

**I-85 Corridor Alliance
Meeting Notes
National Center for Asphalt Technology
Auburn, Alabama
May 25, 2006**

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 am.

Present were:

1. *Joe Sumners, AU/ECDI (Executive Director)*
2. *Larry Fillmer, Auburn University*
3. *Titus Lindsey, Alabama Power Company*
4. *Joe Molnar, AU Rural Sociology Department*
5. *Allen Hendrix, City of Valley*
6. *Valerie Gray, Chambers County IDB*
7. *James T. Bryan, City of Valley*
8. *Ralph Foster, AU Outreach Information*
9. *Mike Easterwood, AU/EDI*
10. *Margaret Gunter, ACHE*
11. *Catherine Jackson, AUM Outreach*
12. *Dr. Mary White, Southern Union*
13. *Amelia Hall Stehaver, EDI-AU*

1. Joe Sumners called the meeting to order and introductions were given.

2. Financial Report

- Joe report for Scott Slocum on finances and reported that there has been no change in the bank balance and that invoices had been sent to Board members for the annual \$500 dues. Current account balance is \$6,899.55. Due have been received from six members.

3. Committee Reports

- Ralph Foster reported on the progress of the Networking Workshop to be held June 21 at the Valley Civic Center. An agenda for the workshop has been established for a three-hour program (starting 1:00 PM Central, 2:00 PM Eastern).
 - ADO Director Neil Wade will be the keynote speaker.
 - For the first time, there will be a facilitated breakout and networking session to discuss issues and identify needs so that the Alliance can better serve members and the region.
 - The biggest challenge has been consolidating various stakeholder lists into one master list, but that has now been done and has some 530 contacts on it. Amelia distributed the list and asked for any suggested additions and changes. Hallame@auburn.edu (334) 844-4704. The list represents anyone who has been invited to Alliance events, and there may be some duplication of people from the same organizations.

- Ralph also serves as chair of the Promotion and Marketing Committee. He reported that, due to the work on the workshop, there is not much new to report. The brochure is coming along, with the same design but new language and a new map (with icons and resource indicators instead of the cluster design).
- Mike reported for the Finance and Fundraising Committee. Some grant possibilities we need to think about include:
 - USDA Rural Development has a program called Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG). Nonprofits can apply. No match is required, but is encouraged. It is a good fit for the Alliance, but the deadline for 2006 has already passed. We can get in on the 2007 grants (April 2007 deadline). The grant supports technical assistance for training and planning in rural counties.
 - Appalachian Regional Commission. Nonprofits can apply for grants. All counties (except Montgomery and Lee) are eligible. Deadline for pre-applications is August.
 - Economic Development Administration. Local Technical Assistance Program is focused on areas of economic distress. Nonprofits can apply, at any time.
- Larry Fillmer gave an update on the status of the planning for the Business and Innovation Forum. The university research and development offices have made commitments. The forum is scheduled for November 2-4. It is the weekend of the Arkansas State football game. Meetings will be held at the Lodge at Grand National in Opelika and on the AU campus.
 - AU (I-85 Corridor Alliance) contracted with George McMillan and Associates for the 1) promotion, 2) sponsorship, and 3) bringing in venture capitalists from around the region. They will receive a commission from the funds that they raise.
 - Auburn University has contributed money for the program. Additional sponsors will be solicited.
 - A program manager, Lesley Parsons, has been hired as a temporary University employee. She is creating a detailed implementation plan, a budget, and a list of key dates and milestones. The target audience is high-level key executives from around the country who would have an interest in the work at the research park; Larry already has 25 candidates but needs to send 100 invitations to get the 30-40 who will attend.
 - Plans are for a keynote dinner on Thursday on the theme of the Global Competitiveness of the region. The event will feature 1) alternative fuels research, 2) transportation, 3) safety and security, and 4) nano-science in the wireless engineering sector.
 - Last year, we had a panel of people from the local area to talk about why they located here. This year, a panel of businesspeople will discuss what their expectations are and what they look for when considering moving into a region.

4. Other

- Mary White reported on a Korean Culture course now being offered at Southern Union at the Valley Campus. It can be taken for college credit or as continuing education; most students are taking it as noncredit students.

- Valerie Gray reported on the latest with Kia. Several tier one suppliers have come in recently to look at Valley and Chambers County. A state trip to Korea is scheduled for July. Chambers County is applying for an RBEG grants to study hospitality, utilities and housing market, infrastructure of the County and what the economic impact of Kia will be on the County.
 - Joe reported that EDI is no more. A new unit, the Economic and Community Development Institute (ECDI), has been created as a partnership between AU Outreach and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES). ECDI will be physically moving to Extension Hall on the AU campus later this summer.
5. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 AM.
 6. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 22, 2006 from 8:00-10:00 AM.