
Date: April 15, 2021

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Location: Telephonic

Minutes

Members Present:

Linda Blechinger
Ronnie Boggs
Joyce Chambers
Tom Crow
John Daniell
David Dyer
Dodd Ferrelle
Cary Fordyce
Kelly Girtz
Doug Haynie
Bruce Henry
Todd Higdon
Steve Horton
John Howard
Terry Lawler
Howard Ledford
Bill Palmer
Jay Paul
Fred Perriman
Billy Pittard
Bill Ritter
Roy Roberts
Jim Shaw
Brad Tucker

Members Absent:

Louise Adams
Andy Ainslie
Marcello Banes
David Bentley
Rick Berry
Jody Blackmon
Phil Brock
Pat Graham
Larry Guest
Gail Harrell
Harold Horton
Janet Jones
Tate O'Rourke
Bob Padilla
Flemie Pitts
Joel Seymour
Jeffrey Smith
Solomon Smothers
David Thompson
Frank Turner
Lee Vaughn

No Guests Present

Employees Present

Amber Bailey
Julie Ball
Alicia Page
Burke Walker

Call to Order

Chairman Pittard called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. Chairman Pittard welcomed everyone to the April meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission. He then asked Julie Ball to take a roll call for those not already identified on the call. Chairman Pittard asked that any guests present announce themselves. Chairman Pittard said the March 18, 2021 minutes were distributed prior to today's meeting. Unless there were corrections or changes, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made by Cary Fordyce and seconded by Bill Palmer. The motion passed unanimously.



Chairman Pittard noted that in the interest of time, “Area Reports” would not be presented by County Chairpersons.

Chairman Pittard stated that two of the Council’s Committees met prior to this morning’s Council meeting and asked the Committee Chairpersons to present their reports.

Committee Reports

Audit & Finance – Howard Ledford

Howard Ledford said members of the Audit & Finance Committee met prior to today’s Council meeting and he reported on the following:

February 2021 Financials

Committee members reviewed the financial statements for the eight-month period ending February 28, 2021. Revenues exceeded expenditures by \$73,756.05. Financial activity for the eight-month period should be at approximately 33% of our remaining FY2021 Budget projections overall.

Howard Ledford made a motion to accept the financial report dated February 28, 2021. The motion was seconded by Mayor Linda Blechinger. The motion passed unanimously.

P.O. Approvals in Excess of \$5,000

Howard Ledford also reported that Alicia Page, NEGRRC Comptroller, informed the committee of two purchase orders that were approved by the Audit and Finance Committee Chairman prior to today’s meeting. They are as follows:

- Jackson County Senior Center- In the amount of \$21,717.50 for reimbursement of items purchase for the senior center.
- Oconee County Senior Center- In the amount of \$5,827.30 for reimbursement of items purchased for their senior center.

Planning and Government Services – Mayor Linda Blechinger

Mayor Linda Blechinger stated that the PGS Committee met on April 14, 2021 and discussed economic development and other news from around the region. The PGS Committee reviewed the draft Action Plan for the Regional Economic Resilience and Recovery Plan. A full draft of the plan will be available for the Council’s review and consideration of adoption within the next two months.



Executive Director's Report – Burke Walker

Executive Director Burke Walker greeted the Council and stated that there were no action items this month.

Ralph Nix

Executive Director Walker informed the Council that retired Executive Director from the Middle Georgia Regional Commission, Ralph Nix, had passed away. Mr. Nix served as Executive Director from 2006-2016 and worked at the Regional Commission for 43 years.

NEGRC Staff-Katurah Patterson

Executive Director Walker shared with the Council that staff member Katurah Patterson's (Aging Division) son, Tykerius Monford, was accepted into Brown University with a full academic scholarship.

White House Infrastructure Plan

Executive Director Walker provided information to the Council regarding the White House Infrastructure Plan or "American Jobs Plan" for Georgia. There were 12 infrastructure categories and Executive Director Walker highlighted 7 that were particularly relevant to NE Georgia.

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)

Executive Director Walker stated that the May 1 application deadline for economic developers to participate in a 5-6 month training was fast approaching.

Executive Director Walker shared that he was elected to serve on the Development Districts Association of Appalachia (DDAA) Board to represent Georgia's 37 ARC Counties for another year.

In-Person Meetings

Executive Director Walker announced that in-person Council meetings would resume in May at Trump's Catering Ballroom in Athens. The change in location was necessary due to the closure of the Holiday Inn related to COVID-19.

Billy Pittard's General Assembly Recognition-Senate Resolution 275

Executive Director Walker mentioned that the commending resolution introduced by Senator Lee Anderson (D24) and sponsored by Senator Cowser passed in the last legislative session. The resolution commended Council Chairman Billy Pittard for his outstanding contribution to public service. Executive Director Walker congratulated Chairman Pittard.



Other Business

Chairman Pittard said that the Robert L. and Betty Wiliford Distinguished Northeast Georgian award and the Northeast Georgia Local Government Administrator of the Year award would both be presented at the Council meeting in May.

Chairman Pittard said that since it was an odd-numbered year a new NEGRC Officer would need to be nominated for the Secretary's position at the meeting in June. He asked Mayor Linda Blechinger, Jim Shaw, and Andy Ainslie (Chairperson) to serve on the nominating committee.

Chairman Pittard briefly discussed Comprehensive Plans and said that there was no fee for the basic-plan's preparation when developed by the NEGRC.

There was no other business to report.

Adjournment

Chairman Pittard thanked everyone for their attendance and with no further business to come before the Council, he adjourned the meeting at 11:29 a.m. He noted the next Council meeting on May 20, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. would be held in person.

Julie Ball, Executive Assistant
Northeast Georgia Regional Commission

May 20, 2021

Date Approved