

MINUTES

Northeast Arkansas Industrial Development Commission

May 2, 2023 – 8:00 am

Al M. Heringer III, Chairman, Presiding

Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce

Present:

Murray Benton

John Freeman

Harold Perrin

Al Heringer III

Brent Stidman

Mark Young

Chairman Heringer called the meeting to order and minutes from the February 7, 2023, meeting were approved on motion by Murray Benton, second by John Freeman. Motion carried.

Financial Report

Brent Stidman reported a cash balance of \$239,679. Outgoing expenses to the Chamber have totaled \$40,764.99 as of March 31st.

Motion to accept the report made by Harold Perrin, second by Murray Benton. Motion carried.

Economic Report

Mark Young gave the economic report, noting five inquiries, one prospect visit, eight business retention and expansion activities, and four market research requests for the quarter.

- The Existing Industries Association toured the new Colson facility a few weeks ago. Camfil is in the process of moving equipment in their new facility, and construction is nearing completion on the FedEx Distribution center, a 300,000 square foot facility in the Craighead Technology Park.
- Steven Lamm, VP of Economic Development for JU, recently participated in an AEDC Consultant event in Chicago.
- Young assisted the Arkansas District Export Council with hosting their quarterly meeting in Jonesboro.
- A groundbreaking was held for construction of the Eastern Bypass.
- The Chamber's Transportation Committee is hosting a meeting this week to hear a highway update from Arkansas Highway Commissioner Alec Farmer and District 10 Engineer Brad Smithee.
- The Chamber will host a Washington DC Fly-In in April, where they will discuss five key issues with our federal delegation. One of the key issues will be the RAISE Grant submitted by the City; a \$24 million grant for trails and walkways through a partnership with Paragould and Brookland.
- The City of Jonesboro has started construction on a new mountain bike trail in Craighead Forest Park, implementing one of the recommendations from a soft track study funded by Jonesboro Unlimited and the City.
- Young asked that board members complete an airport study that is being circulated. To date, 8,500 surveys have been returned, 3,500 of which are from Craighead County. The firm Garver has been commissioned to conduct a study to determine the need for a regional airport in Northeast Arkansas. Approximately \$11 million has been scheduled at the Jonesboro airport to extend and strengthen the runway to accommodate larger aircraft. The next project for the Jonesboro airport will be rebuilding the terminal building.
- The rail storage facility recently constructed near the Craighead Technology Park is being utilized and a camera has been installed for security. Conversations are continuing regarding the possibility of a second carrier providing service to the industrial parks.
- A new traffic light has been installed at Quality Way and Highland Drive, improving safety at that intersection.
- The State Chamber and Be Pro Be Proud host Draft Day, a program connecting students entering the workforce after high school graduation with companies. Jonesboro was the pilot location for this event last year and they expanded to four locations this year. Over 200 interviews were held at this year's event, along with a Business Expo. Feedback has been positive for the Jonesboro event.
- The Society for Human Resource Managers (SHRM) is doing a pilot project in Arkansas and has selected five communities, one of which is Jonesboro. Each community selected will focus on projects that improve the workforce.
- The My Jonesboro Jobs website has been redesigned with added content and technology that makes it easier for companies to post jobs. The website pulls available jobs that are posted on company websites and posts them for participating companies on the My Jonesboro Jobs site.
- Young noted Jonesboro Unlimited has 37 programs, initiatives, and activities that relate to workforce development, focusing on talent attraction and workforce development.

After general discussion about workforce challenges and developments, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,



Al M. Heringer III, Chairman

MINUTES

Northeast Arkansas Industrial Development Commission

February 7, 2023 - 8:00 am

Al M. Heringer III, Chairman, Presiding

Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce

Present:

Murray Benton

John Freeman

Al M. Heringer III

Dr. Len Frey

Harold Perrin

Mark Young

Chairman Heringer called the meeting to order and minutes from the November 1, 2022, meeting were approved as mailed on motion by John Freeman, second by Harold Perrin. Motion carried.

Financial Report

Mark Young provided the financial report, noting that as of December 31, the Northeast Arkansas Industrial Development Commission had \$280,429 in assets. NAIDC funded the last land payment from the city and county for land in the Craighead Technology Park, but will now be assisting in the purchase of new property – 412 acres in Craighead Technology South. This property is being purchased by the Jonesboro Economic Development Corporation (JEDC) through a bank consortium. There was general discussion about the amount of funding NAIDC has received annually from the city and county and the need for an increase. Financials were accepted on motion by Harold Perrin, second by John Freeman. Motion carried. Authorization to enter into funding contracts with the city and county and approval to make payment to JEDC was approved on motion by John Freeman, second by Murray Benton. Motion carried.

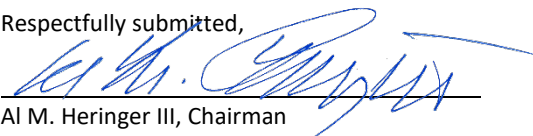
Economic Report

Young continued with the economic report. There were six inquiries for the quarter – 31 for the year; three prospect visits for the year; nine business retention and expansion activities – 31 for the year; seven market research requests for the quarter – 30 for the year.

- Several construction projects have been or are nearing completion in the Craighead Technology Park. Those mentioned were Spirit Fitness, Camfil APC, FedEx Distribution Center, the Hytrol Distribution Center, and Nestle.
- JEDC purchased 412 acres adjacent to the Craighead Technology Park last year and has rezoned 237 of those acres from R-1 to I-2.
- Burns & McDonnell is completing a master plan for the development of the new acreage in the Craighead Technology Park (CTP) South. The plan will include recommendations for rail and road placement and infrastructure development.
- Young noted there is interest by industry in developing a food truck park in the Craighead Technology Park. This would be a nice amenity to add to the park. Information is being gathered at this time.
- The My Jonesboro Jobs website was redesigned last year with new technology and an updated refresh. The site was launched September 14, 2022, and has had a good response from both employers and job seekers. To date, there are approximately 30 companies using the site and 700-800 jobs listed on the site on any given day. A marketing campaign was launched to raise awareness and drive people to the site through ads and geofencing. They would like this to be the site Arkansas State promotes with their students.
- Be Pro Be Proud's Draft Day will be held at Nettleton High School April 10-12. Students from the region will have the opportunity to meet with and interview employers for jobs after graduation. To prepare for the event students take a YouScience aptitude assessment to ascertain their areas of interest and learn to create resumes and do mock interviews.

General discussion followed. There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:45 am on motion by Harold Perrin, second by John Freeman.

Respectfully submitted,



Al M. Heringer III, Chairman

MINUTES

Northeast Arkansas Industrial Development Commission

November 1, 2022 - 8:00 am

Al M. Heringer III, Chairman, Presiding

Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce

Present:

Murray Benton
Al Heringer III

Harold Perrin
John Freeman

Mark Young

Chairman Heringer called the meeting to order and minutes from the August 2, 2022, meeting were approved as mailed on motion by John Freeman, second by Harold Perrin. Motion carried.

Financial Report

Mark Young provided the financial report, noting that funding from the city and county has been received for 2022. A payment of \$154,591 was made to the Jonesboro Economic Development Corporation to make a final land payment to City Water & Light. NAIDC's net income as of September 30, was \$253,729.

Economic Report

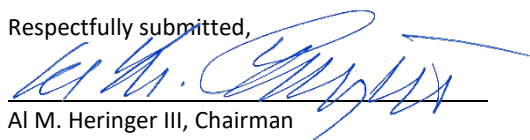
Young continued with the economic report. Economic activity has slowed just a bit over the quarter due in part to rising interest rates and mid-term elections. Young reported eight inquiries, one prospect visit, nine business retention and expansion projects, and six market research requests.

- The prospect visit went well, with labor availability and the floodplain being of high interest.
- Young is working with a local company who has a project that has been put on hold due to interest rates. Clawback provisions are in place in case the project does not proceed.
- The Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC) received a grant from the federal Economic Development Administration to help with planning grants. Jonesboro was one of five communities selected to receive a planning grant for the Craighead Technology Park South property. The firm of Burns McDonnell is developing a master plan for the property that will include planning, development, and infrastructure improvements. This grant has a value of \$50,000.
- Camfil is finishing up construction on their facility with plans to be moved in by the first of the year.
- Craighead County was recertified as an ACT Work Ready Community.
- Over 200 students participated in ASUN's Manufacturing Day activities, which included touring several companies.
- Planning for Draft Day 2023 is underway. Over 150 students had one-on-one interviews with companies at this year's Draft Day.
- Over 30 teachers from six different school districts have signed up to participate in this year's Teacher Externship program. This program is a collaboration with our manufacturers where teachers are immersed in the manufacturing environment for three days. They can then take this knowledge back to the classroom. To date, 125-130 teachers have participated.
- AEDC published an Arkansas economic development guide book this year. Young was interviewed in an article about food companies and he was able to talk about Jonesboro, our infrastructure, and how we have grown.
- Jonesboro Unlimited recently assisted East Arkansas Good Roads and Vice-Chairman of the Highway Commission Alec Farmer in hosting the Highway Commission and staff from the Arkansas Department of Transportation in Jonesboro to celebrate the completion of the Connecting Arkansas Program (CAP).

General discussion followed on promoting the good things that are happening around our city and state. Two concerns raised were the difficulty in obtaining a business permit and the sidewalk ordinance. Young has met with the Mayor about these issues.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:50 am.

Respectfully submitted,



Al M. Heringer III, Chairman

MINUTES

Northeast Arkansas Industrial Development Commission

August 2, 2022 – 8:00 am

Al M. Heringer III, Chairman, Presiding

Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce

Present:

Murray Benton
Al Heringer III

Brent Stidman
Dr. Len Frey

Mark Young

Chairman Heringer called the meeting to order and minutes from the May 3, 2022, meeting were approved as mailed on motion by Murray Benton, second by Len Frey. Motion carried.

Financial Report

Brent Stidman distributed financial statements for the six months ended June 30, 2022. The checking account balance was \$67,444.34 as of June 30th. There is no income to date this year, but funding is expected from the city and county. Stidman noted there is approximately five months of expenses remaining in the checking account. He also presented an engagement letter from HCJ to confirm and formalize the quarterly financial services to the NAIDC. Motion by Len Frey, second by Murray Benton to accept the financials as reported. Motion carried.

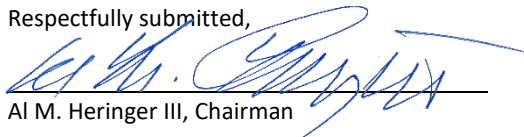
Economic Report

Mark Young stated that NAIDC's funding request would go before the Jonesboro City Council this date. He noted that the East Arkansas Good Roads Association didn't make a funding request for 2022, as they have in the past. This will be the final land payment to City Water & Light, paying off the loan with them.

- Funding resources are being sought through various sources for infrastructure development in Craighead Technology Park South.
- Young had 17 inquiries, 13 business retention and expansion activities, and 17 market research requests year-to-date.
- 237 acres have been rezoned to I-2 in the Craighead Technology Park South site.
- Blue Oval, a project in Western Tennessee, recently announced a Ford F-150 electric vehicle facility. The project will employ 5,600 people. Steven Lamm recently attended an automotive show in Traverse City, Michigan, to be making connections with automotive supplier companies.
- TekStarz Summer Manufacturing Camp was held in June and the campers learned about manufacturing and the careers available to them. Hytrol Conveyor Company hosted the Parent Reception.
- Hytrol broke ground on a new warehouse facility.
- Colson is about 80% moved into their new facility.
- Spirit Fitness is putting the finishing touches on their new 150,000 SF facility.
- Camfil APC will be finishing up construction in the third quarter of this year.
- Nestlé is moving forward with their \$100 million expansion.
- Jonesboro Unlimited has a branding initiative underway for Jonesboro and a survey has been sent out to gather input. A consultant has been commissioned to drive that initiative forward.
- The State Chamber and Arkansas Business is promoting a "Coolest Product Made in Arkansas" contest. Jonesboro had two products that made the top 16 – a 16 oz. stout bottle from Arkansas Glass and Cheetos. Cheetos made the next round of eight. The final four will be voted on in September, with the winner being announced in October.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,



Al M. Heringer III, Chairman