

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN
JANUARY 17, 2013
NOON**

MINUTES

The regular monthly meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Council was held on Thursday, January 17, 2013 at Noon at the Athens Holiday Inn. Chairman Jim Joiner called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Graham, Pat
Graham, Ernie
Denson, Nancy
Eisenman, Emily
Bullard, Ed
Finch, Charles
Crow, Tom
Joiner, Jim
Nalls, Billy
Dove, Anthony
Gandy, Roy
Ainslie, Andy
Perriman, Fred
Brooks, Stenette
Ellis, Keith
Roseberry, Jerry
Turner, Frank
Harden, Amrey
Pittard, Billy
Boggs, Ronnie
Little, Kevin
Roberts, Roy

Members Absent:

Blechinger, Linda
Houston, Lamar
Lyon, Tommy
Guest, Larry
Palmer, Bill
Wright, Glenn
Pennamon, Carl
Thurman, Larry
Blackmon, Jody
Davis, Melvin
Ivie, Charles
Johnson, Jesse
Thompson, Greg
Knight, Harry
Lee, Kay
Lewis, Vince

Associate Members Present:

Horton, Harold
Seymour, Joel
Adams, Louise
Crawford, Charlie

Guests Present:

Bob Thomas
Tim Sweezey
David Dyer
Barton Lowrey
Kathy Papa
Marsay Simpson
Steve Sorrells

Media Present:

Michael Prochaska
Oconee Enterprise

Staff Present:

Jim Dove, Executive Director
Mott Beck, Executive Assistant
Carol R. Cofer, Workforce Development Director
Evans Brinson, Comptroller
Burke Walker, Director of Planning & Government Services
Nina Kelly, Project Manager

CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Joiner called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. He welcomed members, guests, media, and staff. He asked for a motion to approve the November meeting minutes. Such a motion was made by Mr. Joel Seymour and seconded by Mayor Jerry Roseberry. The motion carried unanimously.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

At this time, Chairman Joiner advised that the Council has eight new members, and he asked that the four in attendance give a brief self-introduction. They are Commission Chairs Pat Graham, Barrow County; Ed Bullard, Greene County; Tom Crow, Jackson County; and Keith Ellis, Walton County. The other four new members include Jasper County Chairman Carl Pennamon, Auburn Mayor Linda Blechinger, and Oglethorpe County Private Sector Representative Jesse Johnson. The appointment of the Private Sector Representative from Jackson County is pending.

ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Barrow County: Chairperson Graham advised that she had served on the Regional Development Center Board when she was Mayor of Braselton, and that she also represents this region on the Georgia Rural Development Council. In addition to Chairperson Graham, Barrow County has two new District Commissioners: Kenny Shook representing District #2 and Joe Goodman representing District #1. She also introduced Jock Connell, the new County Manager. On February 1st, the Board of Commissioners will hold a full day retreat to discuss and develop strategic goals to address over the next several years.

Clarke County: The Classic Center expansion will be completed and opening in February. Construction on the hotel adjacent to the Classic Center is progressing very well and will include 1500 rooms. A new plan has been developed for the Armstrong Dobbs property and does not include a Wal-Mart. This project is an \$80,000,000 investment. Caterpillar anticipates hiring 300 employees by the end of 2013, and the facility will be open in March.

Elbert County: The redistricting map has been completed and approved by the State, and the City has applied for Opportunity Zone status. The County has a new Sheriff and one new Commissioner, and Commissioner Horace Harper will serve as Vice Chairman of the BOC. A vacant spec building is available, and it is anticipated that another will be built in the near future. The local hospital is now affiliated with the Anderson Hospital, which is an excellent opportunity for the hospital to prosper.

Greene County: Chairman Bullard expressed appreciation to Director Dove and Executive Assistant Mott Beck for hosting and facilitating the retreat for the Board of Commissioners. At the retreat, the County adopted a Vision/Mission statement for future planning. St. Mary's is building a new hospital on S.R. 44 at the south end of the County. This facility will serve the surrounding counties and has the potential to expand and become a regional hospital in the future. A new EMS facility is also being constructed. SPLOST planning is underway and will likely be placed on the ballot in November.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit & Finance: The Committee met prior to the Council meeting to review the financial statements for the six-month period ending December 31, 2012. A review of the account balances reflects the sound financial condition of the Regional Commission, with cash and near-cash assets exceeding total liabilities, excluding the capital lease obligation, by \$723,000. Revenues exceeded expenses by \$7,248. Financial activity for the six-month period was approximately ½ of the annual 2012 Budget. A motion to approve the financial report as presented was made by Mr. Frank Turner and seconded by Mr. Roy Gandy. 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. **CITY OF MONTICELLO** – Preparation of a OneGeorgia EDGE grant application to benefit a private business within the industrial park.
2. **CITY OF WINDER** - Preparation of a Community Development Block Grant-Employment Incentive Program (CDBG-EIP) grant application. The project is multi-jurisdictional for infrastructure improvements extending into Barrow County.
3. **GREENE COUNTY** – Update to the Short-Term Work Program.
4. **CITY OF GOOD HOPE** – Update to the Short-Term Work Program.
5. **CITY OF SOCIAL CIRCLE** – GIS Zoning Map update.

Based upon recommendation from the Executive Director, a motion to approve the technical assistance requests for the month for inclusion in the FY2013 Program of Work, effective January 17, 2013, was made by Commissioner Billy Pittard and seconded by Mr. Billy Nalls. The motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

At this time, Director Dove provided members a copy of the Georgia Residential Population Projections by County for 2012 – 2030, and highlighted counties in the Northeast Georgia Region. This information was forwarded from the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget.

Director Dove advised that the annual Newly Elected Official Orientation will be held on Wednesday, January 30th at 10:00 a.m. in the E.H. Culpepper Conference Room at NEGRC headquarters. Lunch will be served, and the meeting will adjourn at approximately 1:00 p.m.

Over the past several months, Director Dove and Ms. Beck have facilitated retreats for the City of Oxford and Greene and Jasper Counties. Future retreats have been scheduled for the Cities of Social Circle, Elberton, Braselton and Jefferson and Walton and Elbert Counties.

This past Fall, the Governor's Office of Workforce Development (GOWD) Auditors were at headquarters monitoring the Workforce Development Division, and Workforce Development Director Carol R. Cofer will give a more detailed report later in the program. Director Dove will meet with GOWD Executive Director Tricia Pridemore on Monday, January 28th to discuss the relationship between that office and the Regional Commissions.

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLANS (URPs) DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

At this time, Project Manager Nina Kelley gave a report on Urban Redevelopment Plans (URPs). The Urban Redevelopment Act was adopted in 1955 and has been amended several times since its establishment. This Act supports economic and community development components of the local comprehensive plan and acts as a prerequisite for exercising powers granted under the Act for the purpose of improving the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of community residents. Planning and Government Services staff has recently been involved in working on plans for several of the local governments in the Northeast Georgia region. An Urban Redevelopment Plan is defined by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs as general blueprint for redevelopment and targeting of public investments in a specified area. Plans have been completed for the Cities of Winder, Elberton, Porterdale, and Greensboro, and staff is currently working on a plan for the City of Monticello.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The next item on the agenda was a report by Workforce Development Director Carol R. Cofer on the Workforce Development Division. She advised that the annual review by the Governor's Office of Workforce Development (GOWD) was conducted October 29th - November 2nd. The review team identified three minor findings, which Workforce Development staff is reviewing to determine a response. Ms. Cofer provided an update on services provided through December 2012. Over 1021 persons received training services, 421 received post-training follow-up services, and 175 utilized the mobile units during the last six months. She also provided the Council with information on the collaborative between the local workforce area and the Athens Regional Library System so that the units can be utilized in outlying counties which do not have computer labs in their library. This will provide an opportunity to provide access to computer literacy training. Ms. Cofer informed the Council that there would be a summer youth work experience program this summer for those youth already enrolled in the WIA in-school youth program. She encouraged Council members to be looking for the Work Experience Request packet, which will be distributed in March.

2013 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

At this time, Chairman Joiner presented new Committee assignments for 2013. With eight new members, this necessitated a review of the membership on standing committees. In addition, state officials have indicated the need for a Council such as this to be more involved in human service programs such as the Area Agency on Aging and Workforce Development. The NEGRC Council's efforts were applauded because it hears reports on a regular basis. Chairman Joiner, along with Director Dove and Ms. Beck recently met and discussed committees, and the Chairman decided it would be in the Council's best interest if there was a Human Services Committee. This would be our first new committee in approximately 20 years. It would be instrumental in hearing reports on human service programs as mentioned earlier, including our coordinated transportation efforts. The person to chair this committee must have a strong background in workforce development, have a successful senior center program in their county government, and also understand the need to coordinate transportation efforts for all citizens. Given this, Chairman Joiner appointed Oconee County Commission Chairman Melvin Davis to serve in this capacity. Probably half of the committee assignments have changed in order to spread out the representation both geographically and by the sectors represented - county, city, private, state appointments, and associate members. Chairman Joiner expressed appreciation to everyone for serving and asked for everyone's input throughout the year.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held on February 21st.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha J. Beck
Executive Assistant

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
2013**

AUDIT & FINANCE

Frank Turner, Chair
Ed Bullard
Anthony Dove
Amrey Harden
Lamar Houston
David Nunn
Roy Roberts
Larry Thurman
Glenn Wright
Evans Brinson, Staff

PERSONNEL

Kevin Little, Chair
Louise Adams
Emily Eisenman
Roy Gandy
Larry Guest
Jesse Johnson
Buddy Ouzts
Carl Pennamon
Greg Thompson
Jim Dove, Staff

HUMAN RESOURCES

Melvin Davis, Chairman
Jody Blackmon
Tom Crow
Charles Finch
Pat Graham
Vince Lewis
Fred Perriman
Flemmie Pitts
Joel Seymour
Carol Cofer/Peggy Jenkins, Staff

PLANNING & GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Tommy Lyon, Chair
Andy Ainslie
Robert Bridges
Nancy Denson
Charles Ivie
Kay Lee
Bill Palmer
Larry Postell
Jerry Roseberry
Burke Walker, Staff

PROGRAM OF WORK

Billy Pittard, Chairman
Ronnie Boggs
Stenette Brooks
Charlie Crawford
Keith Ellis
Ernie Graham
Harold Horton
Harry Knight
Billy Nalls
Jackson County Private Sector Rep.
Mott Beck, Staff

Chairman Jim Joiner is an ex-officio member of each Committee.

REVISED: JANUARY 2013