

Developments

The Newsletter of The Simpson County Development Foundation

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2020-2021 Officers

Malory Yelverton
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Christian Carrico
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Lacye Evans
Secretary-Treasurer

Brien Hubbard
Past President

Pat Brown
Vice-President
Community Development

Josh Pierce
Vice-President
Economic Development

Mayor Dale Berry
Mayor Todd Booth
Vice-Presidents
Government Relations

Shannon Welch
Vice-President
Stakeholder Development

Staff

Donnie Caughman
Executive Director

Richard Rankin
Office Manager

SCDF begins new fiscal/program year in midst of COVID-19 challenges. Needless to say, the COVID-19 “earthquake” has thoroughly shaken the structures of “business as usual.” Although we were forced to cancel our 2020 annual meeting, we issued our annual report by way of email to all our members, and we have officers and directors in place and active for FY 2021 (July 2020-June 2021).

Our officers are listed in the box bordering this article; our Board of Directors includes Chris Dunn, Lance Hamilton, Tiffany Kinslow, Bennie Palmer, Eric Adkins, Amanda Blakeney, Carley Hansbrough, Josh Allen, Jake Brown, Amarylis Carter, and Dylan Sanford.

On June 25, 2020, the Officers and Directors met and approved the budget for FY 2021, as summarized here:

Revenue	\$145,700
Program Expenses	28,650
Administrative Expenses	116,900

Revenue includes anticipated membership revenue and the fee for the annual service agreement with the Simpson County Economic Development District.

Program expenses include economic development, community development, stakeholder development, and government relations; administrative expenses include such items as staff salaries, liability insurance for officers and directors, office and vehicle operations.

At that same meeting President Malory Yelverton appointed a Strategic Plan Implementation Steering Committee. The members are Pat Brown, chairman; Carley Hansbrough; Jake Brown; and Dylan Sanford. Developed in partnership with The USM Trent Lott National Center for Economic Development and Entrepreneurship, this strategic plan represents the organization’s goals and objectives for 2019-2024.

GOALS

- Grow wholesale and retail trade by 1-2% annually over the next 5 years.
- Achieve the average growth aligned with Jackson MSA in the annual rate of job growth.
- Establish a business retention and expansion (BRE) process that supports existing companies.
- Create a talented workforce as a means of attracting new business growth.
- Promote a rich culture and a high quality of life.



FY 2020
[July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020]
Annual Report





Southern Pine Electric and TEC to partner in bringing broadband services to rural area customers.

Southern Pine Electric has recently announced a collaborative agreement with TEC, a technology company providing fiber internet to people in rural areas of Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee. TEC will bring fiber internet to many of Southern Pine's members that are unserved or underserved. With an aggressive work schedule of ten years, TEC will bring innovative broadband, voice and security solutions to Southern Pine's members, communities, and businesses that lack access to true broadband services.



Industrial Development



Simpson County continues to anticipate ENVIVA Biomass's location of a wood pellet manufacturing facility in Simpson County.

The Board of Supervisors and The Simpson County Economic Development District have each passed Resolutions of Intent supporting the project. At this time negotiations continue between Enviva and the owner of the site where the company wished to locate. Enviva is proposing to make a estimated 175 million dollar capital investment in the facility and to provide an estimated 80 to 90 direct full-time jobs during operations with average expected wages of \$35,000 to \$40,000 a year.



Thirteen Individuals complete FY2020 SIMPSON LEADERS.

Despite the impact of COVID-19 on the latter part of the class, thirteen

individuals, the largest class in the past several years, completed the most recent Simpson Leaders. *Congratulations to Lauren Adkins, Josh Allen, Beverly Barnes, Jake Brown, Adam Carlson, Amarylis Carter, Dedra Clark-Allen, Romonica*

Feazell, Tiffany Kinslow, Phillip Peacock, Dylan Sanford, Haley Tutor, and Pam Wallace.

The next Simpson Leaders class is planned to begin in calendar year 2021, and details will be announced closer to the anticipated start date.

Simpson Leaders is a joint project of SCDF's Division of Community Development and Copiah-Lincoln Community College, utilizing the resources of Co-Lin Workforce Education and the facilities of the Co-Lin Simpson County Center.



SCDF Executive Director Donnie Caughman has been researching Simpson County's economy for the past year, and his findings include the following data:

- Simpson County has an **unemployment rate** of 4.4%. The U.S. average is 3.9%.
- Simpson County has seen the **job market increase** by 0.9% over the last year. The Jackson Metropolitan Statistical Area average job growth rate for 2019 was 4.8%.
- **Future job growth** over the next ten years is predicted to be 29.4%, which is lower than the U.S. average of 33.5%.
- **Tax Rates** for Simpson County
 - The Sales Tax Rate for Simpson County is 7.0%. The U.S. average is 7.3%.
 - The Income Tax Rate for Simpson County is 5.0%. The U.S. average is 4.6%.
- **Income and Salaries** in Simpson County
 - The average income of a Simpson County resident is \$18,728 a year. The U.S. average is \$28,555 a year.
 - The Median Household Income of a Simpson County resident is \$36,097 a year. The U.S. average is \$53,482 a year.



Every member of the Simpson County Development Foundation is essential to attaining successfully our goals for the continued betterment and advancement of our community—Simpson County. Our goals are primarily economic; however, we are concerned with every element in the quality of life of our community. You, our Members, have a vital role in the success of each of the Foundation's projects and programs.



The Simpson County Development Foundation is a non-profit corporation, incorporated under the laws of Mississippi. For IRS purposes, we are an exempt non-profit organization under Section 501(c)(6). We are not a public or governmental entity. The Foundation is funded by the membership fees of its members.

ABOUT OUR WEBSITE

Working with CMPDD, we are in the process of upgrading our websites:

Phase 1 – www.simpsoncounty.biz – We are completing the transfer of administration of our SCDF website to CMPDD. CMPDD is in the process of coordinating the transfer of the website with 216digital hosting to a platform used by CMPDD for the websites they administer. Once the transfer is



complete, SCDF staff will still be able to make all routine updates and CMPDD will handle major updates.

Phase 2 – www.discoversimpsoncounty.com – CMPDD has been asked to view this out-of-date tourism website for future incorporation of the content into the SCDF website.



COVID-19

Public Health and Restrictions: This page on the Mississippi Department of Health website is a primary source of up-to-date information:

<https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/ static/14,0,420.html>

Important Information for Businesses: This page on the Mississippi Development Authority website is a primary source of up-to-date information:

<https://www.mississippi.org/coronavirus/>



It's not simple.

It is essential!