

Laurens County Development Corporation

Board Meeting – Minutes

Tuesday – May 19, 2026

Attendees:

Shawn Bell, Jim Donahoo, Melissa Ferqueron, Jeff Field, Mayor Stellartean Jones, Brown Patterson, Steve West

Guests:

Serina Combs, Ben Jackson, Hunter Shafer – Burr & Forman

Staff:

Jon Coleman, Lynn Finley
Brandon Norris – Burr & Forman

Press:

None

Chairman Patterson called the meeting to order at 12:13 and gave the invocation.

Minutes and Financials

Quorum was not reached so all reports were for information only.

Lynn Finley provided a recap of expenses for March and April 2026. The financials were accepted as information only.

Existing Industry Update – Lynn Finley

* LCDC partnered to host the Spring Hire Summit event on April 28. This initiative connects workforce ready high school seniors with actively hiring companies. There were just over 30 students to participate and they were evenly split between the two high schools and about 15 companies. The students displayed a lot of excitement and were well prepared.

* The onsite audit was conducted on April 7 and a first draft has been received for review. That information will be presented at the July board meeting.

* The annual industry & investor golf tournament was on April 2. It was a great day of networking with individuals from across the state. Appreciation was expressed to all the supporters.

* An update was provided on Elizabeth's Foods in Fountain Inn which acquired the Rich Products facility. They are still operating with a very small team but plan to start upstaffing and running small batch production hopefully in June. It will be as soon as their air permits are approved with the State.

* Jonathan and Lynn are joining the readySC team meeting with Shamrock Technologies today to kick off their workforce recruitment project.

* The leadership at GE Clinton reached out to ask assistance in promoting two open contract positions they are having trouble filling. Lynn shared with workforce partners and now also with the LCDC Board. The position is a full time Instrument / Mechanical Technician.

* LCDC is partnering again this summer with the Regional Workforce Advisor with SC DEW in hosting a workforce initiative called "Business and Menus". Twelve educators from the region will tour a local industry, exposing them to manufacturing work opportunities, and then meet the staff of a local restaurant to learn more about working in the hospitality industry. A goal is that the educators will leave the day with a better understanding of future work opportunities which they can then share with their students. Nordson in Clinton will be our host industry.

* The Laurens County unemployment rate that last reported for March was 4.4% (compared to the state rate of 4.9%). The current SC labor participation rate is 58.9% which is slightly up over last month.

www.dew.sc.gov

Economic Development Activity – Jonathan Coleman

*Since the last board meeting there have been three new company announcements. Shamrock Technologies with a \$39.6 million investment with 57 new jobs. They are relocating their headquarters from New Jersey and going into the building they had already purchased at the Connexial Center. Suniva was a \$350 million investment with 564 new jobs and will be going into Hunter Industrial Park in the spec building. Aptiv is a tier 1 automotive supplier and make electronic sensors for automobiles. It is a \$120.8 million investment with 277 new jobs. They are locating in the Connexial Center across from Shamrock Technologies. All three are moving very quickly.

*The total amount of announcements for 2026 is now at \$675.4 million and 1,107 new jobs which is a record for Laurens County.

*Mr. Coleman went on to report that activity has slowed as summer approaches. The current number of RFIs received since the last meeting is 19 but the LCDC was only able to submit on four due to no property to meet the required needs. That brings the total RFIs received this year to 31. Of that 31, the LCDC could not submit on 21 of the requests. Mostly the reasons are no existing buildings and utility loads that cannot be achieved. There is a private developer looking at possibly building a spec building at Woodfield Industrial Park and then another considering Hunter Industrial Park, but nothing has been determined at this point.

*There are two new sites currently going through the Palmetto Certified Sites program with the state. Both are privately owned so LCDC is not paying for the certification as in the past but staff is assisting the owners through the process. One is called Innovation Park which is about 150 acres near Hwy 221 and I-385. The other borders Hunter Industrial Park and is approximately 600 acres.

*Jonathan and Lynn recently attended the Area Development Spring Consultants Forum and had the opportunity to meet with and listen to presentations from prominent site consultants along with interacting with other economic developers from across the country.

SCDOC Site Enhancement Grant Update – Jonathan Coleman:

*Mr. Coleman began with an update on the SC DOC site enhancement grant that was awarded to Laurens County at the end of 2025. Just over \$3 million of the grant was allocated for sewer upgrades which the LCWSC continues to work on in the northern part of the county. The remaining funds are to be used to purchase land along I-385 in Gray Court at exit #19 for the future improvement of that interchange. The land purchases are moving along and on May 20 LCDC will close on the first parcel, which is approximately 130 acres. Discussions are still in the works on two additional parcels to get under contract.

Executive Session:

None

Other Business:

None

With no other business the meeting to adjourn at 12:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn S. Finley