

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION  
COUNCIL MEETING  
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN  
AUGUST 16, 2018  
NOON**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:**

Denson, Nancy  
Ferrelle, Dodd  
Houston, Lamar  
Lyon, Tommy  
Palmer, Bill  
Shaw, Jim  
Dyer, Dave  
Scarborough, John  
Padilla, Bob  
Ainslie, Andy  
Bentley, David  
Roseberry, Jerry  
Daniell, John  
Harden, Amrey  
Pittard, Billy  
Dally, Hal  
Chambers, Joyce  
Fordyce, Cary  
Ledford, Howard  
Roberts, Roy

**Members Absent:**

Graham, Pat  
Blechinger, Linda  
Jennings, Tommy  
Guest, Larry  
Smith, Jeffery  
Brock, Phil  
Rhodes, Lee  
Crow, Tom  
Haynie, Doug  
Pennamon, Carl  
Workman, Stone  
Blackmon, Jody  
Perriman, Fred  
Banes, Marcello  
Turner, Frank  
Berry, Rick  
Boggs, Ronnie  
Little, Kevin  
O'Rourke, Tate

**Associate Members Present:**

Horton, Harold  
Seymour, Joel  
Adams, Louise

**Guests Present:**

Robyn Crittenden  
Nancy Bobbitt  
Andrew Seaver  
Barrie Dunlap  
Andy Phippen  
Steve Smith  
Carol Williams  
Cassady Lord

**Staff Present:**

Jim Dove, Executive Director  
Mott Beck, Executive Assistant  
Burke Walker, Director of Planning & Government Services  
Alicia Page, NEGRC Comptroller  
Peggy Jenkins, Area Agency on Aging Director  
Toshia Lewis, Quality Assurance Specialist

**CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF JUNE 21<sup>ST</sup> MEETING MINUTES**

Chairman Jerry Roseberry called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. He welcomed members, guests, and staff and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of

the June 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. **Such a motion was made by Elbert County Commission Chairman Tommy Lyon and seconded by Mr. Amrey Harden. The motion carried unanimously.**

### **ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST**

**Oconee County:** All four lanes of the Mars Hill widening project are open, and a group of citizens will assist the County in planting trees and shrubbery along the corridor. An expansion of the Veterans' Memorial Park is ongoing, and new sod has been installed. Construction of Fire Station #8 at Barber Creek is progressing very well and is slated to be completed in October. Chairman John Daniell gave a "shout out" to former Chairman Wendell Dawson and his leadership for getting the original property donated for the Fire Station. The County was able to sell that property and purchase another site. There was enough of a saving from this property to purchase a ladder truck. Wayne Provost, who was the first planner hired in Oconee County and worked there for 26 years, recently passed away.

**Oglethorpe County:** G-Brand BBQ has opened in the former Chevrolet dealership on Highway 78 in Crawford, and Chairman Billy Pittard reports that business has been very good. The County will have a T-SPLOST referendum on the Ballot in November, as well as alcohol by the drink. Oglethorpe has joined other counties in the region to explore broadband options for rural and underserved areas. The Highway 78 widening project from East Athens through Oglethorpe County will begin the week of August 20<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Pittard invited everyone to visit the County's new up-to-date website!

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Audit & Finance:** Members of the Audit & Finance Committee met prior to the Council meeting and reviewed the financial statements for the eleven-month period ending May 31, 2018. Revenues exceeded expenditures by \$243,940.47. Financial activity for the eleven-month period is approximately 8% of the remaining FY2018 Budget projections overall. They also reviewed preliminary unaudited financial statements for the twelve-month period ending June 30, 2018. Revenues are currently expected to exceed expenditures by \$116,280.70. Financial activity for the twelve-month period should be at approximately 0% of the remaining FY2018 Budget projections overall. Staff is currently working with auditors from Rushton and Company to complete the FY18 Financial Audit. **A motion to accept the financial report as presented was made by Mr. Harden and seconded by Mr. Cary Fordyce. The motion carried unanimously.** Work on the audit is ongoing, and a full report will be presented to the Council in September.

**Program of Work:** The Program of Work Committee met prior to the Council meeting to review the following technical assistance request for the month:

1. **JASPER COUNTY** – Assistance in developing a 2019 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application. This application will seek funding from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to support improvements to the Jasper County Health Department. The fee for developing the application is \$2,000 that will be invoiced upon the application's submission.

Based upon recommendation of the Executive Director, **a motion to accept the technical assistance request for the month for inclusion in the FY19 Program of Work, effective August 16, 2018, was made by Oglethorpe County Chairman Billy Pittard and seconded by Mr. David Bentley. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Planning & Government Services:** The PGS Committee met prior to the Council meeting to discuss items of interest. The Regional Plan was recently reviewed by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and approved. Over the course of its development, the Regional Plan was reviewed by the PGS Committee and regional stakeholders; and they recommended its adoption by this Council today. **A motion to accept the recommendation of the PGS Committee and adopt the Regional Plan by way of resolution was made by Chairman Lyon and seconded by Mr. Fordyce. The motion carried unanimously.** The Regional Plan, as adopted, will guide the Commission's future planning efforts over the next five (5) years.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Director Dove was fortunate enough to be invited to testify before the House Rural Development Council on August 14<sup>th</sup> in Elberton. Speaker David Ralston created this Council to identify issues impacting Rural Georgia in such areas as education, workforce, infrastructure, and healthcare. The council which is co-chaired by Appropriations Committee Chairman Terry England and Ways and Means Committee Chairman Jay Powell is holding a series of meetings around the state. On Tuesday, the Council heard from representatives of the Department of Economic Development and Department of Community Affairs regarding existing incentives, and also heard a report on alternatives for new incentives. Executive Director Dove made a presentation on activities of Regional Commissions, and ABAC President David Bridges who was to report on Tuesday, instead reported on a variety of issues on Wednesday. Also on Wednesday, the Council heard from Rural Georgia Economic Development Commissioner Amy Carter, Department of Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black, and Saralyn Stafford of the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government. Executive Director Dove will advise as to events surrounding efforts of this Council as they wrap-up later this year.

The Georgia Association of Regional Commissions held a day-long Strategic Planning Retreat on August 2<sup>nd</sup> in Macon. Council Member Lamar Houston and Executive Director Dove attended this meeting. It was facilitated by Carrie Barnes of the Georgia Electric Membership Corporation, and she did a tremendous job. The group reviewed and developed a list of core activities undertaken by each Regional Commission, along with a list of efforts that may be expanded upon throughout the state.

The NEGRC is in the midst of upgrading and improving its website. J House Media will lead staff through this effort, and they have been meeting with key personnel to suggest ways to enhance the website and make it more accessible and informative. It is expected that the upgrade will be completed early next year.

It is that time of the year when Private Sector Representatives of the Council are reappointed. Recommendations received from the 12 counties are as follows:

<b>Barrow</b>	-	<b>Tommy Jennings</b>
<b>Clarke</b>	-	<b>Lamar Houston</b>
<b>Elbert</b>	-	<b>Bill Palmer</b>
<b>Greene</b>	-	<b>Lee Rhodes</b>
<b>Jackson</b>	-	<b>Jim Shaw</b>
<b>Jasper</b>	-	<b>Dave Dyer</b>
<b>Madison</b>	-	<b>Bob Padilla</b>
<b>Morgan</b>	-	<b>David Bentley</b>
<b>Newton</b>	-	<b>Frank Turner</b>
<b>Oconee</b>	-	<b>Amrey Harden</b>
<b>Oglethorpe</b>	-	<b>Ronnie Boggs</b>
<b>Walton</b>	-	<b>Joyce Chambers</b>

**A motion to accept these nominations was made by Chairman Pittard and seconded by Mr. Bentley. The motion carried unanimously.**

### **GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES REPORT**

At this time, Robyn Crittenden, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Human Services, addressed the Council. Commissioner Crittenden oversees a \$1.9 billion budget and 9400 employees who work to strengthen Georgia families and protect vulnerable children and adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. She was appointed to her current position in July 2015 after serving as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Georgia Student Finance Commission. During her tenure, Commissioner Crittenden has brought about significant changes in technology to enhance human services delivery to all Georgians. During her presentation, she emphasized the development of partnerships aimed at improving safety, health, independence and self-reliance. With an estimated 190,000 persons diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease living in our state in 2025, the Commissioner is working to establish memory assessment clinics in five locations. In addition, she is working to combat senior hunger. With one in four senior Georgian's struggling with hunger issues, a state

plan to address the situation is currently being developed, and a coordinator to implement the plan will be employed.

### **UPDATE ON PLANNING & GOVERNMENT SERVICES**

The next item on the agenda was a report on the Planning & Government Services (PGS) Division and available programs where staff is available to offer technical assistance to local governments. PGS Director Burke Walker advised that the division is fully staffed, and Stephen Jacques and Monica Sagastizado recently joined the PGS staff. The Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) Program helps communities improve their quality of life and economic vitality through the development of locally driven housing and revitalization strategies. PGS staff can assist with the application process and participate with the local government's team and assist in implementing strategies identified in GICH. Complete Streets is a growing national initiative to improve the design and operation of roadways, particularly those in urban and suburban settings, to accommodate and encourage safe access for all users – motorists, transit riders, cyclists and pedestrians. PGS staff is available to assist in walking, bicycling, and pedestrian planning and promotion. Staff continues to assist with CDBG applications, and will be assisting Jasper County with an application to fund an expansion/renovation to the health department. Madison County received an Appalachian Regional Commission Grant for the MedLink Medical facility in Madison County. PGS staff continues to assist with updates to comprehensive plans for cities and counties in the region.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

The next meeting of the Council will be held on September 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha J. Beck  
Executive Assistant