

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN
APRIL 21, 2011
NOON**

MINUTES

The April meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Council was held on Thursday, April 21st 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
Denson, Nancy
Mercer, Jim
Lyon, Tommy
Guest, Larry
Sanders, Bud
Joiner, Jim
Short, Shane
Hill, Charles
Newsome, Glenn
Nalls, Billy
Dove, Anthony
Gandy, Roy
Ainslie, Andy
Perriman, Fred
Brooks, Stenette
Morgan, Kathy
Roseberry, Jerry
Turner, Frank
Davis, Melvin
Harden, Amrey
Pittard, Billy
Crawford, Charlie
Little, Kevin
Knight, Harry
Roberts, Roy
Lewis, Vince

Members Absent:

Houston, Lamar
Wright, Glenn
Mayers, Tom
Bicknell, Hunter
Faust, Ron
Walter, Joe
Yeany, Russ
Thompson, Greg
Lee, Kay

Associate Members Present:

Ouzts, Buddy
Seymour, Joel
Adams, Louise
Pitts, Flemmie
Jackson, Julian

Guests Present:

Mark Fordham
Jordan Chinouth
Michael Lamar
Leslie McKee Sessley

Staff Present:

Jim Dove, Executive Director
Mott Beck, Executive Assistant
Evans Brinson, Comptroller
Carol R. Cofer, Workforce Development Director
Anne Hansen, Area Agency on Aging Program Monitor

CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF MARCH MEETING MINUTES

Chairperson Stenette Brooks welcomed members, guests, and staff. She asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March meeting. Such a motion was made by Mr. Harry Knight and seconded by Mr. Charlie Crawford. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Barrow County: Four new companies have located in the County, and a new Army Training Facility is under construction. A 12-movie theatre is also under construction. Barrow County has been designated a "camera ready" community. Major sewer projects are ongoing, and the County has raised over \$900,000 for economic development. Bids will be opened for renovations to the historic courthouse. There is a \$1 million shortfall in the present budget; however, there has been an increase in employment.

Clarke County: A new cancer care center is locating north of Athens, and the Medical College of Georgia has taken over the Navy School site and is working on the property. Mayor Denson expressed her sincere appreciation and pride in Athens-Clarke County law enforcement; as well as many others who worked countless hours throughout the manhunt and capture of the person accused of wounding one officer and killing another. Mayor Denson advised that Athens-Clarke County will have a reduction in the workforce next year.

Elbert County: The County finished the year in the black by \$26,000. Bids will be opened for a 1,000 sq. ft. extension to the airport runway, extending the length to 5,000 sq. ft. Three new cabins will be constructed at Lake Russell, and additional campsites will also be built. Three new fire stations are under construction in the County.

Greene County: The County completed the year in the black, with a sound fund balance. The County's credit rating has been upgraded to AA, which is very strong for a government. The County approved \$3.5 million for road projects, and this expenditure will come from the "dedicated fund balance". Greene County has joined Walton, Barrow, and Baldwin Counties in a public safety radio program, and this endeavor will require the location of two towers in Greene County. A GEMA grant was used to fund the expansion of the Emergency Operations Center.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit & Finance: The Committee met prior to the Council and reviewed the financial reports for the nine-month period ending March 31, 2011. A review of the account balance indicated that the Regional Commission is in good financial condition, with cash and near-cash assets exceeding total liabilities, excluding the capital lease debt, by \$702,000. Revenues exceeded expenses by \$872. A motion to approve the financial statement as presented was made by Mr. Frank Turner and seconded by Mr. Ernie Graham. 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. **ELBERT COUNTY** – Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. The fee for this plan development will be provided by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA).
2. **BARROW COUNTY** – Facilitation of Charter Review Committee.
3. **CITY OF WINTERVILLE** – 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 FY11 Program of Work, effective April 21, 2011, was made by Mr. Crawford and seconded by Commissioner Billy Pittard. The motion carried unanimously. Members were advised that the following Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application projects have been completed and forwarded to the Department of Community Affairs:

1. **CITY OF AUBURN**
2. **CITY OF GREENSBORO**
3. **CITY OF RUTLEDGE**
4. **CITY OF SOCIAL CIRCLE**

Personnel: The Personnel Committee met prior to the Council meeting for the sole purpose of conducting the annual evaluation of the Executive Director. A draft of the evaluation will be forwarded to Committee members and the full Council for review and comment prior to the June meeting. Council action will be taken at that time.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Dove advised that he and Executive Assistant Mott Beck collected projects as submitted by local jurisdictions for inclusion in the package submitted to Todd Long at GDOT. The deadline for local governments to submit the projects was March 30th. Director Dove and Ms. Beck checked 166 projects for completeness and then cross checked them to ensure accuracy (two were found to be incomplete). Although the projects did not have to be submitted to GDOT until April 13th, the projects for the NEGRC region were submitted on April 6th and were the first in the state to be received. The 164 projects totaled slightly more than \$2 billion or about double what is anticipated in revenues should the T-SPLOST be successful.

Mr. Dave Van De Weghe joined the staff on April 18th as Principal Planner. Mr. Van De Weghe was more recently employed with the Columbia County Planning Department, and prior to that, served with the Central Savannah River Area Regional Development Center. He has excellent credentials, having received his Bachelors Degree from the University of Dayton and his Masters Degree from Ohio State University, and he is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Director Dove reported that he and Ms. Beck facilitated the annual retreat of the Oxford Mayor and Council for the second consecutive year on April 16th. It was an excellent session, and a number of topics were discussed, including drafting of a Mission Statement; an overview of the cash flow; and infrastructure; including water, sewer, electricity, roads, etc. The group also entertained ideas as to how to involve more citizens in local government activities.

On April 26th, Director Dove and Ms. Beck conducted the organizational meeting of the Barrow County Charter Review Committee. That Committee, as the name implies, will study the existing Charter and recommend potential changes to the Board of Commissioners. The Chairman of the BOC and each member appointed one person to serve on the Committee, and those seven original members appointed two others. The Committee will meet on separate occasions in Winder, Statham, Bethlehem, Braselton, and Auburn/Carl. Recommendations will be made to the full Board of Commissioners at its meeting on June 14th.

ROSALYNN CARTER INSTITUTE – GEORGIA FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

At this time, Leslie Sessley gave a report on the Rosalynn Carter Institute's Georgia Family Support Program (GFSP). The GFSP is a free program that provides support and counseling for those caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease or other form of dementia. The program includes six counseling sessions – two individual sessions and four family sessions. In-home and out-of-home respite care is provided free of cost for the caregiver through the duration of the counseling sessions. The GFSP is based on a scientifically proven course of support that has resulted in reduced caregiver stress and depression, increased family support, and delayed nursing home placement in many cases. Funding for this program was made possible through a grant received from the Rosalynn Carter Institute.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FUNDING UPDATE AND SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM

The next item on the agenda was a report by Workforce Development Director Carol R. Cofer on the status of funding for Program Year 2011 (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012). In FY09, the local area had provided training assistance to over 3,094 persons utilizing a combination of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) formula and stimulus funds. On February 11, 2011, the House Appropriations Committee had proposed a federal continuing resolution funding bill which would have zeroed out funds to WIA, effective July 1, 2011. A massive public awareness campaign was implemented, and the continuing resolution passed both the House and Senate on April 14th and was signed by the President. While this provides funding for the federal government through September 30, 2011, it provides funds for WIA from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012. Regardless of this good news, there were no funds provided to operate a stand alone summer work experience component in the manner that was operated in 2009

and 2010. The only youth that will have an opportunity to work through the WIA Summer Work Experience Component this year will be those already enrolled in the WIA In-School Year Round Program (approximately 250 youth). Worksite solicitation packets will be mailed within the next two weeks.

APPOINTMENT OF AWARDS COMMITTEE AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Annual Meeting is held each May in conjunction with the regular meeting of the Council. At that time, two awards are presented, the Distinguished Northeast Georgian and the Local Government Administrator of the Year. At this time, Chairperson Brooks appointed the following members to an Awards Committee: Harold Horton, Chairman; Amrey Harden; and Charlie Crawford. The Committee will meet in the near future to choose persons to receive these awards. Also, the two year term of officers will be ending in July, and the following persons were appointed to the Nominating Committee: Melvin Davis, Chairman; Lamar Houston; and Buddy Ouzts. They will meet to nominate a slate of officers to serve during the next two year term.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday, May 19th.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully Submitted,



Martha J. Beck
Executive Assistant