

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

The I-85 Corridor Alliance Board convened at 9:00 a.m.(EST) on Thursday, March 24, 2005 at the Batson-Cook Company in West Point, Georgia. Thanks go to Jerry Clement for arranging the facility and for his hospitality. The attendees at the meeting were:

1. Deroald Hopkins, First Tuskegee Bank
2. Dr. Joanne Jordan, Southern Union State Community College
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. Valerie Gray, Chambers County Industrial Board
9. Kristen McLendon, Auburn University-Montgomery - Outreach
10. Tim Jensen, Hecht, Burdeshaw, Johnson, Kidd and Clark, Inc., Architects
11. Larry Fillmer, I-85 Corridor Alliance

Jerry Clement welcomed everyone and provided background and history of Batson-Cook Company and their presence in West Point. Jerry also introduced a business colleague, Tim Jensen from Hecht, Burdeshaw, Johnson, Kidd and Clark, an architecture partner located in Columbus, Georgia. Tim is very interested in seeing the I-85 Corridor Alliance begin to have involvement with areas that are on the Georgia side of I-85 and I-185.

Deroald Hopkins opened the meeting and again reiterated the need for the Alliance to focus on some short term successes as we plan our initiatives for 2005.

Larry Fillmer asked for corrections or additions to the February 24, 2005 Meeting Minutes, and none were submitted. Larry also advised the Board that he had accepted a full time position with Auburn University working in the Office of Development as Development Officer-Major Gifts. With the acceptance of his new position, Larry indicated that for the immediate future he would like to continue as the Executive Director of the I-85 Corridor Alliance, in a voluntary capacity. During this discussion, the question was raised as to whether or not the By-Laws need to be amended, since they now call for a full-time Executive Director. Since the issue of funding and budget

allocation for the position and other administrative and operational expenses has not been resolved, the consensus was that no change was needed at this time. It was, however, agreed that Larry would discuss the issue with Ray Vaughan upon Ray's return from vacation next week.

Larry also informed the Board that changes will probably be required to the IRS Application for Recognition of Exemption (Form 2023). The filing has not been submitted because of these pending changes and because some level of administrative funding must be established to cover the \$500 fee that must accompany the filing. This led into a discussion regarding "apportionment" or membership dues for the I-85 Corridor Alliance. Scott Slocum agreed to develop a proposal to address consideration of membership dues or assessments to cover these types of recurring expenses. Scott's proposal as well as any required changes to the By-Laws and the IRS filing will be presented for the Board's consideration at its April 28th meeting.

Larry Fillmer provided an update on the Branding and Marketing Program. Planning is well underway for a major fall event – **The First Annual Innovation and Business Partnership Forum**, which will be presented and sponsored by the I-85 Corridor Alliance (and its members) and Auburn University. At the present time, the event is still considered to be in the concept stage and has not been formally approved by Auburn University; however, a detailed program plan and budget has been developed for review with the appropriate University officials. The event is currently scheduled for September 15-17th, 2005 in conjunction with the Ball State football game.

Ralph Foster provided an update on the web site and work that has been done by the Economic Development Institute and his staff. The web site continues to be updated and there are now internet connections to other Corridor and Region web sites that can be accessed from the I-85 Corridor Alliance web page. Again, all Board Members and Cluster members were urged to review the web site and provide any comments or changes to Ralph and his organization.

Larry Fillmer and Jerry Clement presented an update on the Workforce Development Initiative. A working group composed of faculty members from Auburn University, Southern Union State Community College and Falk Corporation has developed a draft prospectus for a "Management Minor in Manufacturing." The program will be billed as an "Academy of Manufacturing" with an overall objective of addressing the workforce needs and issues coming from the Manufacturing Needs Assessment conducted in October-December 2004. The primary goal of this program will be to address one of manufacturing's key, on-going labor requirements for "detective/troubleshooters" that combine an understanding of systems operations with a practical knowledge of basic manufacturing. This skill level was identified as a critical need by area manufacturers over the next 2-5 years. The draft prospectus must now be reviewed within the academic community and by local manufacturing for additional comments and changes. The prospectus outlines a 15 credit hour program that would likely be targeted to begin in the fall 2006.

Cluster Updates:

Tourism and Community Development met on March 10th. Maria Traylor reported that her cluster is currently focused on coordinating I-85 Corridor Alliance participation at local events that occur frequently during the spring and summer months. Maria also reported that Charlene LeBleu and her architecture class needed a “Studio Project” and were interested in conducting a comprehensive review of the Corridor’s needs for overall improvement projects that could be used to seek funding for infrastructure projects. The Cluster endorsed Charlene’s concept and Charlene was requested to come back with a detailed outline of her proposal and the support that would be needed from the Cluster and I-85 Corridor Alliance Board.

Jerry Clement reported that Educational Services has now completely focused on the Workforce Development Initiative as its major program. Jerry will enlist involvement from Cluster members who have not been active in a number of months.

Technology Services continues to work on its concept for an annual technology exposition for industries and technical institutions in the corridor. P.K. Raju also reported on a one day workshop that is being sponsored by AETAP, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and NSF. The program, “Industrial Renaissance through Innovative Partnerships” will be held on April 20th at the Grand National Lodge and Conference Center in Opelika. P.K. also stated that he was in the process of re-establishing membership in the Technology Cluster and Board Members were encouraged to provide P.K. with possible candidates. Larry Fillmer indicated that he would provide P.K. with the original list of Cluster members that was developed in the fall of 2003.

Larry Fillmer informed the Board that the I-85 Corridor Alliance would be included as part of Auburn University’s Center for Governmental Services’ program: “Governmental Excellence and Best Practices for 2005-Financing Alabama’s Future, which will be held on April 18th at the Embassy Suites in Montgomery. Additionally, one of the keynote speakers will be Robert Farley, President of Team NEO. Larry will work with the conference planners to see if there is a possibility for interested members of the Alliance Board to meet with Mr. Farley to discuss his experiences regarding the Team NEO organization and focus. Larry will get information out to the Board regarding a possible meeting as soon as possible.

Valerie Gray informed that Board that she and others from Chambers County had traveled to Washington, D.C. to seek funding for lighting I-85 exits 77 and 70 and other infrastructure projects that are being pursued in Valley and Lanett. In their correspondence and presentations, the cooperation between Valley/Lanett and Opelika with regard to their industrial park capabilities was emphasized as well as their participation in the I-85 Corridor Alliance. Valerie indicated that the Washington staff personnel were very supportive of these cooperative efforts.

As there were no other items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m. (EST)

**Next meeting will be Thursday, April 28, 2005, 8:00AM (Central Time)-10:00AM;
at the National Center for Asphalt Technology in Auburn.**