

Georgia Association of Regional Development Centers  
Economic Development Committee

Meeting Notes  
June 13, 2005

John Leonard, Executive Director of the South Georgia RDC, welcomed the group and explained that he was the liaison between the GA RDC Executive Directors and the Economic Development Committee. He also discussed the survey that had been sent out previously. Each person attending introduced themselves, their RDC and highlighted a special project. Every RDC in the state was represented.

Tiffany Andrews, Middle Georgia RDC, reviewed the results of the survey that had been sent out to each RDC Economic Development contact person. The group discussed each question/response and determined the best response that represented the group as a whole. The following is a summary:

1. From a statewide perspective, the definition of RDC's Roles in Economic Development
  - a. Assist in planning and implementation of adopted strategies
  - b. A resource of local and regional initiatives
  - c. Provide data, research and other key information to recruit and retain economic development

(Note: It was the consensus of the group that DCA and GDEcD have a fragmented image of RDC economic development efforts.)

2. RDC's role in Economic Development
  - a. Analyze data regarding economic characteristics, prepare plans and implementation strategies, assist with implementation of adopted strategies (grant/loan assistance, etc), loan programs administration (SBA, EDA, others)
  - b. Regional roundtable/collaboration/networking discussions/meetings
  - c. Designated Economic Development District
3. RDC's role in Economic Development in cooperation with other regions
  - a. Provide assistance and collaborate with other agencies or organizations
  - b. Promote cooperation and share resources and tools
4. RAC's role in Economic Development
  - a. Different in each area
5. Attendance by RDC staff at RAC meetings
  - a. Each Executive Director is appointed to RAC as vacancies occur
6. Participation/Membership of RDCs in Georgia Economic Development Association
  - a. Approximately 50% membership. Participation is unknown.
7. Periodic meetings of economic development staff

- a. Economic Development staff will meet quarterly, with one of these times at the RDC Annual Meeting. It was emphasized that there needs to be a reason to meet.
- 8. Primary Economic Development tools used by RDC Economic Development Staff
  - a. General grant writing (budgets and narratives), LOCI analyses, and industry/market research
  - b. Planning assistance, grant/loan application technical assistance, alternative loan programs
- 9. Three additional tools needed by RDC Economic Development Staff
  - a. More direct ties to Georgia Tech Research Institute and other economic development related research organizations
  - b. Marketing, networking and inter-regional collaboration
  - c. Existing industry survey/program
- 10. Three Innovative Programs/Projects Initiated by each RDC
  - a. To be discussed at the next meeting
- 11. Three most pressing challenges facing RDCs in the next three years
  - a. Funding (fee for projects with no administration), technology (current data in more efficient formats to respond to request for applications, etc.) and professional development (coordinated training and educational opportunities)
- 12. Three priority issues, activities or projects that will be undertaken by the RDC Economic Development Committee
  - a. To be determined at next meeting

John Leonard advised the group that a steering committee has been appointed by the Executive Directors consisting of Tiffany Andrews, Jonathan Sumner and Roderick Gilbert. Since Roderick has resigned, another person was requested to volunteer for the group. Katie Howard volunteered and agreed to write up a summary of the meeting which will be put on the Georgia RDC web site.

After lunch, Lee Mertins of the Economic Development Administration discussed a proposed training event for RDC Economic Development Staff. He presented two formats to consider: hosting the training at the same location each year or rotate the location between each RDC annually.

A training committee consisting of Tiffany Andrews, Katie Howard, Chris McGahee, Jonathan Sumner and Jeannie Brantley was appointed to coordinate a training session to be held in late January or early February 2006. The group will report back at the next Economic Development Committee meeting. The next meeting will be held on September 14 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Middle Georgia RDC.