

**I-85 Corridor Alliance**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
National Center for Asphalt Technology  
Auburn, Alabama  
February 23, 2006

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 am.

Present were:

1. *Joe Sumners, AU/EDI (Executive Director)*
2. *Deroald Hopkins, First Tuskegee Bank (President)*
3. *Scott Slocum, Westin Solutions (Treasurer)*
4. *Amelia Hall Stehouwer, EDI/AU*
5. *Sandra S. Nichols, WildLaw*
6. *Ray Vaughan, WildLaw (Secretary)*
7. *Al Cook, Opelika*
8. *Margaret Gunter, ACHE*
9. *Allen Hendrix, City of Valley*
10. *Cary Cox, Auburn*
11. *Valerie Gray, Chambers County IDA*
12. *Dr. Mary White, Southern Union*
13. *Ralph Foster, AU Outreach Information*
14. *Mike Easterwood, AU/EDI*
15. *Joel Holly, City of Lanett*
16. *P.K. Raju, Auburn University*

**1. Officer's Reports**

- ♦ Deroald reported that the Alliance received our recognition letter from the IRS, dated Jan. 25, 2006. The I-85 Corridor Alliance is now recognized as a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization.
- ♦ Scott reported that we have \$3,899.55 in the account.

**2. Report on Promotional Materials**

- ♦ Ralph reported that his office has developed an update of the I-85 brochure. A draft of the updated brochure was distributed, reviewed and discussed; it will be finalized after the next board meeting when new officers are chosen.
- ♦ The new brochure will reflect changes from a cluster emphasis to an emphasis on specific projects and initiatives. The draft brochure has been reworked to reflect the new mission statement and structure.
- ♦ Major initiatives highlighted in the brochure are the I-85 Asset Inventory, the Innovation and Business Forum, a Regional Stakeholder Workshop, and Support for

Partner Projects (such as the Auburn Research Park, the A-O Airport expansion, the Workforce Development Initiative and civic projects).

- ♦ Attendees were asked to provide feedback to Joe and/or Ralph.
- ♦ Joe distributed the latest version of the Asset Inventory on CD-ROM. It is also available on the EDI website - [www.auburn.edu/edi](http://www.auburn.edu/edi). An updated version will soon be posted on the I-85 Corridor Alliance website.

### **3. Follow-up on Planning Session Items:**

#### **1) Mission Statement:**

The new mission statement (below) was discussed. No one had any problems with it.

*"The I-85 Corridor Alliance promotes innovation, prosperity, collaboration, and competitiveness along Interstate 85 in Alabama. The Alliance is a partnership of local governments, private sector organizations, universities, and technical institutions."*

#### **2) Geographic Focus:**

- ♦ Agreed to maintain the eight-county area initially included in the Alliance, but the primary focus for now will be on the central counties of Chambers, Lee and Macon. Other areas are invited to participate, but the focus for now will be on ongoing initiatives in these counties.

#### **3) What we want to do for 2006:**

- ♦ Overall, our primary focus is on promoting our region's assets. We do not want to work on recruitment and duplicate the job of the area's economic developers. We want to support what they do by establishing a regional identity and promoting all assets of the region.
- ♦ We want to repeat the Business and Innovation Forum organized around an Auburn football game. A key element will be promoting the opening of the Auburn University Research Park. We will use this as a way to bring people in and show off the region.
- ♦ The Second event we want to have is a regional networking workshop, perhaps at the Lodge at Grand National in May or June.
- ♦ We discussed creating a funding committee to get more financial assistance. Scott, Mike, Al, and Mary volunteered for the committee.
- ♦ We decided to create/update our promotional materials. We will:
  - ♦ Update the printed brochure;
  - ♦ Update the website; develop web-based interactive map for Asset Inventory;
  - ♦ Create a Power Point describing I-85 assets;

- ♦ Create a more user-friendly print version of the Asset Inventory; make CDs for distribution throughout the region and at I-85 Corridor events; and
  - ♦ Develop a promotional video; Deroald volunteered to take the lead for this initiative.
- ♦ We also agreed that we needed to educate and involve key stakeholders, especially in Chambers, Lee and Macon counties. After discussion, the following stakeholders were identified as important targets for outreach:
    - ♦ State legislators, mayors, county commissioners, regional planning commissions, representatives from the major manufacturers in the region, representatives from East Alabama Medical Center, and chambers of commerce.
    - ♦ Scott and Joe agreed to work with Margaret Bentley to set up a breakfast meeting with local legislators.

#### **4) Organizational Issues.**

- ♦ The group decided that there will be monthly work sessions with an annual Board of Directors meeting and other meetings of the Board, as necessary. The monthly meetings will be held at the same place each month, unless special circumstances require other arrangements. Monthly work sessions are scheduled for the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month from 8:00 AM until 10:00 AM.

#### **4. Planning for next Official Board Meeting.**

- ♦ We agreed to hold a Board meeting in March. Joe discussed the need to reorganize the Board to reflect those who are active in the organization. Al suggested that the Board also needs to reflect the new focus on the core three counties. The obligations of Board members will also be on the agenda.
- ♦ We discussed the need to look into whether annual dues should be required of Board members. Scott recommended \$500 mandatory annual dues for full membership and a seat on the Board.
- ♦ Officers will be elected at the Board meeting on March 23rd.
- ♦ The Executive Committee structure will need to be changed in the Bylaws themselves. We agreed that language related to clusters needed to be eliminated, but we decided to keep the Executive Committee structure, especially since the Board itself will plan on only one meeting a year.

#### **5. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 AM.**

6. The next meeting (official Board annual meeting) is scheduled for Thursday, March 23, 2006 at the National Center for Asphalt Technology in Auburn from 8:00-10:00 AM.