



**Minutes of Meeting**

**December 17, 2024**

Pursuant to the notice, The Development Authority of Cobb County met on December 17, 2024 at 11:00 am.

<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>SEYFARTH SHAW</b>	<b>GUESTS</b>
Clark Hungerford	Kevin Brown	Dana Johnson, SelectCobb
Carol Riley	Aaron Hambrick	Lindsey Burruss, Cobb Travel & Tourism
Donna Rowe	Dan McRae	Sabrina Wright, Cobb County Gov't
Jason Shepherd		Andrew Egan, Kutak Rock
Karen Hallacy	<b>DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY STAFF</b>	Amy Selby, Cobb Chamber
Smith Peck	Nelson Geter	Dr. Jim Cianca, Mount Bethel
Courtney Knight	Amanda Blanton	Rob Patti, Mount Bethel
	Randy Hyde	

Chairman Hungerford called the meeting to order.

**Minutes:** Board members reviewed the minutes from the November 19 meeting. Ms. Rowe made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Riley seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved. (7 yes – 0 no)

**Financial Report:** Board members reviewed the financials for December. Mr. Shepherd made a motion to approve the financial report as presented. Ms. Hallacy seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously approved. (7 yes – 0 no)

**Mount Bethel Christian Academy:** Mr. Andrew Egan, Kutak Rock, represented the project. He shared that Mount Bethel Christian Academy is seeking approval for a \$50M inducement resolution to finance improvements at the school’s Marietta campus. Dr. Jim Cianca, Head of School, and Mr. Rob Patti, Board of Trustees, further explained that funding will support the Upper School campus and allow them to move forward on the capital improvement project. Dr. Ciana shared that the school serves a wide range of families in the local area. Initially, Mount Bethel was open to students in kindergarten, but they quickly grew to include students up to 8th grade. In 2014, they purchased an additional 33 acres to develop the Upper School. They started with just 9 students, and today they house 200 students. Additionally, they have built an athletic facility with a turf field and STEM labs. To accommodate their growing student population, they plan to move the Middle School to the existing Upper School and build out a new Upper School with dining facilities and gym. No additional debt will be added due to very generous donors and grants from local foundations that support education in Georgia. Mr. Patti shared that the school is operating on a \$13M budget for this year with a projected increase of \$1.2 - \$1.5M with increased enrollment upon completion of the expansion. Renderings were provided to the board displaying a 60,000 SF building with 16 full-sized classrooms, 4 to 5 flex classrooms, and some specialty classrooms to be constructed. There are currently 135 employees on payroll and the expansion is expected to create an additional 16 new jobs in the next 2-3 years. During the discussion, board members expressed concerns that the project had not yet been approved by the Board of Commissioners and was being prematurely presented to the Development Authority. With this, Mr. Shepherd made a motion to defer consideration to the January 7 meeting. Ms. Rowe seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved. (7 yes – 0 no)

**All Star Game 2025 Update and Funding Request:** Mr. Dana Johnson of SelectCobb, Ms. Lindsey Burrus of Cobb Travel & Tourism, and Ms. Amy Selby of the Cobb Chamber presented a comprehensive economic development marketing plan to the board. Last month, Mr. Johnson previewed the project's anticipated scope. Since then, the team has conducted a detailed analysis of projected expenses, categorized as follows: Marketing Materials: \$20,000; Advertising (print, digital, and social media): \$68,500; Marketing Events/Experiences: \$10,000; Partner Reception with Celebrity Softball Game Tickets: \$14,000 (offset costs for 40 partners shared among entities); and Red Carpet Tour with Georgia Department of Economic Development and Metro Atlanta Chamber: \$20,000. Total: \$132,500

The initiative leverages local and regional advertising, including specialized placements in local magazines and targeted marketing at airports. Social media efforts will utilize geofencing and specialized campaigns to maximize reach. The partnership between SelectCobb, Cobb Travel & Tourism, and the Cobb Chamber ensures tourism-specific messaging is complemented by broader economic development-focused marketing.

To enhance impact, Google Analytics will track landing page performance, while social media platforms will provide insights on impressions, engagement, and other key metrics.

Mr. Johnson emphasized that this initiative represents a unique opportunity to elevate Cobb County's brand on a larger stage, generating valuable leads and reinforcing the county's position as a destination for economic growth and development.

Following discussion, Mr. Shepherd made a motion to allocate \$44,166 to market the All Star Game in 2025.

Mr. Smith seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved. (7 yes – 0 no)

At this time, members reviewed the agenda and determined that it should be revised to properly reflect the subject matter being discussed in executive session. Ms. Rowe made a motion to amend the agenda to state a potential legal matter, not financial, would be discussed in executive session. Ms. Hallacy seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved. (7 yes – 0 no)

Following the amendment, Chairman Hungerford made a motion to enter executive session to discuss a potential legal matter. Ms. Hallacy seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved. (7 yes – 0 no)

After discussion, Ms. Hallacy made a motion to exit from the executive session. Ms. Rowe seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved. (7 yes – 0 no) Chairman Hungerford shared there is nothing to report, and no action required from executive session.

**Legal Counsel Update:** Mr. Dan McRae shared that the General Assembly is presently inactive. He also shared that another draw was received from Lockheed.

**Executive Director Updates:** Mr. Geter thanked Seyfarth Shaw for hosting lunch and reminded all members to mark their calendars for the January 7 meeting. He also mentioned that Mr. Johnson is coordinating with other authorities in the area to host the two-hour training sessions at the Chamber and is working to schedule these sessions with Mr. McRae's office. Additionally, Ms. Riley will undergo the required eight-hour basic training session. Chairman Hungerford suggested aligning training sessions with scheduled meetings for convenience. Mr. Geter provided updates on several developments. He announced that Arylessence will close this week, and the KSU transaction is progressing through the necessary processes, with an expected close by the end of the first quarter of 2025. He also highlighted a significant project, South Spring Development, located at the former Emerson site. This \$600M development includes \$410M allocated for the residential component. A Class A office tower and two-story retail space totaling \$190 million will be included in the bond transaction with the Authority. Developers are working with GDOT on intersections and right-of-way improvements for the site. Mr. Geter noted that activity levels have been average for the year, heavily influenced by interest rates. He added that a potential rate cut at the end of the month could spur additional activity.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.