lambert advised that was correct. Merrill stated she just wanted everyone to understand that. Abbott asked if they would hurt any entity by doing this. Merrill advised she wondered if this would impact a not for profit organization. County Attorney Evers advised if it was not a local unit or state unit of government, he would treat it as private. Chairman Lambert asked if it would be prudent for them to put some language in the amendment that connoted that not for profits may or may not be qualified. County Manager Albritton advised their Bylaws currently provided that an application could be accepted from a non-profit organization.

**MOTION by Smith, second by Royal** to direct Staff to prepare a document that restricted job creation applications to private sector jobs. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Chairman Lambert advised each member that they had a timeline in their books and that they would not meet again until August 12<sup>th</sup>.

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Meeting adjourned at 8:59 a.m.

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William R. Lambert, Jr., Chairman

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