

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN
APRIL 19, 2018
NOON**

MINUTES

Members Present:

Graham, Pat
Blechinger, Linda
Jennings, Tommy
Denson, Nancy
Ferrelle, Dodd
Houston, Lamar
Lyon, Tommy
Palmer, Bill
Smith, Jeffery
Haynie, Doug
Pennamon, Carl
Workman, Stone
Dyer, Dave
Scarborough, John
Padilla, Bob
Ainslie, Andy
Bentley, David
Banes, Marcello
Roseberry, Jerry
Daniell, John
Harden, Amrey
Pittard, Billy
Berry, Rick
Boggs, Ronnie
Little, Kevin
Dally, Hal
Chambers, Joyce
Ledford, Howard

Members Absent:

Guest, Larry
Brock, Phil
Rhodes, Lee
Crow, Tom
Shaw, Jim
Blackmon, Jody
Perriman, Fred
Turner, Frank
Fordyce, Cary
O'Rourke, Tate
Roberts, Roy

Staff Present:

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

Associate Members Present:

Seymour, Joel
Adams, Louise

Guests Present:

Doug Hicks
Danielle Miller
Cathy Wooten
Gail Lyon
Matthew Peppers
T.K. Adams
Andrew Seaver
Leta Talbird
Steve Smith
Phillips Workman
Don Jernigan

CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF MARCH 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 March meeting. **Such a motion was made by Mayor Linda Blechinger and seconded by Commissioner Tommy Lyon. The motion carried unanimously.**

ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Barrow County: The County has started a 30+ acre expansion to Victor Lord Park in Winder, a project included in the 2018 SPLOST. The County is in the planning stages for a new wastewater treatment facility project on Tanners Bridge Road. The consultation and management work will take 27 to 33 months to complete. 523 residential permits were issued last year, with over \$72 million in investment. The County is working on an update to its Comprehensive Plan and Service Delivery Strategy. The economy in Barrow County is strong, and a lot of infrastructure projects are ongoing.

Clarke County: The government's financial standing is very strong, with a balance of \$129 million in the General Fund. A 2 ½% salary increase has been set aside for employees; however, Athens-Clarke County (ACC) is currently conducting a wage and salary survey which will determine whether salary increases will be a percentage or another type of increase. Athens-Clarke County has entered into a public/private partnership with Athens Hospitality Holding's Group for construction of a mixed-use development on Strong Street consisting of hotel rooms, a restaurant, office space for the Athens-Clarke County Economic Development Department, and multipurpose space. Planning is underway for re-development of the old Westclox property. This will be a mixed use development, with some residential, entertainment, and office space. The first phase of the Firefly Trail is complete, and the next phase will connect to Winterville.

Elbert County: The County, the City of Elberton, Sheriff's Office, Police Department, and the Board of Education are all working together to keep all of their children safe in school. The Board of Commissioners has approved the purchase of five Yurts for Bobby Brown Park. For the third year, the Park will be hosting a Catfish Festival on the weekend of April 20-22, and all 63 campsites are sold out. DOT is planning to four-lane Highway 17 from Lavonia to Elberton, and the County is hoping to construct a spec building in the near future. The County and municipalities have completed an update to the Service Delivery Strategy.

Greene County: The County has approved a Conditional Use Permit to Greenbrier Sand for the development of natural resources to produce sand, top soil, pea gravel, and mulch at 1440 C.M. Copelan Road. NIBCO, Inc. Greene County's largest manufacturer was selected by the Technical College System of Georgia and the Georgia Department of Economic Development as the Mid-Sized Manufacturer of the Year in the State of Georgia for 2018. Boswell-Parker Health and Rehabilitation is renovating the old Minnie G. Boswell Hospital in Greensboro into a twenty-one private room skilled nursing and rehabilitation center. The Grand Opening will be held in June 2018. Governor Nathan Deal

and Georgia Department of Economic Development Commissioner Pat Wilson recently recognized Quail International at the Go Global Awards Reception in Atlanta as one of forty companies to be honored with a 2018 GLOBE Award recognizing them for achieving entry into one or more new international markets.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit & Finance: Members reviewed the financial statements for the eight-month period ending February 28, 2018. Revenues exceeded expenditures by \$42,565.27. Financial activity for the period should be at approximately 33% of the remaining FY2018 Budget projections overall. Comptroller Alicia Page presented the audit evaluations of the proposals received for the FY2018-20 audit services. Based on the evaluation scores, a staff recommendation was made to the Audit & Finance Committee that Rushton & Company be awarded the contract for Fiscal Years 2018 through 2020, and the Committee agreed with the recommendation. **A motion to accept both the financial report and the recommendation of Committee to award audit services to Rushton & Company was made by Mr. Amrey Harden and the motion carried unanimously based on the motion and recommendation of Committee.**

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** – Assistance in developing a Downtown Strategic Plan and an accompanying Rural Zone application. The fee for this assistance is \$3,000.
2. **CITY OF SILOAM** – Update to the City's Comprehensive Plan. The plan update requires the additional element for land use, and this will require a fee of \$500.
3. **WINDER HOUSING AUTHORITY** – Assistance in facilitating a strategic planning session. There is no fee for this assistance as it is provided under the NEGRC's administrative grant and local dues.
4. **NEWTON COUNTY** – Update to the County's Comprehensive Plan. The fee for this assistance is \$2,000.

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 April 19, 2018, was made by Commissioner Billy Pittard and seconded by Mr. David Bentley. The motion carried unanimously.**

Planning & Government Services: The Committee met prior to the Council meeting to discuss several items of interest, and none of them required action of the Council. As an update, DCA has notified interested parties of the open comment period for the draft Regional Plan Update, DCA's review period will end on May 26th. The committee expects to consider the Plan's adoption at the June Council meeting.

Personnel: The Personnel Committee met prior to the Council meeting to conduct the annual evaluation of the Executive Director. Executive Assistant Mott Beck will prepare a draft of the evaluation and send to Committee members for review and comment. A copy will be forwarded to the full Council prior to action at the June meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

On April 10th, Executive Director Dove attended a meeting hosted by the Georgia House of Representative's Commission on Transit Governance and Funding in Macon. The Commission, which is chaired by State Representative Kevin Tanner, chose Deloitte Consulting to assist in analyzing the state's transit needs and methods to be utilized in addressing them. There were approximately 30 attendees at what was called "a greenhouse lab". Attendees were briefed on transit objectives, and gained a better understanding of current data. Then they were given an opportunity to discuss strengths and improvement opportunities and to explore current government and funding. They also learned lessons from other successful programs across the nation along with best practices and design principles. Attendees will be provided a summary of the meeting and future reports as planning efforts continue.

Executive Director Dove and Ms. Beck facilitated an excellent retreat for the Town of Braselton on April 13th. It was the 13th consecutive year that they have facilitated Braselton's strategic planning session. Outcomes included five specific short-term goals for action over the next 12 to 18 months, along with a number of long-term priorities.

Executive Director Dove will be attending the ACCG Annual Conference in Savannah on April 27th – 29th. The Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC) will have an exhibit at the Buyer's Mart on Friday and Saturday. On Sunday, he will attend the Installation of Officers at which Council Vice Chair Billy Pittard will become 1st Vice President.

Lamar Houston, Burke Walker, Jordan Shoemaker, and Executive Director Dove will attend the GARC Annual Economic Development Conference at Lake Lanier on May 6th - 8th. Among the keynote speakers at the event will be Joyce White, State Director of USDA-Rural Development and Christopher Nunn, DCA Commissioner.

Executive Director Dove was recently elected to a 10th term on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO). NADO represents more than 500 organizations similar to the Regional Commission throughout the nation on a variety of matters at the nation's Capital.

May is Older American's Month, and for 55 years, the designation has been observed to recognize older Americans and their contributions to communities. It emphasizes the importance of being active and involved, no matter where you are in

life. Throughout the month, activities will be conducted and information shared to highlight local programs and resources.

REPORT ON OXFORD COLLEGE OF EMORY UNIVERSITY

At this time, Dean Douglas Hicks gave a report on Oxford College of Emory University. The College was founded in 1836, and approximately 975 students are enrolled. It is a two-year liberal arts college located in the City of Oxford. The students hail from many locations and have very diverse backgrounds. Regarding the 2017 entering class, 32% are from the southeast, 23% are from the northeast, 10% come from the central portion of the country, and 16% are from western states. In addition, 19% are international students. There were more than 16,600 applications for admission last year, and the retention for those admitted is 97%. The first year average SAT score for 2017 is 1,419. The campus has undergone a dramatic transformation during the past decade, and additional changes are planned. The College has a significant economic and civic impact. The annual economic impact in Georgia is \$262 million, and \$79 million in Newton County. The direct capital investments from 2013 – 2020 will total approximately \$114 million. The College supports 1,500 jobs, of which 520 of those are filled by Newton County residents. In addition, faculty and students provide approximately 13,000 service hours annually to the community. Dr. Hicks addressed a number of questions and discussion items following his formal presentation.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held on May 17th.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha J. Beck
Executive Assistant