



Date: September 19, 2024

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Location: Trumps Catering

Minutes

Members Present:

John Daniell
Dodd Ferrelle
Pat Graham
Daniel Graves
Doug Haynie
Bruce Henry
Todd Higdon
David Hunt
Janet Jones
Deborah Krause
Terry Lawler
Dee Lindsey
Blake McCormack
Wendell McNeal
Fred Perriman
Jim Shaw
Brad Tucker

Members Absent:

Ronnie Boggs
Phil Brock
Michael Coile
Tom Crow
David Dyer
David Eady
Kelly Girtz
Serra Hall
John Howard
Tommie Jennings
Jesse Johnson
Carol Myers
Bill Palmer
Jay Paul
Billy Pittard
Shane Short
Lanier Sims
David Thompson
William Trimier
Lee Vaughn

Guests Present:

Christina Baxter, Madison County BOC
Wendy Bond, Winterville
Marty Clark, Jackson County
Beth Eavenson, DCA
Stephen Goad, North High Shoals
Jim Hix, Jackson County BOC
Allen Hulme, Elbert County
Niko Manlapaz, Collins GA-10
Grace Martin, Bogart
Kevin Mason, Collins GA-10
Nolan Mayes, C.A. Marren & Son
Kathy Morgan, Newton County IDA
Tony Rogers, DAJC
Carol Williams, WDB

Staff Present:

Amber Bailey
Mark Beatty
Carol Cofer
Sophia Primer
Burke Walker

Call to Order

Chairperson John Daniell called the meeting to order at 12:33 p.m. He welcomed attendees to the Council meeting and requested a moment of silence to recognize Apalachee High School. He then asked that everyone rise and join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Guests or visitors were invited to introduce themselves.

Chairperson Daniell informed the attendees that the August 15, 2024 minutes were distributed prior to the meeting. He called for a motion to approve the minutes unless there were any additions or corrections. A motion was made by Mr. Fred Perriman and seconded by Mr. Bruce Henry to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.



Items of Local Interest

Chairperson Daniell announced that today, four counties would report on items of local interest. These include Jackson, Jasper, Madison and Morgan Counties. He invited the county representatives to provide their reports.

Jackson County – Marty Clark

- A Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (TSPLOST) will be on the November ballot. This would generate \$200 Million in revenue for the county and its nine municipalities over a six-year period. There is an educational component with Jackson Citizens for Better Roads, a local non-profit.
- Several county staff members visited Washington, D.C. to meet with Senator Ossoff, Senator Warnock, Congressman Collins and Congressman Clyde.
- Construction on the new administration building will be completed on October 21, 2024. Everyone is invited to the ribbon cutting on November 7, 2024 at 11:30 a.m.
- This week the \$88 Million budget passed, which is \$1.3 Million lower than last year. The millage rate was set at 5.751, ten percent lower than last year's. This is a full rollback plus an additional millage cut.
- Ground had broken on an additional transfer station at the current transfer station site.
- After a \$2.5 Million expansion project, the Senior Center will be ready in October.

Jasper County- Bruce Henry

- T & F Lumber was granted a permit to expand their warehouse.
- A new business park will be built at Highway 83 South and Edwards Road.
- A new gas station will be built at Hwy 142 East. A permit review is being conducted for a gas station with a convenience store at Highway 16 West and Highway 212 West.
- Funding for a third full-time ambulance and to expand an existing building with EMS living quarters was approved.
- A new fire engine and 300-gallon firefighting super tanker have been purchased.
- The County Probate Judge will cease serving as the County Elections Superintendent on December 31, 2024 so a three-person election board has been established to hire a new Election Superintendent.
- A new county ordinance has been developed for short term residences. A max of thirty will be allowed but only twelve applied. So far ten have been approved.
- The \$10 Million Sherriff's Office expansion and renovation is complete. This project did not use any County Ad Valorem taxes and was funded by Stanton Springs, SPLOST and Impact fees.
- Wild Road was repaved. The Old Agateville Road Bridge will be replaced using the GDOT low impact bridge replacement program.
- Chairman Henry has been appointed by the Board of Commissioners to serve on the Joint Development Authority Board to fill a vacancy.

Madison County- Todd Higdon



- The millage rate rolled back roughly .567. This was the fourth year in a row that it was rolled back.
- Two new industrial sites have been designated. One is 50 acres and the other is 116 acres. The 50 acre site is almost sold out.
- More industrial and commercial zoning requests are being submitted.
- The ordinance rewrite is still underway with the CPL firm. Due to the recent Comprehensive Plan Update one of the major focuses of the updates will be zoning. A water feasibility study is also underway.
- The County is seeking to hire a Planner, Economic Developer, and many other positions.
- The County water department was previously under the Industrial Development and Building Authority (IDBA) but will be moving back under the Board of Commissioners on January 1, 2025. The IDBA will focus on Economic Development going forward.
- Mr. Higdon discussed House Bill 581 and encouraged everyone to research it.
- There will be a run-off in November in a District Commissioner race, the only contested seat for the County.

Morgan County – Blake McCormack

- The new Recreation Department will be completed in May. Construction continues on the Community Center.
- The County will be featured in Georgia Trend magazine's January issue.
- Three new subdivisions (Kingston, Wellington and Madison Hills) will be built.
- There is an opening for a Public Works Director.
- Advantage Behavioral is coming to partner with Morgan County.

Committee Reports

Audit & Finance – Mayor Fred Perriman

Mayor Perriman said the Audit & Finance Committee members met earlier today and reviewed one item that required Council action today.

The Committee reviewed the July 2024 financial statements for the 1st month of the fiscal year that reported revenues in excess of expenditures by \$62,743.46.

Mayor Perriman made motions to accept the July 2024 financial report. The motions passed unanimously.

Program-of-Work – Mayor Dodd Ferrelle

Mayor Ferrelle said the Program-of-Work Committee met prior to today's Council meeting and reviewed three technical-assistance requests that required Council action today.

The three project requests include the following:



- Madison County requested assistance in developing a 2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application for water-system improvements. The fee for this assistance is \$6,000.
- The City of Social Circle requested assistance in amending their Comprehensive Plan to update their character-area map with supporting descriptions. The request includes assistance with public hearings. The fee for his assistance is \$3,000.
- The Town of Bethlehem requested assistance in amending their Comprehensive Plan to update their character-area map with supporting descriptions to align with the Town's Unified Development Code. The request includes assistance with public hearings and meetings. The fee for this assistance is \$6,000.

Based on recommendations by the Executive Director followed by the Committee's review, Mayor Ferrelle recommended approving the project requests. The motions passed unanimously.

Planning and Government Services – Mr. Brad Tucker

Mr. Tucker said the Planning and Government Services Committee members met earlier today and reviewed one item that required Council action today.

The NEGRC's PGS Division intends to apply for funding for Fiscal year 2026 for Program 5304 Transit Planning funds from the Georgia Department of Transportation. These funds will be used to implement the Regional Transit Development Plan and provide transit planning services to the region.

Based on the Planning and Government Services Division's recommendation to approve the authorizing resolution. Mr. Tucker made motions to accept the recommendation. The motions passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report – Burke Walker

Executive Director Burke Walker greeted the Council and thanked everyone for their attendance.

Department of Community Affairs' CDBG Summit

Executive Director Walker stated that the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) would host a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Summit in Athens October 7-10, 2024. The annual statewide conference includes both training for next year's grant applicants and also presentation of 2024 awards. We are pleased to have Commissioner Nunn and his staff in Athens next month. NEGRC staff will attend in preparation for assisting our local governments with CDBG applications and administration.

Plan First Designation

Executive Director Walker informed the Council that announcements were made for communities that received the Plan First Designation. This designation recognizes and rewards



communities that perform exemplary work and have high levels of activity in local planning and implementing their approved comprehensive plans. Since 2015, six NEGRC communities have received this designation. Congratulations to the City of Monroe, and Mayor John Howard for earning this designation.

Rural Development Council

Executive Director Walker stated that the Georgia House of Representatives' Rural Development Council was meeting today in Thomson. There were no agenda items that related to Regional Commissions.

Audit

Executive Director Walker informed the Council that Rushton had been at the NEGRC offices as part of their FY24 audit. Rushton will attend the NEGRC Council meeting in November to present their report.

New Council Members

Executive Director Walker stated that the Council had two new members. Mayor David Eaddy of Oxford was appointed to the Council by the other Newton County Mayors and will attend his first meeting in October. Mr. Lanier Sims, the Interim Newton County Chairman, has also joined the Council.

Retirement

Executive Director Walker informed the Council that he had recently met with NEGRC Council Chairman Daniell to announce his intent to retire on December 12, 2024 after 31 years with the NEGRC. Executive Director Walker stated that it had been his privilege to work with the NEGRC staff and Councilmembers during his time at the Regional Commission. He expressed his pride in the work the NEGRC does for its local governments. He thanked the Councilmembers for their time and commitment to Northeast Georgia.

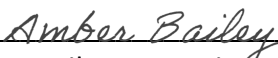
There were no questions or comments, so Executive Director Walker concluded his report.

Other Business

Chairperson John Daniell stated that the Executive Committee would meet on September 26, 2024 to review several items and discuss how to proceed with the Executive Director candidate search.

Adjournment

With no further business before the Council, Chairperson Daniell adjourned the meeting at 1:02 p.m.



Amber Bailey, Executive Assistant
Northeast Georgia Regional Commission

10/17/24
Date Approved