

Salem submits water line grant app

Officials 'don't have a clue' about time frame for decision

BY RILEY MORNINGSTAR
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SALEM — An application for a grant through the Economic Development Administration for a proposed water line extension to the north end of Salem has been finalized and submitted.

Town clerk Marti Jennings told town council members Tuesday night about the grant submission.

"From this point on, we're in a holding pattern," Jennings said. "Everybody can pray real hard about that. It would be great for our upcom-

ing businesses down the road."

The town has partnered with Oconee County on the project and had been in the process of submitting a grant proposal to the EDA.

"We're hoping they do approve — it would be great for us," Jennings said.

Director of operations Ryan Hardin could not update council on the grant, as he was unable to attend the meeting.

At a September council meeting, Hardin mentioned how the Jocassee Brewing Company has been "hobbled" by the lack of municipal water.

"In the last six months to a year, we've actually had some businesses dredge through and blaze a way and actually started business there — the most recent being Jocassee Brewing Company," Hardin said. "In essence, they're hobbled by how they can expand their business because of the lack of municipal water. They can

only go so far with their current business model without having water."

Jennings said there is no specific date as to when the grant could be approved by the EDA.

"We don't have a clue to when it could be approved," Jennings said.

"The reason we want it to happen is so we can spread out and annex into these businesses that want our services, such as police protection, fire protection, but mostly for utility services, which is water. That would help them expand their businesses, so it's as important for them as it is for us."

The pipeline extension will run roughly 2.3 miles and is estimated to cost around \$1.5 million.

Salem Town Council approved \$140,000 in funding toward the project in September, in addition to a \$30,000 in-kind amount.