Regular Meeting Minutes – Development Authority of Walton County

Date: 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, February 3, 2026

Location: 132 E. Spring Street, Monroe, Georgia, 30655 - Conference room

Board Members Present: Morris Jordan (Chairman), Bettye Ray, Melinda Dally, David Thompson, John Howard, David Keener, Tom Carter

Others Present: Shane Short; John Ward; Dessa Morris; Jami Cash; Ben McDaniel; Chris Atkinson, Attorney

1) **Welcome and Call to Order** – Meeting was called to order at 8:32 a.m.

2) **Adoption of Agenda** – The Board adopted the agenda on a motion by D. Keener, second by B. Ray, which passed unanimously.

3) **Election of Officers** – The following slate of officers were approved on a motion by B. Ray, second by D. Thompson, which passed unanimously: Chair – Morris Jordan; Vice Chair – Neal Jackson; Secretary – Tom Carter.

4) **Approval of Minutes –** Minutes for the December 8, 2025, meeting were presented. The Board approved the Minutes on a motion by D. Keener, second by M. Dally, which passed unanimously.

5) **Approval of Financials –** Financials for the months ending 11/30/2025 and 12/31/2025 were presented, and were approved on a motion by D. Thompson, second by D. Keener, which passed unanimously.

6) **Old Business –**

   a) Social Circle Data Centers Update – S. Short discussed water agreements for Project Lighthouse. The Board also discussed data centers generally.

   b) 250th Fourth of July Celebration – Stars & Stripes Trail – S. Short discussed the creation of a logo, Cities and the County partnering for events. The Board approved sponsoring the County portion of the celebration at Grove Park not to exceed $10,000 from the marketing account, on motion by D. Keener, second by B. Ray, which passed unanimously.

   c) Closing of 20 acres – MGM Products – S. Short advised the transaction closed with the Authority receiving approximately $2,000,000 in proceeds.

7) **New Business –**

a) Rivian Purchase – S. Short advised that Newton County has acquired a Rivian vehicle for their representative. The Board discussed acquiring a Rivian vehicle at an approximate cost of $120,00, and the Board approved either acquiring such a vehicle or leasing such a vehicle, which is more advantageous, on motion by D. Keener, second by J. Howard, which passed unanimously. The funds should come from the appropriate account, as determined by the Authority's accountant.

b) Potential ICE Detention Facility – S. Short stated that due to this being a federally owned venture, there will be no taxes generated from the facility.

c) Social Circle Economic Development – S. Short proposed forming a group comprised of S. Short, M. Jordan, D. Thompson, and B. Ray also from the Authority to meet with City of Social Circle leaders to obtain clear direction on future economic development in the City.

d) Updated Landscaping – S. Short discussed the need for landscaping around the Authority's office. The Board approved landscaping not to exceed $4,300 on a motion by D. Thompson, second by B. Ray, which passed unanimously.

8) **Walton Works Report** – D. Morris and J. Cash discussed various initiatives and events, including Walton S.H.I.F.T., a regional job fair on March 18, 2026, and ongoing wage and benefit survey.

9) **Economic Development Report** – B. McDaniel discussed various projects and initiatives.

10) **President & CEO Report –** S. Short is speaking at an upcoming conference to promote the interests of Walton County.

11) **Announcements/Other Business** – D. Thompson began a discussion about S. Short's compensation.

12) **Executive Session** –

a) The Board went into executive session at 10:03 a.m. to discuss personnel matters on a motion by J. Howard, second by D. Keener, which passed unanimously.

b) The Board exited executive session and entered back into regular session at 10:16 a.m. on a motion by D. Keener, second by B. Ray, which passed unanimously. The Board did not take any votes in Executive Session.

The Board approved a $20,000 salary increase for Shane Short on a motion by J. Howard, second by D. Keener, which passed unanimously.

13) **Adjourn** –The Board adjourned at 10:17 a.m. on a motion by D. Keener, second by M. Dally, which passed unanimously.

Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: Monday, February 23, 2026