

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN
JANUARY 20, 2011
NOON**

AGENDA

- | | | |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| I. | CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF
NOVEMBER MEETING MINUTES | STENETTE BROOKS
<i>CHAIRPERSON</i> |
| II. | ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST* | MEMBERS |
| III. | COMMITTEE REPORTS
A. AUDIT & FINANCE
B. PROGRAM OF WORK | FRANK TURNER
CHARLIE CRAWFORD |
| IV. | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT | JIM DOVE
(TO BE GIVEN BY MOTT BECK) |
| V. | WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT
PROGRAM YEAR PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW | CAROL COFER |
| VI. | SCORE – BUSINESS MENTORING | JACK BERNARD |
| VII. | OTHER BUSINESS | CHAIRPERSON BROOKS |
| VIII. | ADJOURNMENT | CHAIRPERSON BROOKS |

***BARROW, CLARKE, ELBERT, AND GREENE COUNTIES**

****THE AUDIT & FINANCE AND PROGRAM OF WORK COMMITTEES WILL MEET
AT 11:30 A.M. PRIOR TO THE COUNCIL.**

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN
NOVEMBER 18, 2010
NOON**

MINUTES

The November meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Council was held on Thursday, November 18, 2010 at noon at the Athens Holiday Inn. Chairperson Stenette Brooks called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Yearwood, Danny
Thompson, Chip
Graham, Ernie
Davison, Heidi
Houston, Lamar
Brown, Terry
Mayers, Tom
Bicknell, Hunter
Joiner, Jim
Short, Shane
Hill, Charles
Nalls, Billy
Dove, Anthony
Ainslie, Andrew
Brooks, Stenette
Morgan, Kathy
Roseberry, Jerry
Turner, Frank
Davis, Melvin
Walter, Joe
Pittard, Billy
Crawford, Charlie
Yeany, Russell
Little, Kevin
Thompson, Greg
Lee, Kay
Roberts, Roy

Members Absent:

Mercer, Jim
Lyon, Tommy
Guest, Larry
Sanders, Bud
Wright, Glenn
Newsome, Glenn
Faust, Ron
Gandy, Roy
Perriman Fred
Harden, Amrey
Knight, Harry
Summerour, Allyson
Lewis, Vince

Associate Members Present:

Seymour, Joel
Pitts, Flemmie
Jackson, Julian

Guests Present:

Russel Carlson
Donald Toms
Robert Bridges
Izlar, Tate
Terry Mathews
Marsay Simpson

Staff Present:

Jim Dove, Executive Director
Mott Beck, Executive Assistant
Evans Brinson, Comptroller
Burke Walker, Director of Planning & Local Gov't. Services
Anne Hansen, AAA Program Monitor

CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES

Chairperson Stenette Brooks welcomed members, guests, and staff. She asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the October meeting. Such a motion was made by Mr. Charlie Crawford and seconded by Commissioner Kevin Little. The motion carried unanimously.

ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Newton County: The Green Enterprise Group, a part of the Leadership Collaborative, recently completed a tour of four farms in Newton County, and an inventory of all existing farms in the County is underway. The City of Porterdale is hosting a farmers' market, in conjunction with organic farmers and others, at the trailhead site in the downtown. The Chamber of Commerce recently hired a new Executive Director. The County, along with the City of Covington, will sponsor the "Lighting of the Courthouse" on the evening of November 18th, and the annual Christmas Parade will be held on December 4th. At the beginning of 2011, a series of meetings will be held to present the 2050 Plan and obtain feedback from the community. An agreement has been signed with SKC Solar, a \$100 million industry that will locate in the County.

Oconee County: The cities in the County are now eligible to participate in full SPLOST revenues. Some of their SPLOST projects include road repaving, rebuilding roads, and surveying for sidewalks and crosswalks. The City, as well as the County, has increased their business licenses and building permits. The County and the City of Watkinsville, along with other groups, have cooperated with the relocation of the tourism office to Main Street. The Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) has chosen Watkinsville as one of the stops for its "Heart and Soul Bus Tour", which will be taking place next spring. The Jennings Mill Parkway, a \$21 million project, is 60% complete and will help to ease the traffic flow to the Epps Bridge area. This area is a significant commercial corridor for the County. Trader Joe's recently opened, and Harbor Freight Tools will be opening in the very near future. The Board of Commissioners and the Development Authority will meet to review matters of mutual interest regarding economic development.

Oglethorpe County: Commissioner Billy Pittard reported that the GARC conference at St. Simons was a great success and provided a lot of information and built good relationships. He offered his appreciation to Elbert County Commissioner John Hubbard and Mayor Heidi Davison for their guidance and support over the years. Oglethorpe County will be updating their Comprehensive Plan and Code of Ordinances. The County will be requesting assistance from the Regional Commission in applying for funds to be used for renovation of the courthouse. Commissioner Pittard advised that counties in the region can transmit EKG data from ambulances through a central location hosted by Athens Regional Medical Center. The 14 cell towers located in the County will help

offset the decrease in the County's tax digest. Commissioner Pittard recognized Terry Mathews and Scott Maxwell, both natives of Oglethorpe County.

Walton County: The City of Monroe has submitted a plan for a streetscape project. The City will also be included on the "Heart and Soul Bus Tour" in the spring. Minerva Products, Inc. has relocated to Monroe from Stone Mountain. General Mills has employed an additional 75-80 persons for a second shift. The Drivers License Facility, and the fire station in Between, will be opening in December. Monroe High School and George Walton Academy have advanced in the state high school football playoffs. The ACCG District meeting will be held at the Monroe Country Club on Monday, November 22nd.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit & Finance: The Committee met prior to the Council and reviewed the financial statements for the four month period ending October 31, 2010. A review of the account balances indicates that the Regional Commission is in good financial condition. Cash and near cash assets exceed total liabilities, excluding the capital lease debt, by \$635,000. Revenues exceed expenses by \$1,211. Financial activity for the four month period is approximately 1/3rd of the annual budget. A motion to approve the financial statement as presented was made by Mr. Frank Turner and seconded by Commissioner Pittard. The motion carried unanimously.

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

1. **JACKSON COUNTY** – 2010 GDOT Transportation Enhancement (TE) Grant Application – Welcome Center & Transportation Museum in the Historic Courthouse.
2. **CITY OF JEFFERSON** – 2010 GDOT Transportation Enhancement (TE) Grant Application - Phase II Streetscape – Improvements in the historic downtown area and extending to the historic courthouse.
(Note: The Jackson County and City of Jefferson TE Grant Applications are part of a joint application, with the County acting as the lead applicant and the City as the co-applicant.)
3. **CITY OF GREENSBORO** – 2010 GDOT Transportation Enhancement (TE) Grant Application – Streetscape improvements in downtown area and along West Greene, West Broad, and Court Streets.
4. **CITY OF MONTICELLO** – 2010 GDOT Transportation Enhancement (TE) Grant Application – Creation of a transportation museum in the historic Monticello High School building and rehabilitation of the first floor.
5. **CITY OF RUTLEDGE** – 2011 Community Development Block Grant Application – Sewer system improvements.
6. **JACKSON COUNTY** – Safe Routes to School Grant Application – Installation of sidewalks and crosswalk around Gum Springs Schools.

7. **CITY OF CARLTON** – Preparation of Zoning Ordinances.
8. **CITY OF CARLTON** – Preparation of Code of Ordinances.

Based upon recommendation from the Executive Director, a motion to approve the technical assistance requests for the month for inclusion in FY2011 Program of Work, effective November 18, 2010, was made by Mr. Crawford and seconded by Commissioner Danny Yearwood. The motion carried unanimously.

Planning and Government Services: The Planning Advisory Committee & the Government Services Committee reports are combined. The Government Services Committee met prior to the Council, and the Planning Advisory Committee met earlier at headquarters. The Government Services Committee reviewed community and economic development activities and learned of projects of local interest. Discussion included the Regional Commission's preparation and submission of its annual Economic Development Administration (EDA) and Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) planning administration grants; review and approval of updates to the services list, and training for local fiscal impact. These items, however, require no action by the Council.

In November, staff continued work on the Assessment for Regional Plan 2035 with the identification of preliminary issues and opportunities, an assessment of the region's progress towards meeting DCA's Quality Community Objectives, and formulation of a regional projected development map based on each county's future land use or future development map. Additionally, the staff, with input from the Planning Advisory Committee, developed a stakeholders list that will assist in identifying the plan's policies and implementation.

The Regional Commission is soliciting new nominations for potential Regionally Important Resource designation. Several communities and organizations have indicated an interest in nominating resources. Nominations may be submitted via the Commission's website and are due January 31, 2011.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Dove advised that the annual Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC) Conference held at St. Simons on November 3rd – 5th was a huge success. Council members attending were Jim Joiner, Kevin Little, Charlie Crawford, Melvin Davis, Hunter Bicknell, Lamar Houston, Tom Mayers, Tommy Lyon, and Billy Pittard. In addition, six staff members attended. Presentations were made by Mike Beatty, Todd Long, Jay Shaw, Ross King, Jim Higdon, and Jay Bulot. The breakout sessions were very informative and well attended. Director Dove expressed appreciation for the Council members that took the time and effort to attend.

The first official meeting of the Regional Transportation Roundtable, which is providing oversight of the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 activities, will be held on December 7th at 2:00 p.m. at the Oconee County Civic Center. Mr. Long will be in

attendance, along with facilitators contracting with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) regarding this exercise.

In keeping with efforts as directed by Chairperson Brooks, RC staff continues to find ways to make the wisest use of available funds. Recently, Director Dove and key staff determined to utilize a different provider for health, vision, and dental group insurance. The former provider had proposed an increase of almost 23%, however, working with our broker, we will utilize the services of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia, effective December 1st. Coverage is very similar to what the RC had, with a 0% rate increase.

The Workforce Investment Board had a very successful full day planning session in late October at the Springhill Suites in Oconee County. The session was facilitated by Wynn Montgomery of Wynnmill Solutions, a very knowledgeable individual regarding job training and workforce related issues. Council member Amrey Harden serves as Workforce Investment Board Chairman, and Commissioner Melvin Davis is the region's Chief Elected Official. Board members reviewed and drafted improved vision and mission statements and developed goals to be addressed in upcoming years.

The Commission on Regional Planning, which is associated with legislation relating to the 2009 transition from regional development centers to regional commissions, met on Monday, November 8th in Atlanta. The Commission, which is chaired by the Governor, includes heads of several state agencies, as well as the Chair of each regional commission. Executive Directors serve as advisors to the Commission. At the first meeting, the Governor gave the charge to the Commission, members heard a report on the performance audit process, and discussed ways in which regional commissions can expand the partnership with state departments. NEGRC Vice Chairman Jim Joiner represented the organization, and Director Dove was in attendance, also.

The Association County Commissioners of Georgia, working in tandem with the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government, will hold the Newly Elected Commissioners' Conference at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education on December 6th – 8th. Director Dove was invited to present a session on regional commissions as partners to local county commissions. Another presenter will be Dave Wills, ACCG staff member and former Commissioner of Webster County. Mr. Wills will be reporting on successful regional efforts, and one item he will focus on will be our own Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority and the Bear Creek Project.

Director Dove advised that he and Executive Assistant Mott Beck will host a Chinese delegation December 10th. The group is visiting the University of Georgia for an extended period of time and requested a visit to the RC to learn more of the services offered. This will be the second such group to visit with staff. Commissioner Davis was part of a delegation that visited China earlier in the year.

At an earlier Council meeting, a resolution was adopted to present the Regional Resource Plan to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for review and comment. DCA has approved the plan, and now the Council must adopt a resolution to approve the Regional Resource Plan. At this time, Director Dove read the resolution, and a motion to adopt said resolution was made by Mr. Turner and seconded by Mr. Lamar Houston. The motion carried unanimously.

REPORT ON THE UPCOMING LEGISLATIVE SESSION

At this time; Chairperson Brooks introduced Terry Mathews, a principal in the firm of Mathews and Maxwell, a governmental affairs consulting firm which represents the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions. Mr. Mathews reported on the political climate at the Capitol and discussed matters requiring attention at the upcoming legislative session. He indicated that several legislators had switched party affiliation, and others were expected to do so prior to the end of the year. He also suggested that preparation of the FY2012 budget will require an inordinate amount of attention; as the budget will probably be trimmed by another \$1.5 billion. Mr. Mathews said it is unlikely that leadership in the General Assembly will seek to amend Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax legislation (H.B. 277) that passed during the 2010 session. He further indicated that Governor-elect Deal was surrounding himself with very capable staff.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING UPDATE

The next item on the agenda was an update by Program Monitor Anne Hansen on the Area Agency on Aging (AAA). The AAA is very proud of the partnership the division has with the counties in the region and the many services that are being provided by the senior centers. This past fiscal year, the senior centers met or exceeded all goals for participation and customer satisfaction. Older adults want to remain in their homes and continue to be independent as long as possible, and the senior centers provide the support to make that happen. Meals served at the centers provide the nourishment to keep them healthy, and the socialization and activities provided keep their minds and bodies strong. AAA staff have written several grants to help the older adults in the region, and four have been awarded. The two grants that will benefit the entire region are the **CDSMP Grant – Live Well Age Well Georgia** and the **Rosalyn Carter Institute Grant**. The CDSMP Grant helps the older adult manage chronic disease. Six class sessions are held at the senior centers in the region, and participants learn how to manage symptoms, set goals, eat healthy, have discussions with doctors, and cope with change. The Rosalyn Carter Institute Grant provides free counseling to couples where one partner has Alzheimers. This counseling involves two individual sessions and four family sessions to help families plan and deal with caregiver needs over time. Ms. Hansen advised the Council that the new Director of the State Office of Aging is Mr. Jay Bulot, a native of Louisiana. He is very committed to making Georgia's older adult population healthy and happy. AAA staff are looking forward to their association with Mr. Bulot.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held on January 20, 2011.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to present to the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha J. Beck
Executive Assistant