

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL
MAY MEETING / ANNUAL MEETING
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN
MAY 17, 2018**

MINUTES

Members Present:

Blechinger, Linda
Denson, Nancy
Ferrelle, Dodd
Houston, Lamar
Lyon, Tommy
Palmer, Bill
Smith, Jeffery
Rhodes, Lee
Crow, Tom
Haynie, Doug
Shaw, Jim
Pennamon, Carl
Dyer, Dave
Scarborough, John
Padilla, Bob
Ainslie, Andy
Perriman, Fred
Bentley, David
Banes, Marcello
Roseberry, Jerry
Tuner, Frank
Daniell, John
Harden, Amrey
Pittard, Billy
Little, Kevin
Dally, Hal
Chambers, Joyce
Fordyce, Cary
Ledford, Howard
Roberts, Roy

Members Absent:

Graham, Pat
Jennings, Tommy
Guest, Larry
Brock, Phil
Workman, Stone
Blackmon, Jody
Berry, Rick
Boggs, Ronnie
O'Rourke, Tate

Associate Members Present:

Horton, Harold
Seymour, Joel
Adams, Louise

Guests Present:

Lynne Riley
Iseeta Robinson
Doug White
Brian Standifer
Cynthia Miller
David Wease
Larry Thurman
Lathaydra Sands
Sherry Ledford
T.K. Adams
Paul Chambers
Andrew Seaver

Staff Present:

Jim Dove, Executive Director
Mott Beck, Executive Assistant
Carol Cofer, Workforce Development Director
Burke Walker, Planning & Government Services Director
Alicia Page, Comptroller

WELCOME AND APPROVAL OF APRIL 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 April minutes. **Such a motion was made by Commissioner Tommy Lyon and seconded by Mr. Frank Turner. The motion carried unanimously.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit & Finance: Members reviewed the financial statements for the nine-month period ending March 31, 2018. Revenues exceeded expenditures by \$236,890.254. Financial activity for the nine-month period should be at approximately 25% of the remaining FY2018 Budget projections overall. Members reviewed the proposed Fiscal Year 2019 budget. The budget is a balanced budget and shows an increase of 2.66% overall from the previous Fiscal Year 2018 budget. A staff recommendation was made to carry the proposed FY19 budget forward for a vote at next month's meeting. Members also reviewed the proposed revised FY18 budget which shows an increase of 6.98% overall from the originally adopted FY18 budget. A staff recommendation was also made to carry the proposed revised FY18 budget forward for a vote at next month's meeting. Comptroller Alicia Page indicated that it is projected that the NEGRC will end the year with a surplus of revenues over expenses. After verifying that the NEGRC would incur a pre-payment penalty for applying excess funds to the outstanding building addition lease, Mrs. Page made a recommendation to apply excess revenues toward an additional payment to the NEGRC's Pension Liability. The recommended payment shall not exceed \$125,000 to help reduce the Commissions Net Pension Liability. Also presented was a purchase order in the amount of \$12,324.95 for the purchase of eight computer workstations, five monitors, ten adapters, and labor for installation and set-up for Planning and Government Services staff. **A motion was made by Mr. Amrey Harden to approve the finance report as presented which includes: 1) present both the Proposed FY2019 Budget and Revised FY2018 Budget to the Council for approval in June; 2) apply excess revenues toward an additional payment not to exceed \$125,000 to the NEGRC's Pension Liability; and 3) approve purchase order for Planning & Government Services staff as presented. The motion was seconded by Mayor Linda Blechinger and 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. TOWN OF BRASELTON** – Assistance in developing a grant application seeking funding from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) FY2018 Disaster Supplemental Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). This funding would support sewer system improvements to serve Green4U Technologies, a company that will create 250 jobs and provide over \$26 million in private investment. There is no fee for this assistance.
- 2. CITY OF WHITE PLAINS** – Update to the City's Comprehensive Plan. There is no fee for this assistance.
- 3. CITY OF WINTERVILLE** – Assistance with efforts to begin preparing the community for the impacts and benefits of the Firefly Trail. This project involves facilitating a site visit to Travelers Rest, SC, which has benefitted greatly from the Swamp Rabbit Trail, a rail-trail that connects to Greenville as the Firefly will connect Winterville to Athens. There is no fee for this assistance.

Based upon recommendation of the Executive Director, **a motion to approve the technical assistance requests for the month for inclusion in the FY2018 Program of Work, effective May 17, 2018, was made by Commissioner Billy Pittard and seconded by Mr. David Bentley. The motion carried unanimously.**

Planning and Government Services: Members met prior to the Council meeting to discuss several items of interest. The Division submitted three comprehensive plan updates that are currently under review by DCA. Three other updates are in process of completion. Nothing discussed required action by the Council.

ANNUAL REPORT OF STAFF ACTIVITIES

At this time, Executive Director Dove gave an in-depth report on staff activities for Fiscal Year 2018 and highlighted accomplishments of each division. He also advised that staff continues to facilitate administrative efforts relative to the Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority, and he and Executive Assistant Mott Beck continue to facilitate retreats/planning sessions for local governments and related organizations throughout the region. A total of 146 such sessions have been conducted to date. A copy of the Staff Activities Report is on file at Regional Commission Headquarters.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE UPDATE

Councilmember Tommy Lyon introduced Georgia Department of Revenue Commissioner Lynne Riley who provided an update on activities of that agency. Commissioner Riley indicated that the Department has approximately 1,200 employees and introduced Ms. Iseeta Richardson of the Athens Regional Office. She touched on many areas of interest, and advised that the Department is hard at work regarding tax reform efforts at the federal and state level. She explained that there are many opportunities at present to minimize corporate and individual tax burdens that will occur at the end of the year. She discussed H.B. 61, which is important in regard to internet sales tax. Also discussed was implementation next year of Ad Valorem Tax changes. She indicated there is considerable discussion about H.B. 55 – voters will decide in November if there is a new type of real property called Timberland. She discussed H.B. 661, which provides for a repository online of tax liens filed by the state. She also mentioned several new tax credits to be put in place or extended including Rural Hospital Credit, Student Scholarship Donation, Education Foundation, Railroad Track Maintenance, and High Technology Data Centers. Commissioner Riley outlined changes to the GATE Program which will provide for better accountability between the Departments of Agriculture and Revenue. She also referenced the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act which provides for revenues to be set aside for investment in outdoor facilities. She closed by indicating that her Department will be assisting local governments that vote to receive additional transit funding, and in the modernization of the automobile tag and title system. Commissioner Riley entertained several questions and comments from Council members.

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

The next item on the agenda was presentation of awards that are given annually by the Regional Commission. Dr. **Howard Ledford** is the 2018 recipient of the Robert L. and Betty Williford Distinguished Northeast Georgian Award. He is currently Dean of the Jackson County Campus of Lanier Technical College. He previously served as CEO/Director of the Technical Career Academy of Northeast Georgia. For five years he was Director of Family Connection of Oglethorpe County. Dr. Ledford serves on the Jackson County Family Connection Board of

Directors and the Board of Directors for both the Banks County and Jackson County Chambers of Commerce. He is a member of the Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Board and the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Council, serving as a member of the Planning and Government Services Committee.

Monticello City Manager **Doug White** was honored at the event as Local Government Administrator of the Year. Mr. White is serving a second tour of duty as Manager in Monticello. Previously, he served as the first Social Circle City Administrator and the first Forsyth City Administrator. He has also worked with private consulting firms during a lengthy career. He retired from the U.S. Army Reserves and Georgia Army National Guard after 25 years of military service.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held on June 21st.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha J. Beck
Executive Assistant