



# Annual Report

FISCAL YEAR 2016

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# Financial Statements

## Financial

An audit of the financial records by Ingram, Overholt, and Bean, P.C. for fiscal year 2016 has been completed and filed with the State of Tennessee Comptroller's Office. There were no findings in the financial audit. Copies of the complete financial statements and auditors' report and notes are available on our website at <http://makeitinnmcminn.org/about-us/reports-presentations>.

### Statement of Net Position Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2016

<b>Assets and Deferred Outflows of Resources</b>		
Current Assets:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 199,756	
Accounts Receivable	7,425	
Prepaid Insurance	3,244	
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		\$ 210,425
Capital Assets, net		16,674
Non-depreciable Property Held for Resale:		
Mt. Verd Industrial Park	1,335,533	
Athens I-75 Industrial Park	1,821,669	
North Etowah Industrial Park	457,154	
<b>Total Non-Depreciable Property Held for Resale</b>		3,614,356
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>3,841,455</b>
Deferred Outflows of Resources – Pension Deferrals		37,072
<b>Liabilities, Deferred Inflows of Resources and Net Position:</b>		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable	272	
Due to Employees	197	
Pension Contributions Payable	1,250	
Net Pension Liability	24,806	
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>26,525</b>
Deferred Inflows of Resources:		0
Net Position:		
Net Investment in Capital Assets		16,674
Unrestricted		154,416
Restricted		3,680,912
<b>Total Net Position</b>		<b>\$ 3,852,002</b>

**Statement of Support, Revenue Expenses, and Change in Net Position  
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2016**

<b>Operating Support and Revenue:</b>	
Athens Utilities Board	\$ 61,000
City of Athens	35,000
City of Etowah	5,000
Etowah Utilities Board	20,000
McMinn County	65,000
General Membership	23,150
Partners for Progress	24,500
Industrial Development Bond Board of McMinn	0
Grants:	
TN Three Star	7,417
TVA	11,000
Miscellaneous	4,358
<b>Total Operating Support and Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 256,425</b>
<b>Operating Expenses:</b>	
Communications	\$ 3,205
Salaries	115,934
Payroll taxes/fringe benefits	18,200
Business Insurance	3,975
Office Supplies and Printing	4,650
Marketing	3,550
Retirement	9,132
Dues and Subscriptions	3,404
Telephone and Internet	3,003
Professional Fees	8,621
Insurance – Industrial Parks	6,159
Salute to Industry	5,515
Meetings	2,253
Three Star	6,950
Travel and Business Development	10,005
Auto and Local Travel	4,133
Depreciation	2,020
Miscellaneous	998
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 211,707</b>
<b>Non-Operating Revenue (Expense)</b>	
Interest Earned	\$ 19
<b>Change in Net Position</b>	<b>\$ 44,737</b>
Net Position – Beginning of Year	3,807,265
Net Position – End of Year	3,852,002

### Achievements & Activities

The McMinn County Economic Development Authority earned the prestigious 2016 Mac Conway Award for one of the nation's top 10 Best to Invest communities. This award, given by Conway and Site Selection magazine recognizes the top economic development agencies of the previous year in both metropolitan and micropolitan areas. They examine the total number of jobs created and total amount of investment, as well as per capita investment and jobs created in the region. They also consider the ways economic development organizations are addressing critical issues in their communities. The McMinn County Economic Development Authority was the sole Tennessee economic development organization to receive this esteemed recognition.



### Business Recruitment, Expansion, & Retention

The McMinn County Economic Development Authority had 55 new industry opportunities in Fiscal Year 2016

- Greenfield Sites and/or available buildings were submitted on 43.6% of 55 new industrial opportunities.
- 47.3% of the 55 opportunities were lost due to lack of building(s) to meet the prospect requirements.
- 5% of the 55 opportunities were lost due to not having a site larger enough to accommodate the prospect requirements.

There were no new industry locations announced in Fiscal Year 2016, but negotiations continued on potential industrial locations.

**Thomas & Betts**

A Member of the ABB Group

Thomas & Betts, a member of the ABB Group, celebrated 50 years of Manufacturing Excellence in Athens on October 16, 2015. The celebration brought in corporate management along with former employees. Staff was able to celebrate with company management and staff to celebrate this milestone for their presence in our community.

**Midlab**, a leading manufacturer of cleaning products and brands in the U.S., announced an expansion that will lead to 13 new jobs and \$1.5 million in capital expenditures. The expansion will double the size of their facility in the Athens McMinn Industrial Park. This expansion follows on the heels of their Fiscal Year 2015 expansion of \$1.2 million and the creation of 4 new jobs.

**MIDLAB**  
INCORPORATED

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*"We have been committed to our East Tennessee roots during Midlab's history of success by focusing our investment in facilities located in the Athens community and working closely with the McMinn County Economic Development Authority. We are committed to keeping our primary production in this area and our hope is that the jobs and financial investment from future expansion to meet Midlab's manufacturing requirements can benefit this area as well,"* said Matt Schenk, Midlab President (Daily Post-Athenian)

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Waupaca Foundry, merged with Hitachi Metals. Hitachi chose to maintain the Waupaca brand. Waupaca Foundry celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> year anniversary by having celebrations at all their facilities, including the Etowah plant.

Resolute Forest Products completed the expansion they announced in Fiscal Year 2014. They closed on their approved Payment in Lieu of Tax (PILOT) agreements in December 2015. They continue work on their new tissue line expansion.

Coming off two record years of new job and investment announcements, Fiscal Year 2016 was a year where our industries were implementing their previously announced expansions. McMinn County saw a 3.4% increase of manufacturing employment between June 2015 and June 2016. Unemployment also hit an all-time low of 4.3% in May 2016. Average annual manufacturing wages hit a 10-year high at \$57,292. Moving forward into Fiscal Year 2017 and beyond, we must focus on diversifying our industrial base in order to remain competitive, and to cushion any impact of future economic slowdowns.

Tennessee continues to lead the nation in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and McMinn County has a strong manufacturing base of international companies. The Development Authority sees more inquiries by international companies than domestic companies in a given year. Therefore, international relations and marketing is important for the organization. Staff attended the Southeast US (SEUS)-Japan joint meeting, and Southeast US (SEUS)-Canada joint meeting to continue to build relationships with Japanese and Canadian government and businesses.

Tennessee was the host state for the annual Site Selectors Guild Conference in Nashville this fiscal year. Staff attended the welcome reception in an effort to continue to build and renew relationships with leading site selectors from around the nation.

Staff worked with the University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services to offer Lean Leader Workshop Series for our local manufacturers. The 10-class training sessions were offered to our location industries from February through June.

Executive Director Price serves as the Alternate Director of the Southern Economic Development Council (SEDC). SEDC is the oldest and largest regional economic development organization in North America. Economic development representatives from seventeen states - Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia – make up the organizations. Staff participated in the annual planning retreat to develop a strategic plan of work for the organization.

Staff continued close relations with the Tennessee Department of Economic Development (ECD), TVA Economic Development, and regional economic development organizations. Staff met with site consultants, developers, and individual companies to promote McMinn County, and our available industrial properties. Staff attended the following conferences and events where industrial site location consultants and/or companies were present to network, strengthen relationships, and to further promote McMinn County. These events also offered professional development opportunities to help strengthen McMinn County's competitiveness.

- Athens Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet
- Chattanooga Chamber Annual Meeting
- Etowah Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet

- Greater Chattanooga Economic Partnership quarterly meetings
- International Economic Development Council Annual Conference
- Site Selectors Guild
- Southeast Industrial Development Association Regional Tour
- Southeastern U.S. (SEUS) – Canada Joint Meeting
- Southeastern U.S. (SEUS)-Japan Joint Meeting
- Southern Economic Development Council Meet the Consultants
- Southern Economic Development Council Annual Meeting
- Tennessee Economic Development Council Fall Conference
- TVA Economic Development Forum
- TVA Economic Development Orientation
- Governor’s Conference on Economic Development

With new environmental laws being enacted related to air quality, staff continues to stay abreast of new laws that may affect our industries and local citizens. The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation hosted a meeting related to new EPA laws related to ozone, where staff attended. McMinn County maintains an attainment status for air quality, which is important for the community and future industrial expansions and recruitment.

Staff continued with their annual visitation with existing industries to strengthen relationships, and to understand the needs of our local industries. These visits are instrumental for our retention and expansion programs, and have proved valuable in being able to attract new investment in our local industries. Existing industries will continue to be the driving force for economic growth in our community.

Goodman Manufacturing in Rhea County announced they would close their Dayton facility in the Fall of 2016 resulting in a job loss of 630. Staff worked with Goodman Manufacturing to help place their displaced employees in open positions with McMinn County manufacturers. A job fair was held in Dayton for McMinn County employers to interview the displaced employees.

The Development Authority continued to co-host the bi-annual Plant Manager’s meetings. Topics at the meetings included: United Way, CAMBI updates, legislative updates, LEAP grant, Career Expo, Broadband Availability, Emergency Planning, Goodman Manufacturing Closing, Summer Interns, Main Street, and group discussions. Each meeting also included a profile of a local industry. Resolute Forest Products and E&E Manufacturing provided profiles from their respective industries.

The second annual Manufacturing Appreciation Week was held in conjunction with National Manufacturing Day, which is held the first Friday in October, annually. Our educational partners incorporated lessons in manufacturing into their weekly lesson plans, industry leaders were guest speakers in the classroom and offered industry tours to students and educators. The highlight of the week was the annual Industry Appreciation Day Lunch held on September 30, 2015. Derek Young with Derek Young Speaks was the key note speaker. Mr. Young

**MFG DAY INDUSTRY DAY**  
 a celebration of industries who  
**make it in McMinn**  
**September 30, 2015**  
 Springbrook Golf Country Club in Niota, Tennessee  
 ~ Lunch, APEX Awards, Keynote Speaker ~  
 FROM 11:30 A.M. TO 1:30 P.M.  
 Registration Deadline is September 15th

**Guest Speaker:**  
**DEREK YOUNG**



Derek Young is a role model in the new, multi-generational business arena. He inspires audiences to transform the results by transforming their view, culture, the way, and leadership. His expertise has been shared through 25+ years as a change agent and thought leader for the nation's #1 Family Dining Chain—Cracker Barrel, the nation's #1 Discount Retail Chain—Dollar General, the nation's #1 Corporate Director Practice—IRONWOOD, the nation's #9 Tobacco Manufacturer—Crownover, the nation's #1 Retailer—Central Bank, the Federal Reserve. He is currently working with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development on mapping the workforce assets throughout the State.

**GUEST SPEAKER SPONSOR:**  
**East TN Industrial Warehouse**

presented 17 People Skills Every Leaders Should Know. East Tennessee Industrial Warehouse sponsored the speaker.

The APEX Awards, which recognize industries and individuals in McMinn County for **A**daptability, **P**erformance, and **E**xcellence in their industry or profession, are a small way that we can highlight successes within our industry. In Fiscal Year 2016, we introduced a new award category that recognizes the achievements of a Career Technical Education (CTE) Student with aspirations of going into manufacturing. This new award gives us a stage to show the community the successes that are coming out of our local technical programs. To be eligible, the student must be enrolled in technical classes at either McMinn County Schools, Tennessee College of Applied Technology Athens, or Cleveland State Community College. Listed below are the Fiscal Year 2016 award winners and sponsors. The awards were presented at the annual Industry Day Lunch.



**Dylan Watson, MCHS**  
**APEX CTE Student of the Year**  
Sponsor DENSO Manufacturing

**Bryan Carver, Thomas & Betts**  
**APEX Production Worker of the Year**  
Sponsor TCAT Athens



**Kim Kirkland, Thomas & Betts**  
**APEX Professional of the Year**  
Sponsor Tennessee Wesleyan University

**Shawn Bryant**  
DENSO Manufacturing Athens, TN  
**Shawn Lindsey**  
City of Athens Public Works  
**APEX Environmental Stewards of the Year**  
Sponsor The Daily Post-Athenian



**Johnson Controls**  
**APEX Distinguished Service Award**  
Sponsors:  
Athens Area Chamber of Commerce  
Etowah Area Chamber of Commerce

**Thomas & Betts**  
**APEX Innovator of the Year**  
Sponsor McMinn County Economic  
Development Authority



The Tennessee College of Applied Technology Athens (TCAT) celebrated 50-years as an educational provider in McMinn County. Joni Walker, McMinn County Economic Development Authority Administrative Assistant, and former TCAT student was presented the Distinguished Alumni Award.



## Product Development

The Development Authority is focused on building an inventory of developable properties for present and future economic growth. Throughout the Southeast Tennessee region, McMinn County currently has the most industrial Greenfield sites available for development, which strengthens our ability to attract new business locations. The Development Authority's Land Committee is charged with exploring and evaluating new product opportunities to expand our industrial base for future opportunities. A new industrial park is under construction in Cleveland,

which will bring an additional 330 acres of available industrial properties into the region in Fiscal Year 2017.

When companies are considering new locations, they are typically on a fast-track to get their product to market as quickly as possible. A trend that has emerged is companies wanting low cost, or free, land that has the due diligence and infrastructure completed to expedite the construction process. Another trend is the desire for prepared sites to lessen any unknown risks, lower costs, and accelerate the construction process. Sites that have gone through the Select TN Sites certification process are getting attention from site consultants and companies. Currently, the North Etowah Industrial Park is the only certified site in McMinn County.

The Development Authority was awarded a \$100,000 TVA InvestPrep matching grant for site clearing at the Interstate Industrial Park site. We completed environmental permitting in Fiscal Year 2016. Bids and clearing will begin in Fiscal Year 2017. Staff also coordinated a site visit with the U.S. Corps of Engineers, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, City of Athens Public Works, and a geotechnical consultant to discuss wetland mitigation, and the opportunities for on-site mitigation of the wetlands. The meeting was positive, but no permit will be issued until we have a site specific project that would require the mitigation.

Staff participated in Tennessee Department of Transportation Field Reviews for the State Industrial Access project on Highway 163 and also for the planned intersection improvements at the intersection of Highway 30 and Denso Drive. Staff also met TDOT executive staff and engineers in Nashville to discuss planning for a new industrial access road off of County Road 608 into the back part of the North Etowah Industrial Park.

Community sustainability has become important to modern manufacturing facilities. It is for that reason that McMinn County, the City of Athens, and Athens Utilities Board applied to become designated as a TVA Sustainable Community. In the first year of sustainability, the community was designated as a Silver ranked community. Designations include Platinum, Gold, and Silver standards. In Fiscal Year 2016, we were able to advance to a Gold standard sustainable community. Staff attended the TVA Sustainability Forum where we were recognized for our community sustainability.

Trends have proven that most companies begin their initial search looking for an existing building. Our inventory of existing buildings in McMinn County has been drastically reduced, so this frequently eliminates us from an initial search. Instead of requesting our public entities to allocate funds to build a speculative building, the Development Authority contracted with Michael Brady Inc. and Retenbach Constructors to design a virtual speculative building on the City of Athens Redfern site with a food and beverage processing facility in mind. Construction costs estimates were included as part of the package. The virtual building will be marketed to site consultants that specialize in food and beverage industries along with direct marketing to businesses within the industry.



Nick Cazana, Commercial & Investment Properties, purchased 170 acres in the northern end of McMinn County along Highway 68 to be developed into an industrial park. Staff completed a Select TN Sites certification application, and met with the developer, engineers, and Monroe County/City of Sweetwater representative on infrastructure improvements that are needed and on marketing opportunities for the site. The site, named 75 Regional Commerce Park, is being marketed as a cooperative regional park. The site has excellent interstate visibility and accessibility, and is well suited for distribution. Staff organized and hosted a meeting with the Tennessee Department of Transportation Regions 1 and 2 staffs, and representatives from McMinn, Monroe, and Sweetwater to discuss potential funding opportunities for improvements to Pleasant Grove Road.

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*“They can expect a very upscale and first-class development,”* stated Nick Cazana, Exit 60 LLC, about the 75 Regional Commerce Park

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The McMinn County Economic Development Authority has an option to purchase 189 acres in the North Etowah Industrial Park with E.M. and Phyllis Armstrong. With the option expiring, staff negotiated an extension of the option, and is working with McMinn County, the City of Etowah, and Etowah Utilities Board on ways to acquire the property. This will be a priority in Fiscal Year 2017. The North Etowah Industrial Park site was shown more than any other sites during Fiscal Year 2016, as we have seen an uptick in large industrial rail users looking for new site locations.



AT&T began a new Fiber Ready certification program that identifies industrial sites that have fiber available in their territory. The Athens McMinn Interstate Industrial Park, Mt. Verd Industrial Park, and the North Etowah Industrial Park were all certified as AT&T Fiber Ready parks. This certification followed Athens Utilities Board’s announcement offering of 1 GBPS service for industries in Fiscal Year 2015.



*Pictured Left to Right: Hugh Cantrell, General Manager of Denso, Shawn Lindsey, Director of City of Athens Public Works, Evonne Raper, City of Athens Council, and Matt Johnston, Plant Manager of Midlab*

The Development Authority dedicated 11.5 acres in the Interstate Industrial Park to be developed as an Eco Park. DENSO announced their partnership with the City of Athens to develop the Eco Park with a \$240,000 grant over a three-year period. Midlab, located adjacent to the park, has participated in the donation of picnic tables. The Eco Park was opened in April 2016 and includes a walking trail, fruit orchard, 3,300 freshly planted trees and 1,000 East Tennessee tulips, and a Japanese-style pavilion.



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*"It's a place where their associates can embrace nature," said Shawn Bryant, DENSO's manager of Safety, Health and Environment. "It really opened my eyes to how cool it would be to have an outdoor classroom or learning environment that meets the needs of the community, but also meets the needs of what DENSO is trying to do with what we call Eco Vision and preserving the planet, which is one of our philosophies."*

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The Industrial Development Bond Board of McMinn County, alongside the City of Athens and McMinn County adopted Tax Increment Financing (TIF) policies and procedures a few years back. Development Authority staff continued throughout the fiscal year to work with a regional grocery store on their interest to locate a new store in the south end of the City or in downtown. Staff along with City of Athens personnel drafted a Downtown Tax Increment Zone that includes the newly formed Main Street district, and also incorporates White Street south to Knight Road. The zone was adopted by Athens City Council.

As a Development Authority Strategic priority, Staff continued to communicate with State legislators on the importance of Annexation laws that support the growth of business and industry. Expansion of our industrial properties in Athens and Etowah will require annexation. The Development Authority, in cooperation with the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce and the Etowah Area Chamber of Commerce, hosted a Legislative Luncheon for our local and regional legislators. The Boards of Directors from each of the entities were present at the lunch. The lunch allowed the opportunity to express concerns about bills related to annexation that have been presented to the General Assembly, and how they would affect our community.

Maintenance of our industrial properties is also a function of the Development Authority. The cities of both Athens and Etowah assisted in mowing and ROW clearing of the parks. Environmental permitting for the clearing of the Athens McMinn Interstate Industrial Park was started. Hacker Signs developed entrance sign designs for both the Mt. Verd Industrial Park and the Athens McMinn Interstate Industrial Park.

## **Workforce Development**

Attracting a skilled workforce continues to be a challenge for communities throughout the U.S. McMinn County has made significant strides over the past few years with its workforce development programs, but in order to sustain a successful industrial recruitment, expansion and retention program we must keep workforce development in the forefront of our programming. The Development Authority surveyed existing industries on the number of vacant jobs going

unfilled, and found an astounding 400+ jobs were open at the time of the survey. Jobs continue to go unfilled and will continue to increase if we lose focus on building a pipeline of industrially minded and skilled workers. McMinn County is blessed to have the highest manufacturing employment per capita in the State of Tennessee. Therefore, our priority must be to train for the jobs we have in our community.

Staff is a member of the Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act's Oversight Committee for region 5. The committee evaluates funding needs for training programs throughout the region. The committee focuses on funding training for in demand jobs.

Staff participated in a state-wide Workforce Development Asset Mapping. The goal for this state initiative was to develop a strong and comprehensive list of community assets that can be leveraged to improve how services are delivered to help Tennesseans go to work. We often find in communities, that several entities are doing some sort of workforce development, but oftentimes there are overlapping programs and no coordination between entities. This exercise was to help understand those overlaps and to bridge gaps in coordinating workforce development programs.

The Tennessee Valley Authority hosted a series of seminars focused on young talent infusion. Staff attending the regional seminar held at the Cleveland Bradley County Chamber. The purpose was to learn about the millennial workforce and how to better communicate and tap into this technological generation.

The Tennessee LEAP (Labor Education Alignment Program) grant that was received in Fiscal Year 2015 has shown great success. The program for our region is a collaborative effort between The Southeast Tennessee Development District, Tennessee College of Applied Technology Athens, Cleveland State Community College, Southeast Tennessee Pathways to Prosperity, and seven high schools within the Bradley, McMinn, Meigs, and Polk counties school districts, and local industrial partners. The grant received was \$946,280. The funds have been used to put mechatronics classes in, or enhance existing programs, in the seven high schools. The goal was to have 100 students enrolled in the program within the first year. The goal was exceeded with over 280 students enrolled in the first year. Staff serves on the marketing committee for the LEAP grant, and the committee is working on a campaign to continue marketing manufacturing careers to students and introducing them to electro-mechanical fields.

Staff presented at the McMinn County Schools in-service training session. The topic of the presentation was Manufacturing as a Career Option. The purpose was to educate the educators that manufacturing careers are viable, well paying, options for students, and to encourage lessons in manufacturing to be included in their lesson planning.

The fourth annual McMinn County Career Expo was held on October 1, 2015 in conjunction with Manufacturing Week. The Expo introduces local high school seniors to careers offered by our local industries, and to training opportunities. The Development Authority was a co-sponsor for the event, served on the planning committee, and assisted students at the event.

The fourth annual McMinn County Job Fair was held at the Southeast Trade & Conference Center at Athens Regional Park on July 30, 2015. A day prior to the event, a How to Get a Job 101 workshop was held for those attending the job fair. The Development Authority was a co-sponsor of this event, served on the planning committee, and assisted job seekers at the event. Over 500 job seekers attended the Job Fair with 61 companies represented.



Design was completed for a 33,000 square foot Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Business Innovation (CAMBI) at the Athens McMinn Interstate Industrial Park. Staff along with the Tennessee College of applied Technology and McMinn County continue to see funding for the Center estimated to be \$6.5 million. To date, \$2.7 million has been committed through public sources. Staff participated in a marketing video to be used to help recruit additional funding for the project. Staff along with a delegation from McMinn County met with Deputy Governor Jim Henry on opportunities for additional state funding for construction of the Center. The dedicated property in the Athens McMinn Interstate Industrial Park was rezoned to fit the need of CAMBI.

Staff serves on the Tennessee Wesleyan University Business Department Advisory Committee to help shape course offerings within the field of business.

Staff attended a Tri-State Regional Workforce Committee meeting at Tech Town Chattanooga. This meeting evolved into staff organizing a tour of the ORNL Demonstration Facility to see how their instruction in 3D printing could be enhanced with the technology advancements being made at the demonstration facility. Staff also started discussions with Tech Town on opportunities to develop a satellite facility in McMinn County.

## Marketing

The Development Authority's brand, Make It In McMinn, continues to be widely recognized throughout the community, State, Southeast region, and with site consultants. We have been referred to as a positive example of community branding. Other economic development organizations throughout the State of Tennessee have called upon staff for recommendations on branding. Local organizations have also begun using our brand to promote McMinn County.



The staff uses website, social media, and direct marketing as a tool for marketing our community. Next fiscal year, new marketing materials will be developed and used for direct marketing and site visits.

The Development Authority received a \$1,000 TVA Partnership grant to be used to enhance marketing efforts along with a \$10,000 Three Star grant.

The Development Authority advertised in the new Chattanooga Region magazine as a part of the new Greater Chattanooga Economic Partnership.

The best marketing tool we can offer is hosting visits to our community for site selectors, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development Project Managers, TVA Target Market Specialists, and other regional and state economic development groups. We hosted a variety of

these visits to introduce our sites and community and refresh memories of those who have visited in the past.

We maintain a database of available industrial properties through the [tvasites.com](http://tvasites.com) searchable database. This comprehensive database includes available sites, and buildings, throughout the Tennessee Valley. We subscribed to the LocalInsite tool for the database, and incorporate McMinn County's portion of the database onto our website.

While most of the Development Authority's marketing is focused outside of McMinn County, it is still important to tell our story to our stakeholders and local citizens. Internal marketing efforts were included as part of our marketing plan. Staff wrote articles for inclusion in the Daily Post-Athenian FYI, and Foundations special editions. Press releases were also written and distributed to media outlets throughout the year highlighting accomplishments, special visits to the community, state of the economy, and co-sponsored events. Another focus for our internal marketing includes keeping civic groups abreast on the state of the economy, and activity of the Development Authority. Staff made presentations at local civic groups, and presented to the Leadership McMinn class on their industry day. Monthly activity reports were sent to public funding entities, and a quarterly partner's breakfast was held to keep our stakeholders informed of the activities of the organization.

## **Administrative & Professional Development**

The full membership of the Development Authority meets annually to conduct business on behalf of the organization. The annual meeting was held on June 16, 2016, at the Springbrook Golf and Country Club in Niota, Tennessee. The members elected new Directors to serve on the Board for fiscal year 2017, and enjoyed a time of networking with fellow members.

Staff attended a mandatory Tennessee Consolidated Retirement Service meeting on changes to the TCRS system and actuarial studies. Staff also participates in monthly Agency Benefit Coordinator conference call in order to stay active in the State Health Benefits system for our employee health insurance benefits.

Staying abreast of proposed legislation that can positively, or negatively, affect our economic development efforts, and maintaining positive relations with our state and federal legislators are important roles of the Development Authority. Staff participated in the Tennessee Economic Development Council's Legislative Day on the Hill, the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industrial Day on the Hill, and met with state legislators in Nashville throughout their time in session. The Development Authority co-hosted a legislative luncheon in McMinn County with the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce and the Etowah Area Chamber of Commerce.

Staff continued to be the administrative arm of the Industrial Development Bond Board of McMinn County, and for the Governor's Three Star Program.

Staff participated and presented at the McMinn County Commission and the Athens City Council planning retreats to help shape community strategic priorities for the year.

Executive Director Price was asked to instruct a marketing class at the Tennessee Basic Economic Development class. This class is a certified class recognized by the International Economic Development Council. She also served as a grader at the national Certified Economic Developer exam in Atlanta.

Professional development is an important part of the growth of any organization. It is important to stay abreast of industry trends, and new programs to benefit our economic development efforts. Staff participated in seminars, conferences, webinars, conference calls and trainings.

The Development Authority, and staff, maintained professional memberships and affiliations in national, regional, state, and local organizations and civic groups. Following are a list of affiliations:

- Athens Kiwanis Club.
- Greater Athens Human Resource Association.
- International Economic Development Council.
- Southern Economic Development Council.
- Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry.
- Tennessee Economic Development Council.
- Tennessee Wesleyan Business Advisory Committee.
- Tri-State Regional Workforce Alliance.
- Ex-Officio Director for Athens Area Chamber of Commerce
- Ex-Officio Director for Etowah Area Chamber of Commerce

# Organization Information

## Organization Leadership

### OFFICERS

**Thom Johnson\***, President

David Alley\*, Vice President

Will Estes\*, Treasurer

Stuart Sullins\*, Past President

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Gentry\*

David Crews

Ann Davis

Bob Lambert

Eric Newberry\*

John Goins\*

Rhonda Whaley

Will Estes\*

Jason McConkey

Jim Wilson

Shane Sewell

Farah Reynolds

Porter Clark

Scott Moore

Jason Housley

Scott Cass

Jerry Smith

Rob Preston

Durant Tullock

Stewart Smith

Harley Knowles

Ex-officio (non-voting)

Matthew Gravley

Mitchell Moore\*

Rhonda Whaley

Senator Mike Bell

Representative John Forgety

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## Organization Membership

<b>Funding Agencies</b>	Athens Utilities Board City of Athens City of Etowah	Etowah Utilities Board McMinn County
<b>Partners for Progress</b>	Athens Federal Community Bank BB&T Citizens National Bank The Daily Post Athenian DENSO Manufacturing Athens TN	First Volunteer Bank Metro Transport Group SouthEast Bank Starr Regional Medical Center Waste Connections
<b>Sustaining Members</b>	Bargain Barn/ UGO Blaine Construction Corporation Clayton Home East Tennessee Industrial Warehouse Hiwassee Builders Supply Holston Gases, Inc. J.M. Huber Mayfield Dairy Farms	Michael Brady, Inc. Partners Development Resolute Forest Products Retenbach Constructors Smith Funeral Home Studio Four Design Thomas & Betts Waupaca Foundry
<b>General Members</b>	AT&T Athens Area Chamber of Commerce Athens City Board of Education Athens Housing Authority Athens Insurance Athens Mini Storage Bordwine Funeral Home Carter, Harrod, & Willhite PPLC Choate Printing City of Niota Consolidate Metco (ConMet) Creative Foam Corp. E&E Manufacturing Edward Jones Estes & Kennedy Law Offices Etowah Area Chamber of Commerce Hacker Sign Company Heil Trailer International Jackson & Runyan, CPAs Johns Manville Johnson Controls Katanbaf Properties Lay Realty Company The Lewis Group Architects, Inc. Maxwell Industries	McKinney Excavating McMinn Co. Board of Education Merit Construction Miller & McPhail, CPA, PPLC Montvue Development Co., LLC Moore Discount, Inc. Riley Consultants Rouse Construction S&ME Seaton Enterprises Selective Structures Southern Hydraulic Cylinder Springbrook Golf & Country Club The Strauss Company, Inc. Sullins Family Eye Care Clinics Sweetwater Valley Oil Company TCAT - Athens Tennessee Wesleyan College Town of Englewood Valley Title Webb Plumbing, Heating & Electric Wholesale Supply Group, Inc. Wilson Construction Ziegler Funeral Home