

Date: May 26 2005
To: I-85 Corridor Alliance Board
From: Larry Fillmer, I-85 Corridor Alliance Executive Director
Ray Vaughan, I-85 Corridor Alliance Secretary
Subject: May 26, 2005 Board Working Session Meeting Minutes

The I-85 Corridor Alliance Board Working Session convened at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 26, 2005 at Southern Union State Community College (SUSCC). We thank Dr. Jordan and her staff for hosting the meeting and for their hospitality. The attendees at the meeting were:

1. Al Cook – City of Opelika
2. Ray Vaughan – Wildlaw
3. Sandy Nichols – Wildlaw
4. Dr. Vic Uzumeri – Auburn University College of Business
5. Dr. Sharon Oswald – Auburn University College of Business
6. Maria Traylor – Auburn/Opelika Convention and Visitors Bureau
7. Joe Sumners – Auburn University Economic Development Institute
8. Ralph Foster – Auburn University Outreach
9. Bill Hutto – Auburn/Opelika Airport
10. Larry Fillmer – Auburn University Development
11. Margaret Bentley – Alabama Power Company
12. Margaret Gunter – Alabama Commission on Higher Education
13. Cary Cox – Auburn Training Connection
14. Dr. Mary Jean White – Southern Union State Community College
15. Don Smith – City of Auburn
16. Tihomir Antonov – Guest of Don Smith

Larry opened the meeting and introduced Dr. Mary White from SUSCC who welcomed everyone on behalf of Dr. Jordan. Larry then introduced the other guests present including Bill Hutto; Director of the Auburn-Opelika Airport, Dr. Sharon Oswald and Dr. Vic Uzumeri of the Auburn University College of Business and Tihomir Antonov, who is from Bulgaria and is interning with the City of Auburn. Deroald Hopkins was not in attendance as he is in China with the Auburn University Executive MBA program.

Al Cook reported on Opelika's selection by Gambro Corporation, a Swedish manufacturer of kidney dialysis equipment. Al commented that the efforts by Dr. Roy Johnson and the ability to locate in close proximity to SUSCC were key factors to recruiting this new industry to Opelika.

Scott Slcocum sent, through Larry, a Treasurer's report. Bank account is now open with deposits of \$2,000. Ray Vaughan reported that the 501(c) (3) application, Form 1023, is ready to go and will be mailed this afternoon.

Larry gave an update on the branding and marketing program. The Innovation & Business Partnership Forum program for September has been given the final "go" by Dr. Richardson. Larry reported that they are trying to secure Duane Ackerman, Chairman of BellSouth, as the keynote speaker. Ralph Foster added more on the marketing and promotion of the event, such as a page in the program for the Auburn-Ball State football game so that people will see it and learn about it. The Asset Inventory being put together by Joe Summers will also be a significant promotional item for the attendees. The web site will have a link to the Forum, and the University will also link to it. Booths for groups and programs in the region will be available as part of the Friday morning program for the Forum.

Dr. Oswald and Dr. Uzumeri gave an update on the Workforce Development Initiative, including the proposed manufacturing minor for Auburn University undergraduate students. The Manufacturing Needs Assessment that was conducted in the fall of 2004 (representing 7,200 jobs) identified specific skills that local manufacturers required and were not being supplied by the existing labor force. Specifically, manufacturers in the area need skilled workers who have the analytical skills of a four-year degree combined with the practical knowledge of the manufacturing environment. Consequently, the Auburn University College of Business and SUSCC have developed a concept in which a specialized minor in manufacturing would be developed to fill this void. Companies in the Region have universally stated that they need trouble-shooters and are having trouble finding them. Four-year institutions typically deliver theory but not hands-on training for students. Some students who might choose to go to a two-year technical school end up at four-year institutions, without a mechanism to give them some hands-on training to complement their focus on theory. Companies found that they could take someone who knew electronics and train them in manufacturing, but that it was much more difficult to take an individual who knew mechanics and teach them electronics. So, the minor will have a solid core in electronics. Companies want a larger pool of potential hires, but they also want some assurance that the candidate students will have a strong capability to succeed in a highly technical manufacturing environment. This minor would meet that need and will be a unique offering combining and leveraging the capabilities of the College of Business and SUSCC.

Bill Hutto gave a presentation on the Auburn-Opelika Airport. The airport has made a number of airside improvements and is now working on improving the image of the airport, along with plans for future growth. Bill shared with us the long-range plans for these improvements to the airport over the next five to ten years, which include relocation and construction of a new terminal, building additional hangar space and the extension of the primary runway to accommodate planes as large as a 737 or MD80. The airport was built in 1930, and the University bought it in 1939. Annual economic impact is estimated

to be \$19.3 million per year. Flight training school has about 150 students during the school year. Mission of the airport is to facilitate economic development.

Cluster Updates.

Maria reported on the Tourism and Community Development Cluster, which has not met since the last I-85 Corridor Alliance Board Working Session, primarily due to construction and expansion of the Auburn Chamber of Commerce building, which houses the Auburn-Opelika Convention and Visitors Bureau. There were no other Cluster reports as other Cluster leaders were not present at this meeting.

As there were no other items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 AM.

Next meeting will be Thursday, June 23, 2005, 8:00AM-10:00AM; location TBD