

HARDEE COUNTY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (EDA)  
**(INDEPENDENT BOARD)**  
COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS  
412 WEST ORANGE STREET, ROOM 102  
WAUCHULA, FLORIDA 33873  
JUNE 23, 2009 8:30 A.M.

**MINUTES**

**Members:**

David Royal, Vice-Chairman, P	Bridget Merrill, A
Bill Beattie, A	Perry Knight, P
Paul Samuels, P	Bill Lambert, Chairman, P
Vanessa Hernandez, A	Bobby Smith, P
Roger Hood, P	

County Attorney Ken Evers, P                      County Manager Lexton H. Albritton, Jr., P  
Office Manager Sandy Meeks, P

Chairman Lambert called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**MOTION by Royal, second by Samuels** to approve the agenda with the addition of announcements to Item VIII. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**MOTION by Hood, second by Smith** to approve the January 27, 2009, regular meeting minutes. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- I. Acknowledge receipt of the Clerk's Financial Report for periods ending 01/31/09, 02/28/09, 03/31/09, 04/30/09, & 05/31/09.

**MOTION by Smith, second by Knight** to acknowledge receipt of the Clerk's Financial Report for periods ending 01/31/09, 02/28/09, 03/31/09, 04/30/09, & 05/31/09. **Motion carried unanimously.**

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

**MOTION by Knight, second by Royal** to acknowledge receipt of the Project Status Reports from the City of Wauchula, Industrial Development Authority, and the Hardee County Board of County Commissioners. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- III. Request approval and authorization for Chairman to sign Modification No. 1 to Grant Award Agreement with the Hardee County Board of County Commissioners extending the agreement for an additional one year period.

Chairman Lambert touched on how important it was to complete the projects and expend the grant monies. He asked Park Winter, Hardee County Director of Utilities if he would like to make a presentation before the Board considered his extension request. He advised there were no changes since his last Project Status Report and that they would be going out for bids soon. **MOTION by Royal, second by Hood** to approve and authorize for Chairman to sign Modification No. 1 to Grant Award Agreement with the Hardee County Board of County Commissioners extending the agreement for an additional one year period. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- IV. Request approval and authorization for Chairman to sign Modification No. 1 to Grant Award Agreement with the City of Wauchula extending the agreement (Harvest Aviation Hangar Project) for an additional six month period.

James A. Braddock, Finance Director City of Wauchula advised the Board they were 94% complete with the engineering and 76% complete with the construction and they only needed a few more months to complete the project. Chairman Lambert asked if he noticed any aberrant funding situations from the Airport Authority meeting yesterday relative to the expenditures of the grant or in his opinion was everything as it should be. Mr. Braddock advised he felt everything was okay. Chairman Lambert asked Mr. Braddock if he felt all expenditures had been made in line with the grant and there was no reason to come before Board and modify the expenditure schedule. Mr. Braddock advised he felt everything was fine. Chairman Lambert advised Mr. Braddock he would like for him to go back and review each expenditure and if there were any problems to contact County Manager Albritton. **MOTION by Perry, second by Royal** to approve and authorize for Chairman to sign Modification No. 1 to Grant Award Agreement with the City of Wauchula extending the agreement for an additional six month period. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- V. Request approval of the Financial Statement and Independent Auditor's Report dated September 30, 2008.

**MOTION by Samuels, second by Knight** to approve the Financial Statement and Independent Auditor's Report dated September 30, 2008. **Motion carried unanimously.** Smith asked what their process was for having this done. County Manager Albritton advised it was completed by the NCT Group as was the County's audit. Chairman Lambert advised he felt it was a little pricey. He also asked if the Board thought they should send a letter questioning their pricing. Knight asked if this was done by the bid process. Office Manager Sandy Meeks advised the Board there was an arrangement letter signed by the EDA Board with the NCT Group that the price of the audit would not exceed \$3,500. She went on to explain there were two invoices received one in January of 2009 for \$1,800 and one in June for \$3,500. Chairman Lambert advised for the County Manager's to continue to obtain clarification from the NCT Group on the invoicing.

- VI. Request approval and authorization for Chairman to sign the Grant Award Agreement with the Heartland Property and Casualty Insurance Company, Inc.

Joe Albritton, CEO Heartland Property and Casualty Insurance Company, Inc., advised the Board there were hurdles they were trying to overcome and they were working diligently to keep the project on pace, but there were issues with state legislation and at the federal level that had made it difficult for them to access capital markets. Chairman Lambert touched on how the projects needed to move forward and the monies granted to the Board needed to be expensed. The term of the agreement was discussed and Chairman Lambert asked Joe Albritton if a six month time frame would be sufficient. Joe Albritton advised it would be. Chairman Lambert further advised if the time frame was not sufficient, they could come back to the Board for an extension. **MOTION by Smith, second by Knight** to approve and authorize Chairman to sign the Grant Award Agreement with the Heartland Property and Casualty Insurance Company, Inc., with a six month timeframe with the option of an extension. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- VII. Acknowledge receipt of EDA Line Item Transfer Form transferring \$3,000 from Services Provided by Clerk of Court to Professional Services to cover the cost of the 2008 audit.

Mike Carter, Partner, The NCT Group, CPA's, came before the Board and provided a copy of the Required Communications for the 2008 audit. He touched on the Financial Statements, Management Discussion & Analysis, Balance Sheet, and Statement of Activities. He advised the Board they were in good shape and how the Board had a good, clean audit and asked if there were any questions. Chairman Lambert advised he did not think they were in good shape when they were sitting on the money. He also advised Mr. Carter about the two invoices received in the amount of \$1,800 and \$3,500 and how the Board was questioning the cost of the reports. Mr. Carter advised the \$3,500 invoice was not correct and he would make sure the problem was fixed immediately. Mr. Carter then discussed the Report to Board Members that was handed out to Board members when he arrived. He said there were no findings in the reports. Chairman Lambert asked what criteria they looked at to determine if an issue of finding would exist or not. Mr. Carter advised they review the Board's internal controls and touched on the levels of deficiencies. **MOTION by Royal, second by Knight** to approve the EDA Line Item Transfer Form transferring \$3,000 from Services Provided by Clerk of Court to Professional Services to cover the cost of the 2008 audit. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- VIII. Next meeting date will be August 25, 2009, Applicants will have presentations on their projects and the EDA will award funds and determine grant conditions during this meeting.

Chairman Lambert advised the next meeting would be August 25, 2009, at which time they would have presentations from the applicants and they would also vote and award during this meeting. He informed the Board that the cities would receive the grant applications today to do their ranking and they would return them back to the County Manager's Office by August 07, 2009. He further advised they would leave the September meeting date open just in case they did not get everything completed.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS – addition to agenda**

Chairman Lambert advised the Board how concerned he was that they had not created any jobs with the monies and how the philosophy for the money was job creation. He further advised the Board they all needed to get their act together because they could come under severe scrutiny and lose the income stream. He further stated he wanted each member to think about this as they move through the process. Smith advised he would be embarrassed if he were asked today how many jobs they had created. Chairman Lambert advised the members that were on the Board representing the cities to please consider what he had said. Commissioner Bryant asked if the community was aware of the funds. Chairman Lambert advised they advertised in the Florida Administrative Weekly. He went on to explain how he has tried to entice businesses by informing them of the unique income stream through the EDA, but with these past cycles the monies have been allocated to the government entities and Albritton Insurance, but with this new cycle they would have roughly 3 million dollars for distribution and how they were trying to find ways to spend the money to directly or indirectly create jobs, but what he seen was the Board struggling to find ways getting the money in the private sector because of honorable commitments to the municipalities and the county. Commissioner Bryant asked if there was anything the Board of County Commissioners could do. Chairman Lambert advised how the Cities and the County had been very supportive of economic development, but for some reason the Board

was failing. Commissioner Bryant asked about fast track permitting. Chairman Lambert advised they had been discussing this, but had not finalized anything. Commissioner Bryant advised how the County would like to obtain some funding to promote Hardee Lakes and finish the RV sites and how that could possibly bring more people in the County. Chairman Lambert advised how the Mosaic Agreement directly addresses that and it specifically allocates money for tourism. He further stated they would also receive additional monies from that and how they had to be ahead of the funding cycle to be able to spend the monies legitimately. Knight touched on how bad the economy was at this time and how there was not much job creation occurring. He further advised he felt Senator Alexander was aware of how bad the economy was and how businesses were struggling to survive. He also stated how the Board had to keep working to move forward. Hood advised he did not think anyone would find fault with improving infrastructure and without infrastructure the jobs could not come and how he felt they were laying the foundation and they were doing the right thing. Chairman Lambert advised he was not arguing about infrastructure he was arguing about doing maintenance. He further advised how this was not the cities fault and how their tax base had declined. He went on to explain he was worried about the maintenance related issue and how a line may need to be drawn. Hood advised he totally agreed and their primary focus should be job creation.

Chairman Lambert advised the Board Members their application packages were ready. County Manager Albritton advised that he tried to make sure the applications had enough information for the Board to make a decision, but some of them were not complete and how he made a note on them for the Board.

Chairman Lambert advised from his discussion with Olivia Minshew the City of Wauchula's ALF application needed to be pulled.

Park Winter, Hardee County Director of Utilities, asked for a waiver of the Commencement Documentation required for the County's infrastructure project. Chairman Lambert advised it was county land. He asked the County Attorney if he had any problems with this. County Attorney advised he did not. **MOTION by Smith, second by Royal** to waive the Commencement Documentation requirement for the County's infrastructure project **Motion carried unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

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William R. Lambert, Jr., Chairman