

Date: January 28, 2005
To: I-85 Corridor Alliance Board
From: Larry Fillmer, I-85 Corridor Alliance Executive Director
Ray Vaughan, I-85 Corridor Alliance Secretary
Subject: January 27, 2005 Board Meeting Minutes

The I-85 Corridor Alliance Board working session convened at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 27, 2005 at the Auburn University Hotel and Conference Center in Auburn, Alabama. The attendees at the meeting were:

1. Deroald Hopkins
2. Ray Vaughan
3. Sandy Nichols
4. Margaret Bentley
5. Dr. P.K. Raju
6. Maria Traylor
7. Scott Slocum
8. Joe Sumners
9. Ralph Foster
10. Valerie Gray
11. Troy Wayman
12. Dr. Joanne Jordan
13. Larry Fillmer

Deroald opened the meeting and commended Larry on the public meeting on Tuesday, January 25, 2005, which went very well. Larry gave a report on the Tuesday meeting and on the Executive Committee meeting, which was held just prior to this Board meeting. Funding and addressing budgetary needs is a priority from the Executive Committee meeting. Larry and Ray will meet and put together and file the IRS 501(c) (3) recognition before the next Board meeting in February. Deroald emphasized that funding go toward programs supporting the “regional economy,” as suggested by Robert Bogart of the Economic Development Administration in his remarks on Tuesday. We need some small “hits,” some grants on projects, to show that the Alliance can be a key resource for the regional economy and get broad financial support from entities in the corridor and elsewhere.

Critique of the I-85 Network Meeting – 1-25-05:

Many felt that such meetings need to be shorter, a maximum of two hours. Such meetings also need the draw of good outside speakers, as Mr. Bogart made a good impact on many. While there was a lot of good information, future meetings need to focus on succinct briefings that are of particular interest to the larger I-85 Network. Alabama Public Television covered the meeting and did a good seven-minute report on it. Ralph Foster brought in a tape of the APT program for the Board to watch. Many thanks to Ralph and his folks who did a great job with the banner, the resolution display and other “behind the scene” elements. Larry tried to get a meeting set up with Senator Shelby and Governor Riley, as they were in the area at the time. While no organized meeting occurred, Larry did get to meet briefly with Senator Shelby and met longer with his chief of staff; the Senator’s office committed to meet with us in Washington, D. C. (which could be done also with Senator Sessions, Representative Rogers, Davis and Bonner as well). Governor Riley’s staff also told Larry they would meet with us in Montgomery.

Cluster Updates:

Based upon comments at Tuesday’s meeting it is felt that many people are now expecting near-term tangible results from the Alliance. A couple of specific ideas are possible to move us in this direction. The workforce development initiative can move quickly and develop a possible model for partnership among Southern Union State Community College, Auburn University College of Business and local manufacturers. A suggested concept to consider is the establishment an enterprise or manufacturing training program that would enable students with required skills to meet the needs of industries in the Region. A possible consideration is the establishment of a program that would be similar in concept and design to the Auburn University College of Architecture “Rural Studio”, only focused on manufacturing.

The other priority strongly suggested by Mayor Johnny Ford of Tuskegee, is to begin a program to light all the exits along the interstate to give a common look and feel to all the exits. That would be a starting point on infrastructure improvements for the Region. The key, however, is not the lights themselves but that ALDOT expects the local communities and counties to maintain the lights, and many of our local counties do not have the equipment to handle that kind of maintenance. Valerie Gray will work to get her county engineer to come to the next Board meeting to explain the process and what would be required to undertake such a project.

Charter Bank is vacating a building at Exit 79 and moving that operation to Georgia. Valley Council Member Shawn Jarrell approached Larry regarding the possible use of the building as a “Welcome Center” to Alabama and possibly the Corridor. It is not certain at this time what Charter Bank may be considering regarding the disposition of this building. We agreed to see how we can help with the process or to support the City of Valley in their efforts to utilize the property. Maria Traylor agreed to take the lead in working with Valerie Gray and the officials in Valley regarding discussions with Charter Bank.

P.K. Raju gave a review of the work of the manufacturers' alliance he helped formed. Industrial clients' projects are matched to professors and students for development and ideas, at no cost to the client. Faculty also work on specific projects, for a charge, to provide solutions to industrial needs. They also develop multi-media educational materials for workforces and teach students how to deal with real-world problems. Much of that can tie into the work of the Alliance. P.K. agreed to provide a presentation at the next Board Meeting regarding how this effort can help focus the initiatives of the Technology Cluster.

Tourism and Community Development was covered well at the Tuesday meeting.

I-85 Corridor Alliance Marketing Program:

We had our third meeting, a working session, on January 20, 2005. Larry reported on three things they looked at: (1) the creation of information and connectivity to various websites, including the I-85 Corridor Alliance website, that can provide detail about the region and its resources; (2) trade shows that the State is going to participate in during 2005 (20-25) and possible participation in two shows, where the I-85 Corridor Alliance would be teamed up with either the State or one of the local communities along the Corridor; and (3) a major marketing event in the fall. The two trade shows we will target are Plastics USA (September in Chicago) and the National Business Aviation Trade Show (November in New Orleans). The fall event would be to attract site consultants or possible Auburn alumni who are senior executives of corporations or enterprises that may have some interest in locating operations in the Region. The Branding and Marketing working group will meet again in approximately 30 days.

Joe Sumners gave a report on the Asset Inventory. Since the inventory will always be a "work in progress," it should be web-based. Thus far, it is about 120 pages of information; however it can be accessed at: [www: i85corridor.org](http://www.i85corridor.org) under the "Resources" heading.

Ralph Foster gave a report on putting the Asset Inventory information on the website. Most information is in PDF format now (broken down into sections as separate PDF documents, to make it more accessible), but it is being converted entirely to html and will then be more user-friendly when it can be linked together and to outside sites. A search component will be added, for ease of use. There is a concern about how to maintain it so that it can be updated and changed easily without each change impacting the format of rest of the information. Ralph's staff is working to resolve that issue. The Cluster Groups will be required to take ownership of sections of the inventory regarding updates and changes.

Scott Slocum recommended that a copy of the resolution presented by Dr. Richardson at Tuesday's meeting and a DVD of the APT coverage of Tuesday's meeting be sent to each of the mayors as a way of thanking them for their support. The DVD can also be

used to help brief the congressional staff and other political leaders. Larry and Ralph will handle the logistics of getting the material distributed.

As there were no other items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 AM.

Next meeting will be Thursday, Feb. 24, 2005, 8:00AM-10:00AM; at the First Tuskegee Bank Board Room.