

Mitch Griggs named Executive Director of the Stephens County Development Authority

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Toccoa, GA. Mitch Griggs, an Economic Development Program Manager for the Georgia Department of Community Development has been named Executive Director of the Stephens County Development Authority. Mr. Griggs selection was formally ratified in a special meeting of the Development Authority Board on May 2nd. Final negotiations were satisfied on May 4th.

"We are delighted to have attracted such an outstanding individual to lead the Development Authority", said Bob Defenbaugh, Chair of the Search Committee and Development Authority. "Mitch Griggs is the best suited candidate for the job among a deep field of qualified applicants."

Mr. Griggs' background and experience are diverse. In his current job he has been responsible for administering state- and federally-funded grant and loan programs as incentives for new industry locations and business expansions. His experience includes project development, including prospect cultivation, establishing and maintaining relationships with site selection consultants and local officials, making presentations, deal structuring, incentive contracts and marketing. Mitch has coordinated over \$40 million in grants and loans to help over 130 companies locate or expand their operations throughout Georgia, resulting in over \$800 million in new private investment and over 20,000 new jobs in the state. He previously worked for the Lower Savannah Council of Governments, and in the private sector as a Manager for Talley Leasing Company.

Mr. Griggs is a graduate of the University of Georgia. He is a Certified Economic Development Finance Professional. Mitch is active in the Georgia Economic Developers Association.

"A big factor in Mitch's hiring was the expertise he brings in financing and deal closing" Bob Defenbaugh said. "His technical skills will be very important as we seek to develop new job opportunities for our community". The Development Authority was assisted in the search process by Executive Leadership Solutions. An initial pool of 45 applicants was narrowed to four candidates from whom Mr. Griggs was selected.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to work with our elected, professional and volunteer leadership on the continuing development of Toccoa, Stephens County," Griggs said. "A lot of resources are in place or underway: Hayestone-Brady Industrial Park, Four-laning of Highway 17 to I85, an exceptionally strong existing industry base, significant investments in public education including a new middle school/the satellite facility for North Georgia Technical College, Toccoa Falls College, superb medical services, and the Currahee Club residential development.

Mr. Griggs and his wife Joanna, have two children, Elena and Daniel, and an English bulldog, Sanford.

