



## *2007-2008 Annual Report*

### *Dublin-Laurens County Chamber of Commerce & Development Authority*

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*Our Mission Statement:*

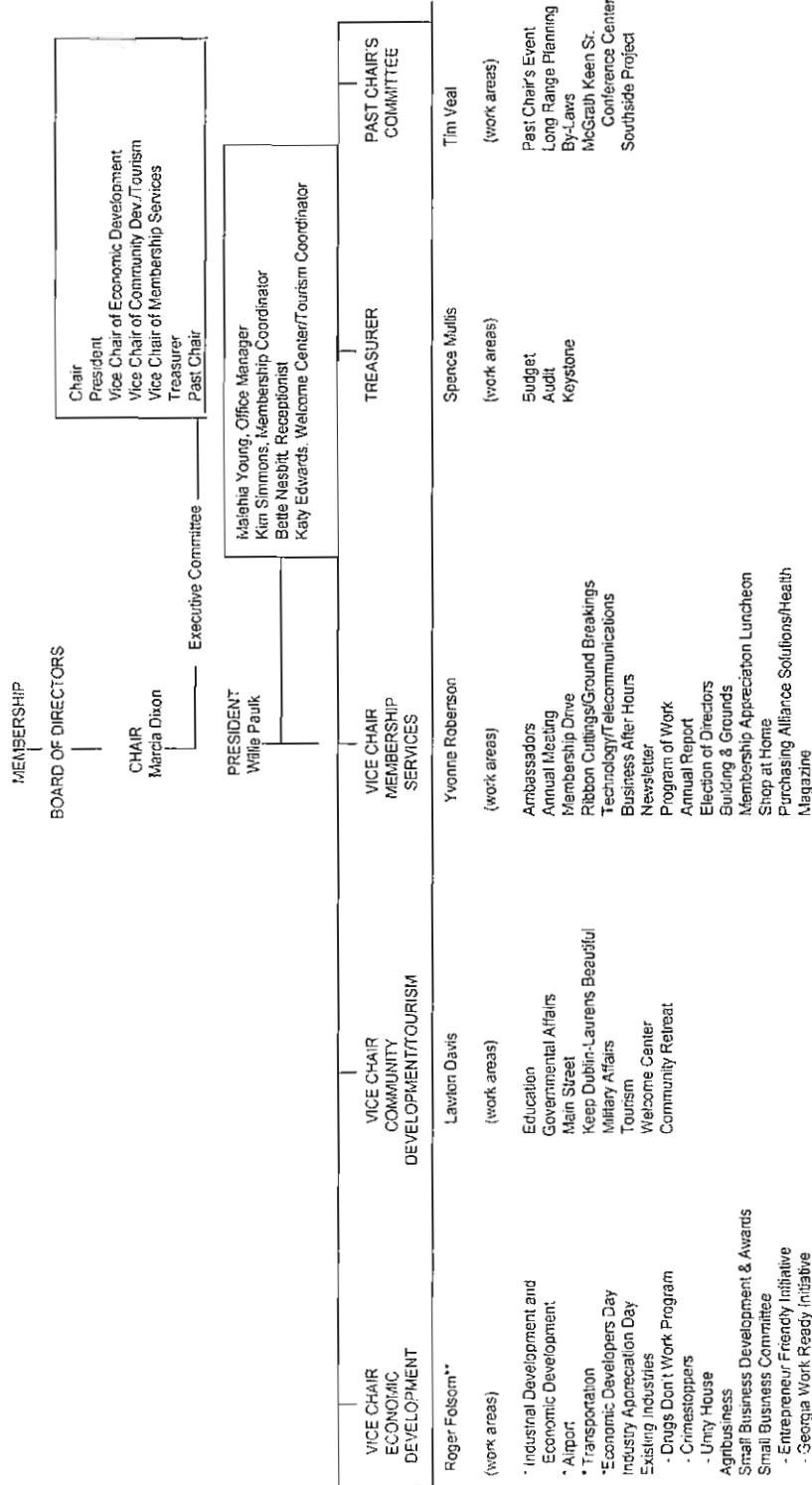
*“To make Dublin-Laurens County  
a better place to live ,  
work , and play.”*



Serving Cadwell♦Dexter♦Dublin♦Dudley♦East Dublin♦Montrose♦Rentz

# 2007-2008 Organizational Chart

DUBLIN-LAURENS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
1200 Bellevue Avenue – Box 818 – Dublin, Georgia 31040-0818



\* Handled by the Development Authority  
\*\* Chairman of the Development Authority  
November 1, 2007-October 31, 2008

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# *2007-2008 Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors*



**2007-2008 Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors**

**Front Row: Kelly Duke, Jackie Curtis, Willie Paulk-Chamber President, Marcia Dixon-Chairman, Yvonne Robertson– Vice Chair of Membership Services, and Emily Kight. Middle Row: Randy Jackson, Tim Veal– Past Chair, Carneage Young, Jay Studstill, Jeff Davis IV, Charles Johnson, Ed Touchberry. Back row: David Roberts, Wayne Christian, Skip Evans, Will Smith, Dr. Lawton Davis– Vice Chair of Community Development and Tourism, Bill Hoyt, and Roger Folsom– Vice Chair of Economic Development.**

**Not pictured: Jerry Hatcher, Emory Lake, Spence Mullis– Treasurer, and Jack Walker**



## Marcia Dixon Chair

### The 2007-2008 Chamber Year.....

This past year we have been blessed to have so many wonderful individuals working in our community to make it the best it can be! The list includes Willie Paulk and the Chamber Staff, the Board of Directors and certainly our 700+ membership which shows our strength as a community. The desire and willingness of our local and state government, Development Authority and business and industry, who all understand the ultimate impact of a community that works together can have for the continued growth that we have experienced now for many years is vital. Dublin-Laurens County is the envy of many other communities and this just does not happen without a lot of dedication from so many community leaders. During this past year, I would like to outline some of the areas that your Chamber worked to accomplish as a part of making you proud of your Chamber:

#### Crime Stoppers and Drugs Don't Work -

Crime Stoppers has just celebrated the one year anniversary since being introduced to Dublin-Laurens County. As a Chamber, we were anxious to get involved in this initiative which would only make our community a more attractive place to live by reducing and discouraging crime. Crime Stoppers is very pleased to share our success rate. The arrest success rate is 95% with a picture of the individual being sought and 65% without a picture. We believe that Crime Stoppers is a continuation of the previous year's initiative of "Drugs Don't Work" since the significance of illegal drugs is one of the biggest factors affecting the crime rate in our country. In conjunction with these efforts, Chief Wayne Cain, Dublin City Police Department and Sheriff Bill Harrell of Laurens County were both awarded the "Carolyn R. Watson Award" at the Annual Meeting for their efforts and the efforts of their teams in making our community a safer place to live for our families.

#### Unity House -

There are many different ways in which to help support our community and we often think of some of the normal "means" in which to offer support. However, there are other areas in which we can get involved and we are pleased this year to be a partner in the formation and introduction of the "Unity House." The Chamber was asked by concerned citizens to address this issue as a "need" for our community. This is a Family Support Recovery Group organization for "Hurting Families of those with Addictions" that will meet on Tuesday evenings for free and confidential meetings to be held at a facility located on the VA Grounds. We are pleased to be a partner with Community Mental Health on this endeavor and also appreciative of the support from the Laurens Judicial Court Judges. The funding for this project will be through our Existing Industries.

#### Georgia Work Ready -

As your Chamber, we are continuing to support the Georgia Work Ready Initiative. Georgia is one of the last remaining states that does not have this certification. This is a win-win challenge for Laurens County to become part of a Certified Work Ready Region. We have partnered with the Heart of Georgia Technical College to assess our workforce skills and offer training to match a specific job with a specific individual's skills. What better way to secure our future as a community than having a workforce that is trained and validated to meet the employment needs of our existing businesses and industries but to also display this to anyone interested in moving or opening a new operation here.

The McGrath Keen Conference Center and the Louie Livingston Gardens are now complete. You can only appreciate and understand the significance of the Conference Center and Gardens by visiting and seeing for yourself. As a community, we are so fortunate to have the support of the members who made this possible by their donations and pledges. There are so many who also donated their time and effort along with financial support which made this dream a reality. A special thanks to all who worked so diligently on this project.

There are so many other initiatives that your Chamber continues to support such as the next level for the "Entrepreneur Friendly Initiative" as well as the Lunch and Learn Workshops, Shop at Home Gift Checks, and Mini -Web Pages just to name a few. Your Chamber was a key player in the project for the BRAG Bike Ride which attracted approximately 2000 Visitors this past summer to shop and visit here.

Your Chamber works every day to insure that Dublin-Laurens County is being "progressive and aggressive" in their efforts to be a support mechanism for you. The existence of the Chamber and the success of our community depends on involvement and support from you. You have elected a wonderful group of individuals to serve as your Board of Directors and I know that Spence Mullis as Chair, will lead the team to a great year and with the support of Willie and her staff at the Chamber; there is no doubt that they will continue to make us proud to be a part of this great community.

## Roger Folsom Vice Chair of Economic Development

- 33rd Annual Industry Appreciation Day- Over 388 attendees.
- Existing Industries Committee
- Contributed to the Unity House, a support facility for families of those suffering from addiction.
- Continued to promote Drugs Don't Work, a drug free work program.
- Annual Farmer Appreciation Day Luncheon
- "Entrepreneur Friendly Community" through the Georgia Department of Economic Development



- Supported the Work Ready Initiative through the Heart of Georgia Technical College.
- Small Business Awards-Congratulations to our four quarter winners of the Small Business Award: 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Winner – Bella Event Flowers; 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Winner – Clark's Health Club; 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Winner – Art by Frenasee; and 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Winner – Major Turbine. The 2007-2008 Small Business of the Year was Bella Event Flowers.



## Dr. Lawton Davis Vice Chair of Community Development & Tourism



- Sponsored the student of the quarter awards. This year's winners were Kalie Hudson of West Laurens High School, Yusef Smith of East Laurens High School, Ashley Young of Trinity Christian School, and Caitlin Barnham of Dublin High School.
- Held the Annual Honors Reception for 133 honor graduates at the McGrath Keen Sr. Conference Center.
- Sponsored the Dublin Eggs and Issues Breakfast in February 2008 with attendance over 68.
- Participated in the Laurens Dodge Bleckley Legislative Dinner held in Atlanta.
- Supported the Downtown Development Authority and Keep Dublin-Laurens Beautiful with their endeavors over the past year.
- Sponsored the Irish Chamber Breakfast with 236 guests.
- Supported the Robins Air Force Base by participating in the 21st Century Partnership and Middle Georgia Military Affairs Committee.
- Membership in the Magnolia Midlands Travel Association and the Heritage Hwy. 441 Travel Association.
- Sponsored a Tourism Day for Georgia Department of Economic Development's Tourism Commissioner Charlie Gatlin.
- The Bike Ride Across Georgia visited in June and brought over 2,000 riders into the community.
- Over 4,500 visitors to the Dublin-Laurens County Welcome Center during the 2007-2008 term.





## **Yvonne Robertson** **Vice Chair of Membership Services**

- New members 2007-2008 term: 114
- Ribbon Cuttings and Groundbreakings: 36
- Annual Membership Appreciation Luncheon: 150 attendees
- Provided Lunch and Learn informational sessions.
- Business After Hours average attendance: 176
- Business and Breakfast average attendance: 111
- Sold over \$21,500 worth of Shop at Home Checks.
- Over 35 organizations involved in Chamber's Purchasing Alliance Insurance Program.
- Continued the Ambassador volunteer program.



## **Spence Mullis** **Treasurer**

- Monitored monthly budget for the Chamber
- Continued to promote Keystone Membership level



## **Tim Veal** **Past Chair**

- Hosted Annual Past Chairs' Luncheon at the McGrath Keen Sr. Conference Center
- Assisted the Southside Revitalization Committee with projects as needed
- Promoted the use of the McGrath Keen Sr. Conference Center and continue fundraising for the facility.



## **Willie Paulk President**

Each time the Chamber cuts a ribbon, more jobs are added to our employment base. During the 2007-2008 term, the Chamber held 37 ribbon cuttings across the community. New jobs created by these businesses is approximately 250. Equitable to the size of a medium sized industry, the importance of small businesses to the community is immeasurable. Each small business contributes to our well being by creating a high quality of life, providing small town customer service, stabilizing our local economy, and providing job security for our citizens.

The Chamber is also excited about the completion of the Chamber magazine. This publication will serve as a great resource tool for those relocating , opening a business, or currently living in our community. We thank our magazine committee: Marcia Dixon, Marcus Clements, Emily Kight, Will Smith, Brian Bazemore, Yvonne Robertson, and Stacye Lee, who served as the Chairman, for their work on this project.

Our Program of Work continues to expand each year, with additions such as the Entrepreneur Friendly committee, the Unity House, the WorkReady Initiative, and Crimestoppers. As we start new projects, we continue to focus on our older programs. We will continue to evolve with changing times, but stay true to the basic principles the Chamber has always held important. Our Program has a great balance of programs that are proven to be essential to accomplishing our yearly goals as a Chamber.

To Malehia, Kim, Bette, and Katy, thank you for your professionalism, dedication, and team spirit as we work together each year to complete our Program of Work.



## **Dublin-Laurens County Chamber of Commerce Staff**



**Pictured: Bette Nesbitt, Receptionist; Malehia Young, Office Manager; Willie Paulk, Chamber President; Kim Simmons, Membership Coordinator; Katy Edwards, Welcome Center & Tourism Coordinator**

Photo Courtesy: Cal Duke Publishing



## **Roger Folsom**

### ***Development Authority Chairman***

The mission of the Dublin-Laurens Development Authority is quite simply to create jobs and foster economic growth in our county. The Authority has retooled and formed a solid foundation to continue our economic growth. As with any organization, there is a time to restructure and create new goals for growth. For the last several years the Authority members have been hard at work on implementing our Strategic Plan. As part of the overall plan a re-branding process has resulted in a new logo, a creative website, impressive collateral materials and updated technology which can be utilized to provide a prospect the ability take a virtual tour of Laurens County from any place in the world. In reality we can do business with anyone in the world with these new tools, by allowing them to see a prospective site before they even leave their office. Certainly our goal is to get these potential investors to our community and now we have some new exciting methods to entice them to come see for themselves what we all know....that Dublin-Laurens County is a wonderful place to do business.

With the addition of a Vice President of Economic Development and working with marketing consultants from The Whitaker Group, the marketing base of this community has been considerably widened with an on going contact system in place for acquiring new prospects. Each land tract has been categorized and prioritized. This Authority has taken the steps necessary to do business in today's fast paced global economy. Our work has not gone unnoticed by those in the economic development arena and that too has positioned us well for interest from prospects.

In summary, I am delighted to report that the Dublin-Laurens Development Authority is quite sound financially. Some excellent tracts of land are retained for development which adds to our market attraction. The Authority has executed a Strategic Plan which positions this community for growth for both the present and the future. I strongly commend my colleagues on the Authority for their hard work, commitment and love for this community. With support from the Laurens County Commissioners, the Mayor and City Council of the city of Dublin, all the city governments in Laurens County, Senator Ross Tolleson and Representative DuBose Porter, this Authority will continue to create growth for all Laurens County.

## **Cal Wray**

### ***Vice President of Economic Development***

The Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority had a very successful 2008 in our economic development goals for Laurens County and its municipalities. Below is a summary of the highlights for 2008:

- The Development Authority is pleased to welcome the location of three (3) new industries to Laurens County:
  - Custom Concessions, Inc.
  - Sovereign Manufacturing of Georgia, LLC
  - Sovereign Bio-Chem of Georgia, LLC
- The Dublin Bank Consortium was created with the Authority and seven (7) local banks to aid in the attraction of quality industrial, distribution, research, and headquarters facilities to Laurens County. This consortium would have the ability to lend up to \$15 million per qualified project.
- The Authority began site improvements on 100+ acres to aid in marketing to industrial/distribution prospects. We are planning to continue site improvements to show companies the benefits of locating in Laurens County and allowing them to create jobs for the citizens of Laurens County.
- The Authority had much success in garnering the attention of projects in 2008 and is currently being considered for locations by a number of quality companies. We continue to work toward the goal of locating all of these projects within Laurens County.
- We enjoyed a wonderful 2008 and are looking for a more fruitful 2009 with announcements of locations and job creation for Laurens County.





# DUBLIN-LAURENS COUNTY

THE BUSINESS HEART OF GEORGIA

## 2007-2008 Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority



**Roger Folsom, Chairman**  
**Guy Cochran, Vice Chairman**  
**Jimmy Allgood, Treasurer**  
**Scott Beasley**  
**James Malone**  
**Walter McCall**  
**Kathy Sweat**  
**Willie Paulk, Executive Director**  
**Cal Wray, Vice President of Economic Development**

Photo Courtesy: Cal Duke Publishing

- The \$64 million US Highway 441 perimeter road is continuing construction and is nearing completion through our industrial park and should be finished by early 2009. Full completion is anticipated by early 2010. This will add a 5-lane, 8.8 mile limited access highway from US Highway 441 South around the City of Dublin to US Highway 441 South North.
- Our local W.H. "Bud" Barron Airport completed a 500 ft. runway extension expanding our total runway length to 6,500 ft. This will allow us to accommodate any corporate aircraft.
- Laurens County is seeking Certified Work Ready County status.
- Laurens County is also part of the Heart of Georgia Advanced Manufacturing WorkReady Region covering 8 counties to become a Certified WorkReady Region in 2009.

Visit: [www.dublinlaurensgeorgia.com](http://www.dublinlaurensgeorgia.com)

# **Dublin-Laurens County**

## **Chamber of Commerce & Development Authority**

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