



Date: May 19, 2022

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Location: Trumps Catering

Minutes

Members Present:

Andy Ainslie
Linda Blechinger
Ronnie Boggs
John Daniell
Dodd Ferrelle
Cary Fordyce
Kelly Girtz
Pat Graham
Doug Haynie
Bruce Henry
Todd Higdon
Janet Jones
Terry Lawler
Byron Lombard
Bill Palmer
Jay Paul
Billy Pittard
Joel Seymour
Jim Shaw
Craig Snow

Members Absent:

Louise Adams
Marcello Banes
Phil Brock
Tom Crow
David Dyer
Daniel Graves
Gail Harrell
Harold Horton
Steve Horton
John Howard
Ralph Maxwell
Jill Parham
Fred Perriman
Flemie Pitts
Bill Ritter
Roy Roberts
Shane Short
Solomon Smothers
Jennifer Stewart
David Thompson
Brad Tucker
Frank Turner
Lee Vaughn
Paul Walton

Guests Present:

Wendy Bond, Winterville
Barbara Cabaniss
Bill Cabaniss
Adam Mestres
Hilda Sorrow
Mark Sorrow
Jean Spratlin
Melanie Thomason
Carol Williams, WDB

Staff Present:

Amber Bailey
Julie Ball
Mark Beatty
Carol Cofer
Eva Kennedy
Sophia Primer
Burke Walker

Call to Order

Chairperson Bill Palmer called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. He welcomed attendees to the May Council meeting and asked everyone to rise and join him in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then asked any guests or visitors to introduce themselves. Chairperson Palmer said the April 21, 2022 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 Ronnie Boggs and seconded by Mayor Dodd Ferrelle. The motions carried unanimously.



Chairperson Palmer mentioned the Reports on Items of Local Interest would be deferred to the June meeting to allow time for the annual awards presentations.

Committee Reports

Audit & Finance – Terry Lawler for Mayor Fred Perriman

Terry Lawler said members of the Audit & Finance Committee met earlier today and reviewed several items.

The first item was the review of the March 2022 financial statements that reported revenues in excess of expenditures by \$79,199.69. Based on the Committee's review, Mr. Lawler made motions to accept the March 2022 financial report. The motions passed unanimously.

Second, the committee also reviewed the FY22 Revised and FY23 Proposed budgets and their recommended funding. Copies of these budgets were available on tables for members' review. In reviewing the FY22 Revised Budget, he mentioned the following:

- There was an overall increase from the original adopted FY22 budget of 12.77% amounting to \$1,711,407.
- The Division of Aging had an overall increase of \$1,778,757.
- The Division of Planning & Government Services had no changes.
- The Division of Workforce Development had an overall decrease of \$67,350.

In reviewing the FY23 Proposed Budget, he mentioned the following:

- The FY23 budget is a balanced budget, therefore, the revenues equal the expenditures.
- The overall revenues and expenditures are projected to come in at \$13,282,795.
- There is an overall decrease of about 12.14% from the Revised FY22 budget due to a reduction in COVID funding in our Aging and Planning & Government Services Divisions.
- The amount required to match the Regional Commission's programmatic grants is projected at \$517,952.
- To comply with the Department of Audit's recommendations, annual dues are calculated using the most recent population figures. This results in an increase of \$93,979 in dues for Fiscal Year 2023 based on the most recent 2020 Decennial Census numbers.

Mr. Lawler said the draft budgets, as presented, will be considered at the June meeting for Council action. There was no action and Mr. Lawler concluded his report.



Program of Work Committee – Mayor Dodd Ferrelle

Mayor Ferrelle stated that prior to today’s Council meeting, the Program-of-Work Committee reviewed three (3) technical-assistance requests for the month. They also reviewed the updated FY22 annual program-of-work and a performance review using the standard for measurement for the year. Both of these items require Council action today.

First, the following technical-assistance requests were received for the month:

- Oglethorpe County requested assistance with the Firefly Trail planning, design, property research and other related tasks—not including any grant/loan application preparation. There is no fee for this assistance as it is provided through the NEGRC’s GDOT Bike/Ped planning contract and local dues.
- The City of Good Hope requested assistance in a Land Development Ordinance Amendment. There is no fee for this assistance as it is provided through the NEGRC’s Economic Development Administration’s (EDA) Cares-Act grant.
- The City of Monticello requested assistance in updating their Comprehensive Plan (including Public Hearings, input sessions, and additional plan elements. The fee for this assistance is \$7,500.

Based on recommendations by the Executive Director followed by the Committee’s review, Mayor Ferrelle recommended approving the technical assistance requests for inclusion in the NEGRC’s FY2022 Program-of-Work in the form of motions. The motions passed unanimously.

Second, the Committee received a report from Director Walker on the FY22 Program-of-Work activities for the year. The year’s annual work program was amended to include all the monthly, technical-assistance requests for the year. The Committee also reviewed the year’s activities using the adopted standards-of-measurement. Based on the Committee’s review, Mayor Ferrelle recommended the amended work program and performance review for approval in the form of motions. The motions passed unanimously.

Planning and Government Services – Commissioner Andy Ainslie

Commissioner Ainslie said the Planning & Government Services Committee met this morning and discussed economic and community development activities occurring around the region.

Commissioner Ainslie said the CEDS update is currently underway. NEGRC staff will also begin updating the Regional Plan in the coming months and would like leaders from throughout the region to be involved in that process. Information on the initial public hearing and meetings will be coming soon.

The PGS Committee had one item that required Council action: DCA recently approved the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan Annual Implementation Report for FY22. The PGS



Committee reviewed the Annual Report and made motions for Council adoption. The motions passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report – Burke Walker

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

GARC Meeting- Grant Clarification

Executive Director Walker provided updated information regarding the Downtown Revitalization Grants. These grants are available to rural communities through funding approved by the legislative session. At the GARC Conference in May, Kim Carter (DCA) updated the following information:

- \$17 million available for grants that require a 10% match. Applications are due June 30, 2022. Announcements will be made June 30th by DCA. The projects must be completed by June 30, 2024. These are expected to be very competitive grants, each requesting a minimum of \$1 million.
- Executive Director Walker thanked Commissioner Andy Ainslie, NEGRC Chairman Bill Palmer and Mark Beatty (NEGRC) for attending and participating in a CEDS round-table discussion at the GARC conference.

Staff News

- Executive Director Walker mentioned that the NEGRC had vacancies in each Division and the process of searching for candidates was underway. He announced the resignation of Kim Meadows (Workforce Division). Executive Director Walker wished Kim the best and thanked her for 15 years of service to the NEGRC.
- Mark Beatty was promoted to replace Eva Kennedy as PGS Division Director, following her resignation. Executive Director Walker congratulated Mark and wished Eva the best as she moves on.

David Nunn

Executive Director Walker stated that David Nunn, former Council member and Administrator of the Year had announced his retirement as City Manager of Madison. Executive Director Walker said he planned to attend the recognition program and wished Mr. Nunn the best in his retirement.

Annual Dues

Executive Director Walker informed the Council that it was time to send invoices to the member local governments for annual per-capita dues. The per-capita dues are based on the most recent Census numbers and allows the NEGRC to match state and federal grants that typically results in a \$1 to \$19 return on investment for our member governments in programs and services. This



year was a little different since the population was based on the actual Decennial Census 2020 count and not estimates. Dues invoices will be prepared by our finance staff and sent out to local governments shortly.

Phone System

Executive Director Walker reported that the new phone system was in place at the NEGRC offices. The new system includes inter-office messaging, video conferencing and other features that enable out-of-office connectivity. Next month's Update publication will provide more information.

CVIOG Classification and Compensation Plan

Executive Director Walker informed the Council that Dan Lassiter (CVIOG) had recently presented the draft version of the NEGRC's Job Classification and Compensation Plan to the Personnel Committee. The meeting was convened by Mayor Haynie (Committee Chair) and included distribution of the draft document for the Committee's review. At the June Council meeting, Mayor Haynie will report on the results of this review.

Lincoln Resolution

Executive Director Walker discussed the NEGRC's 401k plan and its defined-contribution plan through Lincoln National. The plan document requires a modification to include a Hardship Distribution provision set forth in the 2019 final regulation applying Section 41114 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. This is an IRS requirement to bring our plan to current standards and it allows certain financial disbursements from individual accounts. This requires approval by resolution to accept the amendment that was circulated with the meeting materials. Executive Director Walker recommended adoption of the Hardship Distribution Provision by resolution for the inclusion the 401k plan document. A motion was made by Mayor Linda Blechinger and was seconded by Mayor Doug Haynie. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director Walker asked if the Council had any questions. There were none and he concluded his report.

Awards

Executive Director Walker presented the Administrator of the Year Award to Athens-Clarke County Clerk, Jean Spratlin. Chairman John Daniell presented the Robert L. & Betty Williford Distinguished Northeast Georgian Award to Bill and Barbara Cabaniss, of Maxeys. After the presentation, Chairperson Palmer congratulated both of this year's recipients.



Other Business

Chairperson Palmer reminded everyone of the next meeting on June 16, 2022 at Trumps.

Adjournment

Chairperson Palmer thanked everyone for their attendance and with no further business to come before the Council, he adjourned the meeting at 12:59 p.m.

Julie Ball, Executive Assistant
Northeast Georgia Regional Commission

June 16, 2022

Date Approved