

Technology & Entrepreneurship Advisory Board  
Minutes – February 20, 2025

1. Call to Order: Chairman Richardson called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.
2. Roll Call: Chairman Richardson; Directors Pearson, Ritchie, Rhoades, Kennedy, and Vellidis were present with Director Boman via teleconference.

Staff: Holly Wharton – Economic Development Director. Trey Hildebrand, IT Manager, and Joni Ary – Recording Clerk.

3. Citizens with Input- None.

4. New Business

- a. Introduction of New Board Members and Staff: Chairman Richardson asked everyone to introduce themselves.

- b. Approve December 19, 2024, Minutes

Director Ritchie motioned to approve the minutes as submitted; Director Rhoades seconded all in favor and was unanimously approved.

- c. Approve December 2024 Financials

Director Rhoades motioned to approve the financials as submitted; Director Pearson seconded; all were in favor, and it was unanimously approved.

- d. New Perry Resident Survey Update

Ms. Wharton, in follow-up, stated that she had received two years' worth of data on all new Perry Residents from the Customer Service Department. Director Kennedy offered to lend her assistance in cleaning the data so that it's in a usable format to proceed with the survey.

- e. Startup Week Planning Update

Ms. Wharton advised that everything is moving forward, and registration has been launched. Ms. Wharton stated that the Kick-Off Event will be on Monday, February 24, 2025, at 5:30 pm. Ms. Wharton asked Director Pearson if he would be a moderator for the Q&A Panel on Thursday, February 27, at 5:30 pm. Director Pearson stated he would be able to participate.

- f. Speaker Series Update

Ms. Wharton stated that the first event will be held upstairs at Orleans on Carroll on March 13, 2025. Ms. Wharton advised that she has reached out to Grand Farm, and they will be the speaker for May as it will coincide with their groundbreaking time frame. Ms. Wharton stated that Grand Farm will have their groundbreaking event and will let the Board know when it is scheduled. Ms. Wharton stated that SunMark Bank will be at our next meeting to present the Board with a \$500.00 sponsorship check.

5. Staff Items

a. Digital Entrepreneurial Training update

Ms. Wharton received positive feedback from the Board, stating that the training modules were comprehensive and precise. The information captured by the training software will be returned to the Board for review. When clicking the "Need Help" button, an email is automatically sent to Ms. Wharton for assistance. Possibly looking at doing more podcasts to get more information out to the public.

6. Member Items:

Director Vellidis reviewed with the Board the upcoming Integrative Precision Agriculture Conference that will be held at the Perry Events Center on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Precision Agriculture is the practice of improving the yield of crops and using information technology to ensure crops and soil receive exactly what they have for optimal health and productivity. Director Vellidis announced that the University of Georgia and Grand Farm will partner to create a robust regional agriculture innovation ecosystem. The Grand Farm will serve as a hub for research, education, and sustainable agriculture practices and will harness the power of precision agriculture, robotics, and data analytics to increase productivity, conserve resources, and ensure food security for future generations.

7. Adjournment – there being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm.

Approved at 3.20.25 Meeting