

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION  
COUNCIL MEETING  
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN  
APRIL 18, 2019  
NOON**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:**

Blechinger, Linda  
Girtz, Kelly  
Ferrelle, Dodd  
Houston, Lamar  
Palmer, Bill  
Haynie, Doug  
Pennamon, Carl  
Dyer, Dave  
Scarborough, John  
Padilla, Bob  
Ainslie, Andy  
Perriman, Fred  
Bentley, David  
Roseberry, Jerry  
Daniell, John  
Harden, Amrey  
Pittard, Billy  
Boggs, Ronnie  
Dally, Hal  
Chambers, Joyce  
Fordyce, Cary  
Ledford, Howard  
Roberts, Roy

**Members Absent:**

Graham, Pat  
Jennings, Tommy  
Vaughn, Lee  
Guest, Larry  
Smith, Jeffery  
Brock, Phil  
Crow, Tom  
Shaw, Jim  
Blackmon, Jody  
Banes, Marcello  
Turner, Frank  
Shearon, Dave  
Berry, Rick  
Little, Kevin  
O'Rourke, Tate

**Staff Present:**

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

**Associate Members Present:**

Horton, Harold  
Seymour, Joel  
Adams, Louise

**Guests Present:**

Dave Belton  
Paul Chambers  
Byron Lombard  
Don Jernigan  
Beth Eavenson  
Andrew Seaver

**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. He 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 Andy Ainslie. The motion carried unanimously.**

**ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST**

**Barrow County:** Barrow County is experiencing a tremendous amount of residential and commercial growth. Single family home permits have increased significantly. Several companies have made substantial investments, and the County has a very healthy tourism industry.

**Clarke County:** The City of Winterville will be unveiling a new mural at the bookstore on Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 p.m. Athens-Clarke County has been engaged in some very vigorous criminal justice reform activities that will enhance public safety and reduce costs as well. The first issue to be addressed will be Municipal Court such as limiting use of cash bail and bond and instituting a contact system using text messages or e-mail (much like a Pharmacy system). ACC is also looking at a carbon free clean energy package that will be developing over the next decade. This will be included in the next SPLOST at a cost of \$10 million.

**Elbert County:** Bobby Brown Park is great, and is almost at 100% capacity over holidays and special events. Yurts have been added, and camp spaces have been renovated and, in some cases, enlarged to accommodate campers. The Catfish Tournament and Festival will be held at the Park the weekend of April 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, and 30+ boaters have already signed up. In the City of Elberton, dilapidated buildings have been renovated for businesses on the ground floor and lofts upstairs. This project has been a huge success.

**Greene County:** A \$29,000,000 SPLOST referendum will be voted on in November. A Chick-Fil-A is locating in Greensboro. Greene County is planning to have a T-SPLOST early next year.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Audit & Finance:** The Committee met prior to the Council meeting, and members reviewed the financial statements for the eight-month period ending February 28, 2019. Revenues exceeded expenditures by \$24,222.54. Financial activity for the period should be at approximately 34% of the remaining FY2019 projections overall. **A motion to approve the financial report as presented was made by Mr. Amrey Harden and seconded by Madison County BOC Chairman John Scarborough. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Program of Work:** The Committee met prior to the Council meeting and reviewed the following technical assistance requests for the month.

- **CITY OF SOCIAL CIRCLE** – Assistance in developing a Master Plan for the City's sidewalks, trail, and parks. This assistance also includes graphical and GIS mapping support for the final Master Plan product. As this project is included in the City's short-term work program, the NEGRC can offset a portion of its costs with the planning contracts. The remaining fees will not exceed \$5,000 that will be invoiced at the project's completion.
- **CITY OF ARCADE** – Assistance in developing an update to the City's Comprehensive Plan. While there is no fee for the basic plan's development, any additional elements, as required or requested, will be quoted after further discussion with the City.

Based upon recommendation of the Executive Director, **a motion to approve the technical assistance requests for the month for inclusion in the FY19 Program of Work, effective April 18, 2019, was made by Oglethorpe County BOC Chairman Billy Pittard and seconded by Mr. David Bentley. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Planning and Government Services:** The Planning & Government Services Committee met prior to the Council and discussed several items of interest. In addition to members providing area reports, the Committee was updated on the candidate search for a new PGS Division Director. A review of information submitted by job candidates began last week, with interviews to follow. The position is expected to be filled on or before July 1, 2019. There was no action by the Council regarding this report.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Director Dove will be attending the ACCG Annual Conference in Savannah on Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>. He will be at the exhibit center for a good portion of that time manning the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions booth. Vice Chairman Billy Pittard will be inducted as President at the meeting. He follows in a long line of Northeast Georgia Leaders to serve in this capacity including Kevin Little who is currently a member of the Council.

On Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday May 7<sup>th</sup> Council Member Lamar Houston and Mr. Dove will attend the GARC Annual Economic Development Conference at Lake Lanier. Burke Walker, Director of Planning & Government Services and Project Specialist Jordan Shoemaker will also be in attendance. There will be several informative speakers and breakout sessions scheduled for the conference. Mr. Dove will give a full report at next month's meeting.

All of the Annual Personnel Evaluations have been completed and placed in the Personnel Files of each employee. These are utilized to improve the overall performance of staff members, and are considered in personnel actions and salaries.

Executive Assistant Mott Beck and Mr. Dove will facilitate the 14<sup>th</sup> annual consecutive planning retreat for the City of Braselton on Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at NEGRC headquarters. Given time constraints and duties facing Mr. Dove and Ms. Beck during the next couple of months, this will be the last such retreat they will facilitate. This effort, which is provided at no additional costs to local governments and affiliated organizations, is among the more worthwhile of technical assistance matters with which they have been involved.

## **REPORT FROM THE GOLD DOME**

Representative Dave Belton of House District 112 was introduced by Chairman Roseberry. Representative Belton has served in the General Assembly since 2014, and served as an Aviator in the U.S. Navy. He currently chairs the House Military Affairs

Committee, where he has inspired the passage of 23 laws to assist military service members and their families. He began his presentation by commenting on economic development opportunities offered by our state. For the past six years, we have been named the Best State in the Nation to do business. He commented on the 800,000 jobs created during the Deal Administration, the deepening of the Savannah Port, the importance of the Atlanta Airport, and the amount of funds spent on surface transportation routes. He discussed efforts of the recently completed Session of the General Assembly including military bills, the state budget, the Ballot Box Bill, the Heart Beat Bill, and efforts to extend rural broadband. He also mentioned the Medicaid Waiver Program and the medical Cannabis Act. Following his presentation, he addressed questions and comments from Council members.

### **PROGRESS REPORT ON MAP-21**

PGS GIS Planner Eva Kennedy provided an overview of Georgia's MAP-21 program, a unique cooperative partnership between GDOT, ITOS, and GARC to update Georgia's local road data on a county-by-county basis. NEGRC is currently working on its fifth county review. All twelve regional commissions (RCs) are confident in meeting the 2021 target completion date. GDOT has asked each RC to distribute a survey to county staff following the completion of each MAP-21 review; NEGRC appreciates those staff taking the time to complete the survey. Ms. Kennedy also emphasized the importance of Local Road Activity (LRA) reports. Local governments are required to submit an LRA to GDOT whenever any changes are made to their public, local road system. Both MAP-21 and LRAs serve to ensure communities are properly accounted for in state and national datasets, thereby ensuring proper funding allocations.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

The next meeting will be held on May 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, Chairman Roseberry adjourned the meeting at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha J. Beck  
Executive Assistant

