GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Zoom

Wednesday, February 17, 2021
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Compiled by:
Commissioner’s Office
Georgia Department of Economic Development
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Georgia Department of Economic Development
Board Meeting – February 17, 2021

Pursuant to notice duly given, the Board of Directors of the Georgia Department of Economic Development met on February 17, 2021, 2:08 pm, via Zoom.

Attending Board Members

1. Scott Blackstock
2. David Belle Isle
3. Jake Carter
4. Dennis Chastain
5. Drew Ellenburg
6. Jaclyn Dixon Ford
7. Ron Garrard
8. Larry Hanson
9. Randy Hatcher
10. Allen Hodges
11. Garnett Johnson
12. Eric Johnson
13. Mitch Malcom
14. Jay Neely
15. Mulham Shbeib
16. Mat Swift
17. Steve Syfan
18. June Wood

Chairman Jay Neely called the GDEcD Board Meeting to order at 2:08 pm. He introduced June Wood as the new Vice Chair of the Board and Dennis Chastain as the new Secretary of the Board. He also reminded the members that the meeting was being recorded and welcomed the media that was on the call.

Chairman Neely then called for a motion to vote on the minutes from the November 2020 meeting.

- Motion to approve by Randy Hatcher, Seconded by Larry Hanson
- Approved 16-0

Chairman Neely called on Andrew Capezzuto, General Counsel – GDEcD, to present a resolution to be voted on by the Board. The roll was called for the vote.

Resolution 1 | Savannah Trade Center Easements (Chatham County)

- Motion to approve by Eric Johnson, Seconded by Larry Hanson
- Approved 18-0

Next, Chairman Neely spoke regarding the role of a GDEcD Board member. He said that a member is an ambassador on behalf of the Department because they know the community and can be invaluable to the Department by getting the word out about what we do. There is all kinds of help that comes from the Department in such areas as small business, etc. You should all let your community know the good news that the Department has to share. As members, you can also help connect the Department with people needing assistance and speak to the different groups such as chambers of commerce, Kiwanis, etc. regarding what GDEcD does. The Department is happy to help with talking points and give you materials that can be customized for your area so that you can “preach the gospel”.
It is also very important for you to collect information from your community and pass it along to the Department. Information such as when a company in your area is considering expansion is very helpful to get to the Department so that they can reach out to the company and offer assistance. He said that the members are the eyes and ears of the Department and needs to always pass along the support that can be offered to the community. The business communities do not understand what the Department does and have no idea all of the things that they can offer support no. Keep the Department’s mission moving forward and pass along what you hear in these meetings.

Chairman Neely called on Pat Wilson, Commissioner – GDEcD, to present the Commissioner’s Report and to introduce the speakers for the day.

While our time together at the office and at visits, trade shows, other events around the state and world have been limited over the last year, our team has probably never been more in tune with each other and the needs of the people we serve here in the state.

There has been more change in the last year than any of us could have imagined as we entered 2020, and this has led to new opportunities.

You’ll hear more today from GDEcD about the ways we have adapted and are planning for the future.

While Georgia’s business community really stepped up to help get folks back to work, provide our state with PPE, develop, distribute, and inform the public about vaccines – we’ve also been proud that one of Georgia’s best-selling points and strong suits has also held strong.

Our state has listened and been responsive to the needs of our diverse business community.

As one of the first states to reopen its economy, Governor Kemp has managed to protect both lives and livelihoods and stave off a significant amount of economic hardship that states like California and New York have been experiencing.

Under the leadership of Governor Kemp, Georgia cemented its position as the No. 1 state for business for a record-breaking eighth year in row.

The state’s rapid and rational coronavirus response has been noticed by companies both domestically and internationally, and we’re continuing to leverage this to create jobs and opportunities for Georgians.

Over the summer, the legislature passed a measure to encourage more PPE production in our state to make sure we can rely on our own Georgia businesses – and they made adjustments to the commuter tax credit – since a lot of employees weren’t commuting farther than their kitchen table, as we worked to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and flatten the curve.
The Governor also worked with the legislature last session to pass SB359, the Georgia COVID-19 Pandemic Business Safety Act, to Georgia businesses and employers from COVID-19 liability. And I’m sure as you all know, this session, Rep. Trey Kelley is pursuing HB 112 to extend that COVID protection into 2022, and the House voted last week to support it.

Joshua Stephens, our Government Relations and Policy Director, will give a more comprehensive update on the General Assembly during his presentation in a bit.

In economic development, there is no sign of slowing down as our current pipeline is incredibly strong, and we’re seeing an increase in the number of large projects.

We see growth in:

- Transportation and logistics (had net growth in 2020 with the rise of e-commerce),
- Fintech,
- Film and Entertainment,
- Health IT,
- Electrification infrastructure,
- Investment in OEM, and
- Food sector and data center investment.

Georgia’s strong reputation for economic development and in business remains intact, and we plan to use that as we push forward and aim higher.

Georgia’s diversity of talent, our regions and economic base are all assets that make Georgia attractive to industry.

Deputy Commissioner Scott McMurray will get into more specifics about recent months and the first half of fiscal year 2021, but during that time:

- Job creation is up 40% compared to the same time last year,
- With investments up nearly 50%.

We’re seeing existing industries choose to expand their operations in Georgia, and an increase in foreign direct investments over the same time period last year.

According to the Georgia Department of Labor, the state finished out 2020 with a workforce of more than 4.5 million jobs, more than doubling the monthly jobs number from November to December.

Looking ahead, mobility and solar are priorities to help us seize changes that are coming.

The Department is going to continue to prioritize recruiting the automotive industry with a focus on the electric vehicle industry.
We’ve already been working on attracting the entire electric vehicle supply chain to transition those automotive jobs as the industry undergoes more change in the next 20 years than in the previous 100.

As the center of the southeast automotive corridor with close proximity to the region’s automotive original equipment manufacturers, Georgia is positioned to capitalize on these trends.

Our Trade team continues to play a critical role for helping Georgia businesses – mostly small and medium-sized – reach new markets.

You heard during the last meeting from some of our team – and Governor Kemp just announced this week that Georgia ranked in the Top Ten U.S. exporting states in 2020 for the first time.

These efforts are complemented by our work to ensure that we have the educated workforce ready for the jobs of the 21st century.

As the state inches back towards full employment, we are working to make smart connections to put people to work, talking to our businesses to find out what skills they need, and turning around to look at industries that are still suffering – such as the arts – where work remains.

Pat then called on Lee Thomas, Deputy Commissioner of Film, Music, & Digital Entertainment.

Lee spoke about the film industry during the 70s and 80s and how we lost businesses in the 90s when Canada started giving incentives.

- 2003 we scouted and landed the Ray Charles movie but Louisiana passed incentives and we lost it
- 2005 - Georgia passed incentives
- 2008 - there were revisions to the incentives
- 2012 - came more revisions
- 2021 - housekeeping to the incentives
- March 2020, business shut down
- May 2020 - we opened back up some and were the first in the US to open up with safety guidelines.
- June 2020 – under the guidelines set by Governor Kemp, some of Georgia’s biggest companies returned. Having sound stage space allowed us to get back quickly. We continue to get new sound stages.

Georgia has good incentives, crews, cheaper infrastructure, diverse locations, and ease of access to Hartsfield International Airport.
Next, Pat called on Tina Lilly, Grants Program Director – Georgia Council for the Arts.

The GCA moved to GDEcD in 2011 under Governor Deal who thought that it would be a good fit in the Department because of the synergies with the jobs that the arts create and small businesses. The GCA is funded through state funds and the National Endowment for the Arts.

**Georgia’s nonprofit industry**

- 30,000 jobs
- $2 billion in annual economic impact

**Georgia’s creative industries**

- 200,000 jobs
- $62.5 billion in annual economic impact
Georgia Council for the Arts

FY21 Grant Totals

<table>
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<th>PROJECT</th>
<th>PARTNER</th>
<th>ARTS ED</th>
<th>VIBRANT COMMUNITIES</th>
<th>CULTURAL FACILITIES</th>
<th>RESILIENCY (CARES Act)</th>
<th>FY21 TOTALS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Eligible Applicants</td>
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<td>102</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>156</td>
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</tbody>
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FY21 Grants: 288 grants, $2.3 million, grants and/or GCA funded services were provided to 150 counties, funded programs will reach approximately 5 million people

These are GCA’s grant programs:

- Partner Grants = operating money for arts organizations
- Project Grants = supports arts projects for non-profits, government entities, libraries, schools and colleges
- Arts Education Grants = grants for arts programs for K-12 students
- Vibrant Communities Grants- grants for arts projects in counties in which no entity received a Partner, Project or Arts Education Grant
- Cultural Facilities Grants- grants for arts organizations for the renovation, preservation, repair or acquisition of an arts facility
- CARES Act Grants- grants awarded for COVID relief

GCA grants support activities such as:

- Drug rehabilitation activities
- Veterans – PTSD arts activities
- Clowns perform in 10 hospitals
- Classes for children in homeless shelters and the community

Programs

- Governor’s Awards for the Arts & Humanities
- Poetry Out Loud
- Art of Georgia
- Inspired Georgia book
- Teaching Artist Roster – K-12
- Creative Healing – in hospitals and DJJ/Department of Corrections
The Out of Hand Theatre play, commissioned by GCA for middle and high schools, will be performed as a pilot in five schools and educates students on human trafficking.

Pat then called on Scott McMurray, Deputy Commissioner – Global Commerce.

The Global Commerce team seeks to increase jobs and investment through locating and expanding companies, as well as growing small businesses.

- **Statewide Project Managers**
  - Focus on recruiting companies
  - Teams with in-depth knowledge on strategic industries

- **Existing Industry and Regional Recruitment**
  - Focus on expansions and new companies focused on a single region
  - Twelve service regions where the project managers work and live

- **International Offices**
  - Focus on FDI
  - Offices in eight markets across the globe
    - Europe
    - S. Korea
    - Japan
    - China
    - Israel
    - Ireland & UK
    - Brazil
    - Canada

- **Small Business**
  - Focus on growing and supporting small businesses
  - Connect small businesses to resources that help take them to the next level

- **GRAD**
  - Focus on preparing Georgia sites for prospects
  - Markets sites as ready for development

- **Georgia Made**
Focus on supporting the industries that make a wide variety of products across the state.

Governor Kemp announced in January that a record 16,000 jobs had been created in the first half of FY 21.

**FIRST HALF FY21**

- **NEW JOBS CREATED IN EVERY REGION**
- **16,000 NEW JOBS**
- 40% increase from July - Dec. 2019
- **$6B TOTAL INVESTMENTS**
- 47% increase from July - Dec. 2019
- **163 NEW PROJECTS STATEWIDE**

November 19, 2020 to January 29, 2021

- 49 projects located
- $1,792,666,978 investment
- 4,856 jobs created
- Locations in all twelve regions of the state

Next up was Mary Waters, Deputy Commissioner – International Trade

- 2020 trade numbers have just become available and will be shared by the Governor in a press release
- Georgia is one of the top 10 states for export
- Exports have had a slight decline (-6%) which is still less than the US decline (-13%)
- Focus on small business resources and tools
  - Grow international customer base – EIRR exclusive
  - Help build the pipeline
  - 90% of small business exporters in Georgia have less than 500 employees
- 1-100 employees is where we see the bulk of our work – the businesses that need us the most - 80% of the businesses that use our services fall into this size category
  - Georgia has a network of international reps that are crucial to us – our “boots on the ground”
  - In FY20 our team supported exports to more than 52 unique countries
  - Our international teams wear a lot of hats and cover a lot of ground
    - They help companies make decisions, they help them expand, they help them identify vetted buyers and partners
  - Our international footprint is a two-way flow, facilitating exports and foreign direct investment
- New tools
  - Go Global Georgia provides reimbursement grants for eligible, pre-approved export activities:
    - Launched in October 2020 – runs through September 2021
    - Design and translation of international marketing materials
    - Export training courses
    - International trade show costs (virtual and in-person)
    - International travel costs
    - Participation in U.S. Commercial Service programs and services
    - Website localization services

**Engagement by Company Size**

- 1-19 employees: 53%
- 20-100 employees: 29%
- 101+ employees: 18%

82% of trade team export assistance went to SME’s with fewer than 100 employees.
Pat then called on Abby Turano, Deputy Commissioner - Marketing, Communications, & International Engagement. He explained that GDEcD is the marketing agency for the state of Georgia and our marketing division helps all of the state agencies.

The Marketing, Communications & International Engagement division supports GDEcD’s seven operating divisions in their marketing needs. Merged with the International Relations division last year.

Responsible for helping the teams start with marketing strategy and messaging, and then proceeding from there with:

- Advertising campaigns
- Brochures and collateral
- Events and Trade show support
- Video Production
- 3 huge websites (Georgia.org, exploregeorgia.org, gaarts.org)
- Social Media
- Press & Media Relations
- Announcements & Releases
- Articles & OpEds
- Overseas Missions
- Consular Communication
- Welcoming Delegations
Creative Services
We fulfill an enormous variety of graphic needs with a colorful, crisp and clean, emphasis on talking and relationships, lots of movement. Some of the things that are handled by our creative team include:

- print ads
- product media support/graphics
- pop-up banners
- Year in Review notebook
- business Incentives brochure;
- graphics for webinars
- design a variety of logos

Note: The Year in Review is available online on Georgia.org. I encourage you to check that out. Arranged by region this year, so you can see a snapshot of the variety of ED projects and activities in each region across the state. Good stories for talking points.

Digital and Interactive Marketing
The bulk of our marketing efforts obviously shifted toward the digital space in the past year. The kinds of things this team handles -

You might see some of our ads on LinkedIn – we are focusing on LI this year – really emerging as the business-focused social media platform, we have learned that a huge percentage of our target audiences for many of our divisions and campaigns is active on LI.

You should be signed up to receive our monthly wrap-up newsletter called We Speak Businesses (we have quite a few other breakout options – Trade, Tourism, COIs). And it’s worth noting that since we invested in SEO and SEM last year, looking at second quarter FY21:

- Visits to Georgia.org were up 108% year-over-year
- Newsletter sign-ups and contact form submissions, which are some of the metrics we use to gauge involvement, are both up as well – 20% and 40%, respectively. Which means we had 550 people sign up for the newsletter in that period.

Communications
Many of you already know Marie Gordon, our Director – she and our Comms specialist turn out a phenomenal amount of high quality content. In this quarter, they issued 35 releases, 22 blog posts, media pitches and responses, interviews, talking points, and social media posts. Crafting a strong position and presence for the state.

We really look to our Board Members to amplify this messaging, whether that’s through a presentation, jumping into a conversation on social media or LinkedIn, or sharing a blog post – we know people look to you as leaders in the state, and we want to equip you with these stories.
International Relations
Part of the Marketing, Communications & International Engagement division, International Relations team cultivates and expands Georgia’s international relationships.

- Oversees communications and activities – we are up to 70 foreign governments with representation here in GA (that’s 26 CGs, about 44 HC’s, and a handful of standalone trade offices)
- Manages Governor’s trade & investment missions; welcomes international delegations and dignitaries; and coordinates international efforts among state departments and agencies.
- 2020-2021: Pivot to vital information sharing, research support, company support for travel disruptions, and visa restrictions.

Pat introduced David Nuckolls, Executive Director – Centers of Innovation, next. David is the newest director of the COIs just taking on the role in December. They are a unique team to Georgia and a great economic development asset.

David said that the COIs have many roles, but in a nutshell, they help companies find resources. They are the connection point. David showed a video where the COIs helped a Georgia grown business, Sweet Grass Dairy, with an immediate need. We continue to provide ongoing support to them.

“As a small business owner, you’re the CEO, COO, R&D, Production Manager, and HR. Having the ability to plug-in to the Centers of Innovation who are experts in these areas, there’s tremendous opportunity for advancing your business and helping you compete.” - Jessica Little, Sweet Grass Dairy

The mission of the Centers of Innovation is to foster unique interactions with Georgia businesses to help them clear the path to innovations and growth.

Focus on building and supporting the state’s strategic industries

- Aerospace (Macon)
- Agriculture Technology (Tifton)
- Energy Technology (Atlanta)
- Information and Creative Technologies (Atlanta and Augusta)
- Logistics (Atlanta and Savannah)
- Manufacturing (Atlanta)
- David also gave mention to the upcoming Georgia Logistics Summit which would be taking place virtually. This year’s Summit will focus on the pandemic’s effect on supply chains and logistics, and issues affecting trucking as a result. Registration and sponsorship information can be found at www.galogisticssummit.com.

Next up, Pat introduced Mark Jaronski, Deputy Commissioner – Tourism. Pat said that Mark was a COVID hire that came to Georgia with more than 25 years of tourism experience and a Disney pedigree.

MISSION: We inspire and promote travel to and within Georgia.
GOAL: Work closely with partners statewide to expand market share and increase the annual economic impact of Georgia tourism by:

- Growing visitation
- Increasing visitor spending

Georgia Tourism by the Numbers 2019

- 2019 saw an all-time high - $69 billion impact
- Since the end of March 2020, we’re down $12 billion vs 2019 with a net loss of 53,000 jobs in leisure/hospitality jobs
- Leadership helped us keep Georgia open, capture market share from the smaller population of travelers who were willing to do so.
- We kept our efforts focused on digital marketing/ads to ensure maximum efficiency and flexibility during a year that required everyone to be nimble and reactive to the fluid situation.
- Web traffic has been the highest it has been in five years
- By the end of 2020, Georgia most frequently ranked 6th in the nation in terms of weekly travel spending
• Conventions were hit hard, and are expected to take longer to come back that leisure... road travel will return faster than air, domestic sooner than international.
• Georgia having such diverse tourism assets was very helpful
• Recovery and growth ahead with the Governor’s support of $1 million passed by the legislature to help the industry with recover marketing efforts
• We are passing this incremental funding on to destination marketing organizations, CVBs and tourism authorities throughout the state that saw much more severe cuts to their budgets and staff due to the impact that Covid had on lodging taxes (where these organizations derive the majority of their operating funds).

Pat called on Joshua Stephens, Director – Government Relations & Policy, for the Legislative Update. Josh has been at the Capitol taking care of business during the Legislative Session which is currently still in Session.

Joshua started his presentation with an overview of the current membership of the Georgia Legislature:

Currently, the Georgia Legislature consists of:

• House of Representatives: 103 Republicans; 76 Democrats
• Senate: 34 Republicans; 22 Democrats
• Representative Ron Stephens is the Chairman of the House Economic Development and Tourism Committee
• Senator Bruce Thompson is the Chairman of the Senate Economic Development and Tourism Committee

This Session (so far) has been very active:

• Bills Introduced
  o House – 500
  o Senate – 200
• Compared to last Session (two years)
  o House - 1,256
  o Senate – 533

Active legislation of note:

• HB 304 – Georgia Made medication manufacturer Act – tax credit/bonus credit to pharmacies, medical supplies in the Ways & Means committee
• HB 398 – Mega Project Tax Credit – 1,800 – 4,500 jobs; regional significance – sunset
Georgia Department of Economic Development  
Board Meeting – February 17, 2021

Chairman Neely stated that the key takeaway from this meeting is that 10-11 months ago Governor Kemp was taking flack for keeping Georgia open and now, 1 year later, Georgia is a success story. Georgia has strong leadership, is fiscally sound, and has a great climate.

He adjourned the meeting at 4:17 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

[Signature]

Jay Neely  
Board Chairman

[Signature]

Dennis Chastain  
Board Secretary

Attachments

Resolution | Savannah-Georgia Convention Center Authority Resolution
RESOLUTION
OF THE
BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

I. WHEREAS, the Department of Economic Development (the “Department”) was created as a department of the State of Georgia (the “State”) in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 50-7-1 et seq.;

II. WHEREAS FURTHER, the Board of Economic Development (the “DEcD Board”) is charged with the direction, supervision and policy setting for the Department pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 50-7-3, 50-7-4 and 50-7-8;

III. WHEREAS FURTHER, pursuant to an act of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia (Act No. 65, 2019 Regular Session, H.B. 525) (the “Act”), various titles of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated were amended so as to dissolve the Georgia International and Maritime Trade Center Authority, created by Georgia Laws 1995, p. 4499, as amended, to rename the Georgia International and Maritime Trade Center as the Savannah Convention Center, to create the Savannah-Georgia Convention Center Authority (the “Authority”), and for other purposes;

IV. WHEREAS FURTHER, the Act further declared that there exists a need for a public authority of the State to develop, operate and promote the Savannah Convention Center as a site for meetings, conventions, and tourism and other matters of economic development, growth, and commerce for the public good of the State, and therefore the Act created the Savannah-Georgia Convention Center Authority as a public corporation and instrumentality of the State in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 50-7-55 (the “Authority”);

V. WHEREAS FURTHER, O.C.G.A. § 50-7-55(v) provides that as of July 1, 2019:

A. all powers, duties, assets, real and personal property, liabilities, and indebtedness of the Georgia International and Maritime Trade Center Authority as they existed on July 1, 2019 shall be transferred to the Authority;
B. all contracts entered into by the Georgia International and Maritime Trade Center Authority as they existed on July 1, 2019 shall be transferred to the Authority;
C. all accounts of and debts owed to the Georgia International and Maritime Trade Center Authority that were outstanding on July 1, 2019, shall also be transferred to the Authority;

VI. WHEREAS FURTHER, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 50-7-55(t), the Authority is assigned to the Department for administrative purposes only;

VII. WHEREAS FURTHER, the Authority is completing an expansion project which requires the granting of an easement to the City of Savannah ("City") over .38 of an acre, an easement to Georgia Power over .27 of an acre, and an easement to Atlanta Gas Light over .28 of
an acre. These easements will be used to provide and maintain utilities for the Authority and the expansion project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THAT:

The DEcD Board hereby approves and authorizes the Authority to pursue and grant the easements identified above to the City, Georgia Power, and Atlanta Gas Light, for the benefit of the Authority to maintain, replace, and repair the utility system on the expansion; and that DEcD Staff shall prepare the appropriate requests to the State Properties Commission seeking its approval of, and assistance with, the granting of said easements in accordance with applicable laws, policies and procedures.

This Resolution is hereby adopted this 17th day of February, 2021.

John J. Neeley, III
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ATTEST:

Dennis Chastain
SECRETARY
BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT