

Date: February 24, 2005  
To: I-85 Corridor Alliance Board  
From: Larry Fillmer, I-85 Corridor Alliance Executive Director  
Ray Vaughan, I-85 Corridor Alliance Secretary  
Subject: February 24, 2005 Board Meeting Minutes

The I-85 Corridor Alliance Board convened at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 24, 2005 at the First Tuskegee Bank in Tuskegee, Alabama. Thanks go to Deroald Hopkins for arranging the facility and for his hospitality. The attendees at the meeting were:

1. Deroald Hopkins, First Tuskegee Bank
2. Ray Vaughan, Wildlaw
3. Dr. P.K. Raju, Auburn Engineering Technical Assistance Program
4. Maria Traylor, Auburn-Opelika Convention and Visitors Bureau
5. Scott Slocum, Weston Solutions, Inc.
6. Ralph Foster, Auburn University - Outreach
7. Jerry Clement, Batson-Cook Company
8. Dean Matheson, Interport/SDS
9. Yvonne Hardy, Auburn Engineering Technical Assistance Program
10. Jack Brown, Spinks Brown Durand Realtors
11. Valerie Gray, Chambers County Industrial Board
12. Henry Hawkins, Chambers County Maintenance Engineering
13. Larry Fillmer, I-85 Corridor Alliance

Deroald opened the meeting welcoming everyone to the Bank and Tuskegee and gave a bit of history on the bank and the University. Larry introduced Jack Brown, who is interested in possibly joining the Alliance.

Larry reported on work he and Ray did putting together the application for 501(c) (3) recognition from the IRS. Three items need passage by the Board, but a quorum was not present. Everyone agreed that votes from attending members would be taken and then votes of other board members would be taken later via e-mail or telephone.

Conflict of Interest Policy: A draft policy was reviewed and discussed. All Board members present voted unanimously in favor of adoption of the policy.

Proposed Operating Budget: Larry reviewed how the proposed operating budget was drafted as required by the IRS filing. Larry reviewed possible fundraising options we will be pursuing. There was a discussion of having each member organization donate

\$1,000 per year. A more detailed discussion of this subject will be part of the March agenda for the Board Working Session. Few expenses have been incurred to date, but some will soon (e.g. the IRS filing requires a \$500 fee when submitted). After a discussion of the proposed budget, all Board members present voted unanimously in favor of its adoption.

Proposed Resolution on Selection of an Executive Director: Scott Slocum moved that the Board appoint Larry Fillmer and adopt the resolution as written. Maria Traylor seconded. All Board members present voted unanimously in favor of the resolution.

Dr. P.K. Raju gave a detailed presentation on the Auburn Engineering Technical Assistance Program.

Discussion on lighting for I-85 exits where it does not currently exist: The primary issue associated with this problem concerns maintenance of the lighting more than the cost of initially installing it. Valerie Gray brought as her guest, Henry Hawkins, Chambers County Engineer to describe the problem in some detail. Valerie and Henry gave a presentation on Chambers County and its work and efforts on lighting for the exits in Chambers County. While difficult, getting federal transportation funds approved to fund the installation of lights is less of an issue than finding state or local money for the divisions of ALDOT or the communities to maintain them. Few smaller communities or counties along I-85 have resources available to accept responsibility to maintain and keep them lit, and it does not appear to be a high priority for ALDOT to maintain them either. In lieu of these circumstances, this does not appear to be a high priority initiative for the I-85 Corridor Alliance to pursue at this time. It was, however, suggested that the Infrastructure Services Cluster provide some additional investigation into the issue and then report back to the Board with any findings that they may uncover. Dean Matheson agreed that the Infrastructure Cluster would take on this assignment. It was also agreed that the issue would be re-opened, if there are constructive ways that the I-85 Corridor Alliance can address some form of “standardization” of exits along I-85. We thank the Valerie and Henry for providing basic facts about the lighting situation.

Larry provided updates on the Branding and Marketing Program and on the Workforce Development Initiative. The Branding and Marketing work group has agreed to take on three projects for 2005: (1) extensive development of the I-85 Corridor Websites; (2) support for communities and promotion of the corridor at two trade shows this year. The two trade shows we will target are Plastics USA (September in Chicago) and the National Business Aviation Meeting (November in New Orleans). We are also working on a major Fall event associated with the weekend of the Auburn-Ball State football game (Sept. 15-17). Auburn University development office is co-presenting the program with us. The outline of the program is to create the first annual business-technology forum, and invite 30-50 very senior people in large companies who are also Auburn alumni. Ron Evans from the Auburn University Development Office (Corporate Giving) and Larry Fillmer are Co-Chairs for the event.

Regarding the Workforce Development Initiative, the manufacturing needs assessment has been done. We are looking at developing a unique program to address the needs shown by the assessment. A proposal is now under concept development to create a program similar to the Rural Design Studio, only focused on manufacturing and operations management. We are ready to take the next step to move forward, to get the program concept finalized and get the input of local manufacturing enterprises who are already resident along the Corridor.

Cluster Updates:

Tourism and Community Development is now meeting every other month. They are also editing and fine-tuning the information on the website. Next meeting will be early March, TBD.

Educational Services is moving more toward the Workforce Development Initiative and we may need to consider refocusing or redefining this cluster around the workforce development program. We may be ready to look at programs or initiatives and to de-emphasize the cluster concept to a certain degree.

Technology Services is developing a concept for an annual technology exposition for industries in the corridor to showcase their technologies. It would also provide a forum for two and four year colleges to showcase their capabilities, with the goal of helping to attract new industries to the region. P.K. Ragu and the Auburn Engineering Technical Assistance Program are leading this effort.

Infrastructure/Business Services convened after the holiday break. They are currently involved in two projects: (1) mapping political and physical infrastructure resources in the corridor and (2) the *Foundations for Growth* study by the City of Opelika. While the Cluster is ready to tackle the interviews associated with Foundations for Growth, it has been delayed because of the demands made on the Opelika Economic Development Office regarding recent industrial recruitment activity. This Cluster also plans to make presentations to local clubs, like Rotary and Kiwanis.

All of the Mayors signing the Resolution presented at the I-85 Network Meeting on January 25<sup>th</sup> received a copy of the resolution, a CD copy of the Alabama Public Television segment regarding the Network Program and a thank you letter from the I-85 Corridor Alliance for their support and involvement.

As there were no other items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 AM.

**Next meeting will be Thursday, March 24, 2005, 8:00AM (Central Time)-10:00AM; at Batson-Cook in West Point, Georgia.**