

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN
AUGUST 18, 2011
NOON**

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission was held on Thursday, August 18th 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
Houston, Lamar
Lyon, Tommy
Palmer, Bill
Sanders, Bud
Mayers, Tom
Bicknell, Hunter
Short, Shane
Nalls, Billy
Dove, Anthony
Gandy, Roy
Ainslie, Andy
Brooks, Stenette
Morgan, Kathy
Roseberry, Jerry
Turner, Frank
Walter, Joe
Harden, Amrey
Pittard, Billy
Crawford, Charlie
Little, Kevin
Knight, Harry
Lee, Kay
Roberts, Roy
Lewis, Vince

Members Absent:

Guest, Larry
Wright, Glenn
Joiner, Jim
Hill, Charles
Newsome, Glenn
Faust, Ron
Perriman, Fred
Davis, Melvin
Yeany, Russ
Thompson, Greg

Associates Present:

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

Guests Present:

Carol Williams
Tate O'Rourke
T.K. Adams
Timothy Adams
Wayne Provost

Staff Present:

Jim Dove, Executive Director
Mott Beck, Executive Assistant
Carol R. Cofer, Workforce Development Director
Don Carpenter, Workforce Development Contractor
Burke Walker, Planning & Gov't. Services Director
John Devine, Senior Planner
Evans Brinson, Comptroller

CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF JUNE COUNCIL MINUTES

Chairperson Brooks called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. She welcomed members, guests, and staff. She asked for a motion to approve the June meeting minutes. Such a motion was made by Mr. Tom Mayers and seconded by Mr. Roy Gandy. The motion carried unanimously.

ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Madison County: The County is matching LMIG funds to complete seven miles of resurfacing, and the intersection on Highway 29 at the Ingles is nearing completion. The County is also completing the water line from Commerce to Hull, and anticipates having extra funds to extend the line to Spratlin Mill Road. Madison County has a new Bed and Breakfast and Winery off Hudson River Church Road. The budget process has been completed, and Chairman Dove is happy to announce that they did not have to use any of the Contingency Fund. Madison County's Bicentennial celebration will be held on September 24th.

Newton County: In March, citizens of Newton County approved a SPLOST referendum, and those projects are being implemented. The Board of Commissioners recently approved the County's transportation projects for the new year, and most of them are maintenance and resurfacing. Newton County has three to five movies or TV series a year filmed in and around the area, and due to this initiative, \$7 million in revenues have been generated over the last three years.

Oconee County: The Oconee Connector project is on schedule, with a contract opening date of December. A Town Hall Meeting was recently held, and discussion topics included budget, finances, Hard Labor Creek, courthouse and administration facilities expansion, and redistricting. Staff has completed review of RFPs from ten firms for the Farmington Fire Station Site Plan. The County is seeking funds from a grant for a Public Safety Radio Station. Several road-resurfacing projects are ongoing in the County. Watkinsville has completed the Harris Shoals project.

Walton County: The Board of Commissioners recently passed the budget. Walton County citizens will vote on a \$54 million SPLOST referendum in November. New SPLOST projects will include a jail, two fire stations, and a new E-911 Center. Hitachi, located in the industrial park, has doubled its workforce during the last 18 months. Commissioner Kevin Little stressed the importance of T-SPLOST and education of citizens.

APPOINTMENT OF PRIVATE SECTOR MEMBERS TO THE COUNCIL

The Bylaws provide for private sector representation from each of the twelve counties in the region. Nominees are chosen by the leadership of those

counties and submitted to the Regional Commission Council for approval for a one-year term. Nominees submitted were:

Barrow	-	Ernie Graham
Clarke	-	Lamar Houston
Elbert	-	Bill Palmer
Greene	-	Tom Mayers
Jackson	-	Shane Short
Jasper	-	Billy Nalls
Madison	-	Roy Gandy
Morgan	-	Stenette Brooks
Newton	-	Frank Turner
Oconee	-	Amrey Harden
Oglethorpe	-	Russ Yeane
Walton	-	Harry Knight

A motion to accept the nominations was made by Commissioner Kevin Little and seconded by Commissioner Anthony Dove. The motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit & Finance: The Committee met prior to the Council meeting to review the financial statement for the first month of FY 2012. Revenues exceeded expenses by \$492, and financial activity for the month was approximately 1/12th of the annual 2012 Budget. A motion to approve the financial report as presented was made by Mr. Frank Turner and seconded by Commissioner Kathy Morgan. The motion carried unanimously. Committee members were advised that representatives from the auditing firm of Clifton, Lipford, Hardison & Parker have been conducting the annual audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011. The audit report will be presented at the September Council meeting.

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. CLARKE, MADISON AND OGLETHORPE COUNTIES** – Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan Update – Fees for this service are provided by FEMA grants. The updates will span a two-year period and will involve the Counties' EMA Directors and other staff.
- 2. CITY OF BOWMAN** – Immediate Threat & Danger (ITAD) Grant Application - \$50,000 for improvements to failed wastewater treatment ponds.
- 3. CITY OF ELBERTON** – Urban Redevelopment Plan.
Based upon recommendation from the Executive Director, a motion to approve the technical assistance requests for inclusion in the FY2012

Program of Work, effective August 18, was made by Mr. Charlie Crawford and seconded by Commissioner Billy Pittard. The motion carried unanimously.

Planning & Local Government Services (PGS): The committee met prior to the Council meeting and reviewed community and economic development activities, planning activities, and member reports. PGS staff updated members on activities related to the development of the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan 2035. Three stakeholder meetings were held in June, at which time attendees were asked to contribute their ideas on creating a vision for the Plan. This vision will serve as the foundation of the components of the plan, which is being developed in accordance with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Regional Planning Requirements. The Plan is scheduled to be adopted by the Council in January 2012.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Dove advised that staff member Jim Moneyhun is recuperating at the University of Alabama Birmingham Medical Center after donating a kidney to his Uncle. He was a very willing candidate and a perfect match. He is not expected to be in the hospital more than a couple of days and will return to work shortly.

Director Dove reported that he and Executive Assistant Mott Beck have spent a considerable amount of time in the past few weeks regarding the T-SPLOST effort, and expressed appreciation for the cooperation of everyone in planning meetings, disseminating information, and coordinating with GDOT. This effort provides an opportunity to fund much needed transportation improvements over the next ten years in the Northeast Georgia region.

At this time, Director Dove gave a report on the Georgia Competitiveness Initiative. This initiative is bringing state government and the business community together at the request of Governor Nathan Deal to develop a long-term strategy for economic development. Led by the Georgia Department of Economic Development and the Georgia Chamber, the initiative will work throughout Georgia to assess the state's current strengths and weaknesses, gather information and ideas from leaders from various regions and industries, and develop recommendations that will ultimately stimulate job creation and economic growth. Meetings are being held around the state, and the one in this region will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, August 24th at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education. Ms. Beck, Workforce Development Director Carol Cofer, and Director Dove will be in attendance to represent the Regional Commission.

Since the last council meeting, the Regional Commission reviewed one Development of Regional Impact (DRI): DRI#2213 Arcade Meadows, proposed to be located in the City of Arcade. The DRI committee met on Tuesday, August 9th and found this DRI to be in the best interest of the region and; therefore, the state. The committee did, however, express concern with the project's potential impact on wetlands and stream corridors and made recommendations regarding traffic improvements and buffers with adjacent land uses. No action by the council is required for this finding.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ROUNDTABLE ACTIVITIES

At this time, Commissioner Hunter Bicknell gave an in-depth report on T-SPLOST efforts in the region. The Transportation Investment Act of 2010, also known as House Bill 277, was signed into law in June 2010. This legislation will allow voters in the general statewide primary of 2012 to decide on a one-percent, 10-year, regional sales tax for all types of transportation improvements in each of the twelve regional special tax districts that correspond to the regional commission boundaries. Revenues raised in this region will remain in the region. Commissioner Bicknell expressed his appreciation to Director Dove and Ms. Beck for their efforts related to this initiative. The RTR Executive Committee has pared the list of projects down to 64, and the full Roundtable will meet on October 6th to vote on the list. A series of public meetings is scheduled throughout the region in September to give the public an opportunity to review the projects and make comments.

WRAPUP OF 2011 SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM

The next item on the agenda was an overview by Ms. Cofer of the 2011 Summer Youth Program. A total of 239 youth, working 30 hours per week for five weeks, were placed at 118 worksites located throughout the twelve Northeast Georgia counties. Outside of the regular youth formula funding, there were no additional funds to support extra youth placement for this Summer's program. Ms. Cofer advised that the adult and dislocated worker waiting list for training services total 1,000. She was happy to report that there were no Workmen's Compensation claims filed this year. Ms. Cofer encouraged Council members to tour the new computerized mobile unit available at the meeting and to explore ways the unit could be utilized in their communities.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee, consisting of Committee Chairman Melvin Davis, Lamar Houston, and Buddy Ouzts, met via e-mail on August 4th and voted to unanimously recommend to the Council the following slate of officers for a two-year term:

Chairman	-	Jim Joiner
Vice Chairman	-	Kevin Little
Secretary	-	Frank Turner

A motion to accept the slate of officers as presented was made by Mr. Amrey Harden and seconded by Mr. Lamar Houston. The motion carried unanimously.

TRANSITION OF OFFICERS AND OATH OF OFFICE

At this time, Chairperson Brooks administered the oath of office to the new officers. Following the oath, Chairperson Brooks expressed her appreciation for being allowed to serve and thanked everyone for their dedication and service to the Regional Commission. She then turned the gavel over to Vice Chairman Little in the absence of Chairman Joiner, who had a previous commitment.

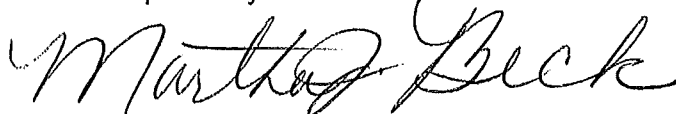
OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held on September 15th.

ADJOURNMENT

They're being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Martha J. Beck
Executive Assistant