

**HENRY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 04, 2026**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Henry County Development Authority (HCDA) was held in the conference room at 125 Westridge Industrial Blvd., McDonough, GA 30253.

**Board members present:** Charles Marshall, David Crow, Pierre Clements, Eddie Ausband, Cynthia Andrews and George Patterson

**Staff present:** Sharon Hill, Executive Director; Susan Wise, Manager of Business Development; Angela Hall, Manager, Business Retention & Expansion, Abigail Watkins, Communications Specialist and Cherie Simon, Executive Assistant

**Others present:** Rod Meadows, Legal Counsel, Meadows, Macie & Morris, P.C.

**II. ROLL CALL / QUORUM / NOTICE OF MEETING**

Chair Pierre Clements called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

Chair Clements confirmed a quorum was present and verified that meeting notices were properly posted.

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Mr. Meadows and Ms. Hill requested the agenda be modified to allow the Board to include an executive session to discuss updates on existing real estate projects.**

*Mr. Patterson moved to approve the agenda with the requested executive. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ausband and passed unanimously.*

**IV. GUEST PRESENTATION**

**Mr. Richard Andrews, Vice President of Economic Development of Southern Crescent Technical College**, provided an update on the collaborative efforts on workforce development between the Development Authority and Southern Crescent Technical College.

The college is expanding workforce training through partnerships with Luxottica, Nexus, and NewCold, with active apprenticeships, a growing pipeline, and strong placement outcomes (12/15 students historically, 7 current students). Luxottica has 3 active apprentices and 10 more launching in April, while Nexus aims to develop 60–90 new technicians. An 8-week pre-apprenticeship program provides OSHA-10 certification and training in electrical, motor control, and mechanical skills.

STEM and youth initiatives are increasing early career exposure, with SkillsUSA state winners advancing to nationals, new VEX Robotics clubs and competitions, and Summer 2026 programs including camps and employer-connected senior experiences. Continuing education includes Excel

training for county staff and 30–40 quarterly leadership courses, alongside public safety training support for police, EMS, and fire through PSAP grant funding.

**Mr. Joe Henning, President of the Henry County Chamber of Commerce** shared the Chamber's Annual and Tourism Reports with the board and introduced Thriving Henry Leaders, a new initiative supporting C-suite executives' wellness and mental health by addressing leadership isolation and strengthening peer connections.

The 8th Annual Women's Empowerment Summit will be held March 5th, 2026 at the Merle Manders Conference Center, where two \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded. An update on the FLEX Program noted its final round will take place Friday evening March 13th, 2026 at Creekside Christian Academy with the top three students presenting live.

He also announced that two participants were selected to begin the program in June.

Executive Director Sharon Hill highlighted a recent joint meeting with community leaders to reignite the Moving Henry Forward program. Ms. Hill expressed her appreciation for the collaboration and leadership support from the Chamber..

## **V. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

February 4, 2026:

*Ms. Andrews moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Patterson and passed unanimously.*

## **VI. BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

### **Pierre Clements, Chair**

Chair Clements emphasized that 2026 is focused on building strong organizational foundations, with priority on filling key roles and scaling internal capacity to better manage growing development activity.

The Authority has increased visibility through county-wide collaborations, major conferences, and government engagement, including meetings with 90% of county commissioners, county manager and county commission chair; participation in *Henry County Day at the Capitol*, and attendance at key community events to include the *South Metro Economic Development Conference*, *Piedmont Henry hard hat tour*, the *Piedmont Locust Grove Urgent Care grand opening*, the *Chamber of Commerce's Awards Gala* and the *Rosenwald School fundraiser*.

There is also a stronger emphasis on regional partnerships and benchmarking, with active collaboration in Douglasville and Hampton to share best practices, align development goals, and stay informed on economic trends, additional workforce development partnerships and broadening the score of industries locating within the County. The organization continues to focus on filling open vacancies with top talent to stabilize its infrastructure and scaling the team to better manage the high volume of "moving parts" and development opportunities currently underway.

Mr. Clements highlighted a shift toward proactive collaborations with neighboring authorities to share information and improve local outcomes.

- **Douglasville Collaboration:** He and Ms. Hill traveled to Douglasville and met with its Mayor, Board of Commissioners chair and its Economic Development Executive Director.
- **Benchmarking:** Attended the *State of the Union for Douglasville* to gain insights into state-wide trends and meet other Development Authority chairs.
- **Hampton Development Authority:** Mr. Clements and Ms. Hill attended the Development Authority's monthly meeting. Ms. Hill presented at its meeting and continues to have ongoing partnership meetings to align local development authority goals.

## VII. TREASURER'S REPORT

### **Cynthia Andrews, Treasurer**

County / Corpus / Financials – Ms. Andrews presented the financial report for the Corpus account as of January 31, 2026.

**County budget for February 28, 2026:** (based on county's July 1–June 30 fiscal year)  
There was no budget presented for county expenses because of a delay in the timing in which the budget report was received. It also included several items that were misallocated to the incorrect line items which needed to be corrected..

### **CORPUS budget:**

Monthly: \$-32,684.83; YTD: \$196,028.42 (22.82% utilization)

**CORPUS Financials as of January 31, 2026** \$3,074,811.90

Current assets: \$3,097,145.90 (Monthly income: \$22,334.00 liabilities: \$8,470.94

Total Assets: \$3,133,536.79)

*Ms. Andrews moved to approve the monthly financial Corpus report. Mr. Ausband seconded. The motion passed unanimously.*

## VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Sharon Hill, highlighted the following work of the Authority:

### **Workforce & Training (Southern Crescent)**

Southern Crescent is expanding its apprenticeship programs to better align with targeted industries, strengthening the talent pipeline for careers in automation, robotics, and engineering technology. County employees are also participating in Excel and Microsoft Office training, with additional opportunities available in soft skills and leadership development. Public safety career pathways—including EMS, fire, and law enforcement—are being supported through Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) grant funding in Henry County and surrounding jurisdictions.

### **Budget Process & Meeting Calendar**

The proposed county budget included several misallocated items, and staff did not have sufficient

time to correct them prior to the meeting. A revised version will be presented at the next session. Staff will also compile a proposed calendar of meeting dates to ensure the Board has adequate time for budget review and to better align with the schedule of the Tax Assessors.

### **Publicity & Branding**

Henry County and the Development Authority's Executive Director were featured in *Georgia Trend's* March 2026 issue, which highlighted economic development activity across South Metro counties. This recognition enhances the Authority's visibility statewide. Additionally, the new "H with the swoosh" branding has been fully implemented across all marketing materials.

### **Community Leadership Alignment**

Ms. Hill convened a countywide leadership meeting with key community partners, including representatives from the County's four municipalities, educational institutions, water and hospital authorities, and planning and zoning. The group established a shared focus on "Building Henry Together" through coordinated economic development efforts and improved communication. Meetings will be held quarterly. Ms. Hill also invited Mr. Ausband to help incorporate input from the business community into these discussions.

### **Website, Properties & Developer Outreach**

Ms. Hill reported that the Authority's website now features enhanced property listings, including photos and detailed data tailored for brokers and site selectors. An outreach event for site selectors and developers is being planned for May. The session will focus on clarifying target development priorities, addressing logistics-heavy inventory, and outlining strategies for economic diversification. County leadership and Board members will be invited to participate.

### **Tax Digest & Growth Strategy**

Expanding the County's industrial tax base remains a key priority. While increasing the share from approximately 12–13% to 40% is a long-term objective, efforts are underway to position the County for more diverse industrial growth. Data centers are being explored as part of this strategy. However, the existing concentration of logistics facilities presents challenges, as these sites are not easily converted to manufacturing uses due to infrastructure constraints. Ultimately, site viability remains driven by end-user needs.

### **C-PACE Implementation**

The Development Authority has been designated as the administrator of the new C-PACE program. Implementation will require coordination with bond counsel and the establishment of validation procedures. A plain-language overview is currently in development, with an emphasis on providing clearer, more accessible briefings early in the process.

## **IX. STAFF REPORTS**

### **Business Development: Susan Wise**

Ms. Wise provided an update on active projects and available assets.

### **Business Retention & Expansion (BRE): Angela Hall**

Ms. Hall reported on the Business Retention & Expansion 6 visits and outcomes for the month of February.

Ms. Hall provided the following summarized BRE report:

Priority is retaining and growing existing industries, regular industry visits, targeted workforce and training partnerships, better infrastructure and zoning communication, and real-time support for expansions and hiring needs.

**Marketing: Abigail Watkins**

Ms. Watkins gave an update on the following:

**Branding Refresh Completed**

The Authority has fully transitioned from the old molecule logo to the new “H with the swoosh” across all marketing materials, ensuring a consistent and modern external presence. The HCDA is featured in the March 2026 edition of the Georgia Trend South Metro issue (page 99), where our first advertisement with the new brand was shown. Our website has been enhanced with an upgraded “Available Properties” section that includes photos, specifications, and data, providing brokers, site selectors, commissioners, and the public with a clear view of current opportunities in the county.

We are also in the process of implementing the CivicServe data management system over the next nine weeks, including the entry of historical project and bond data, to improve responsiveness to inquiries and strengthen marketing and performance reporting, with core data expected to be live before the end of the fiscal year. In parallel, the Authority’s ongoing social media and digital content efforts continue to highlight workforce partnerships, project successes, and community events, reinforcing Henry County’s position as open for quality growth and investment.

**X. COMMISSION DISTRICT REPORTS**

**District 1** No report

**District 2** - Chair Clements provided the following highlights:

Following the last Development Authority meeting, Ms. Hill and Mr. Clements met with District 3 Commissioner, Mr. Dee Anglin to provide an update on Authority activities and strengthen alignment with district priorities. The discussion was transparent, positive, and supportive, with the Commissioner offering insight into District 3 concerns and reaffirming support for the Authority’s direction.

Mr. Clements attended Commissioner Neat Robinson’s Fairview town hall, which included discussions on public safety and planning and zoning. Attendance was strong—estimated at 130 constituents, the largest turnout the Chair has seen—where residents raised a range of community questions. The event was well managed and well received.

Mr. Clements and Ms. Hill met with Commissioner Robinson to further align on strategic planning and Development Authority initiatives.

**District 3** - Vice Chair Ausband provided the following highlights:

District 3 Commissioner Dee Anglin has qualified for re-election; however, opposition and the competitiveness of the race remain unclear. No additional district updates were provided, but developments will be monitored as the election cycle progresses due to potential impacts on long-term planning and policy alignment with the Development Authority.

**District 4** Mr. Patterson provided the following highlights:

District 4 Commissioner Michael Price has qualified for re-election. There is at least one announced opponent in the race at this time. No additional district updates were provided but developments will be monitored as the election cycle progresses given the potential implications for: Land use and zoning decisions, Economic development priorities, and Support for Authority initiatives within the district.

**District 5:** Ms. Andrews provided the following highlights:

District 5 Commissioner Kevin Lewis has qualified for re-election. There is at least one announced opponent in the race at this time.

Commissioner Kevin Lewis recently hosted a community forum on the Airport Area Development Plan (formerly the airport master plan). Attendance was described as modest, due in part to the early start time. The discussion centered on updates to the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) for the broader airport area, extending beyond the airport itself. Key themes included a long-term vision for residential, entertainment, mixed-use, and commercial development.

Data centers and related community concerns were openly discussed, with acknowledgment of challenges experienced by Hampton as part of the broader context. Community sentiment appears to be gradually softening toward data centers, particularly where clear legislative controls and guidelines are established regarding location, design, and overall impact.

Commissioner Lewis emphasized the county's need to expand its commercial tax digest, which currently comprises approximately 12–13% of the total tax base. He cited a long-term aspirational goal of increasing that share to as much as 40%, underscoring the importance of sustained economic development efforts. He also noted the potential role of data centers, alongside other commercial uses, in strengthening non-residential tax revenue.

The Authority's work in recruiting and retaining businesses was recognized as critical to improving the county's tax base, with District 5 identified as a key area for future growth given its proximity to the airport.

**County At-Large** - Mr. Marshall provided the following highlights:

Mr. Marshall reported on a recent "Hard Hat" tour of Piedmont Henry Hospital's \$250 million expansion, noting the project's significance as both an economic driver and a major quality-of-life enhancement for the county. A ribbon cutting is anticipated in June 2026. CEO David Kent encouraged the Authority to leverage the hospital's advanced, high-tech capabilities as a key asset in business recruitment efforts.

Mr. Marshall also summarized a discussion with Commission Chair Carlotta Harrell regarding the county's fiscal and legislative outlook. He indicated that Chair Harrell expressed concerns about budget uncertainty, noting the county's budget may not be finalized until late May or early June due to its reliance on pending state property tax legislation. Should the legislation pass, the county could face potential layoffs.

Chairwoman Harrell advised that she will be unable to attend the upcoming retreat but plans to participate in the May board meeting to ensure continued communication with the Authority.

Additionally, Mr. Marshall noted strong interest from county leadership in tracking available inventory to support developer engagement. Chair Harrell requested regular updates on building and land vacancies and inquired about the feasibility of retrofitting vacant logistics facilities for data center use.

Ms. Hill responded that she will follow up with guidance on utilizing the Authority's website tools for real-time inventory tracking. She also clarified that logistics facilities are generally unsuitable for conversion to data centers due to specialized infrastructure requirements, including robust fiber connectivity, substantial power capacity, and water resources.

Mr. Crow made a Motion to enter Executive Session at 9:09 a.m. which was seconded by Mr. Ausband and unanimously approved.

Ms. Andrews made a Motion to exit Executive Session at 10:15 a.m. which was seconded by Mr. Crow and unanimously approved.

*The Chair executed an affidavit confirming that the only matters discussed in the Executive Session were appropriate for such a session and no action was taken by the Board during the session.*

## **XII. LEGAL MATTERS**

### **MOTION TO ADOPT THE ESTOPPEL CERTIFICATE AND THE RELATED DOCUMENTS FOR MREIC LOCUST GROVE, GA, LLC (SUCCESSOR TENANT TO DRI-SP LOCUST GROVE TWO)**

Mr. Crow made the following motion: Mr. Chairman, having first ascertained that there are no conflicts of interest, I Move that the HCDA adopt the Estoppel Certificate related to the MREIC Locust Grove, GA, LLC and all of the supporting documents in connection therewith, as drafted by our General Counsel, all of which have been provided to us electronically in advance of today's meeting, and as we have discussed in this meeting.

In light of the foregoing, I further Move that the Officers of the Authority be granted the right and responsibility to execute such documents as are necessary or convenient in connection with this transaction, along with the discretion to make such minor amendments and corrections to any of the documents as might be suggested by Counsel in conjunction with the subject transaction.

*The Motion was seconded by Ms. Andrews. The Motion passed unanimously.*

## **XIII. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business to address

## **XIV. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to discuss

## **XV. ADJOURNMENT**

*Mr. Crow moved to adjourn. Ms. Andrews seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:24 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 9th, 2026.*