

Date: May 21, 2026

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Location: Trumps Catering

Notes-No Quorum

Members Present:

Marty Clark
John Daniell
Dodd Ferrelle
Doug Haynie
Bruce Henry
Todd Higdon
John Howard
Tommie Jennings
Terry Lawler
Blake McCormack
Carol Myers
Bill Palmer
Jay Paul
Fred Perriman
Tony Rogers
Brad Tucker

Staff Present:

Amber Bailey
Shadeiki Cain
Jody Graichen
Amy Jones
Rhonda Keeter
Eva Kennedy
Annette Miller
Susan Perdue
Sophia Primer

Members Absent:

Phil Brock
Michael Coile
David Eady
Kelly Girtz
Pat Graham
Daniel Graves
Serra Hall
Joe Hicks
David Hunt
Jesse Johnson
Janet Jones
Debbie Krause
Dee Lindsay
Demond Mason
Wendell McNeal
Shane Short
Amy Stone
David Thompson
DeAshley Thurman
William Trimier

Guests Present:

Lee Black
Wendy Bond, Winterville
Brian Broderick, Watkinsville
Deb Cantrell, Georgia's Rural Center
Carol Cofer
Stuart Cofer
Drayton Criswell, Watkinsville
James Dickerson
Joe Dickerson
Sharyn Dickerson
Beth Eavenson, DCA
Jan Watson Greer, Watkinsville
Luke Hetland, Lt. Governor's Office
Sarah Hovater, The Marigold Collective
Julie Klein
Grace Martin, Bogart
Marc Novak, Watkinsville
Nick Parker, Watkinsville
Jesus Rubio, Senator Warnock
Mattie Thomas
Miriam Thomas
Carol Williams
Colt Young, Winterville
Greg Ziesenhene, Collins GA-10

Call to Order

Vice-Chairman Dodd Ferrelle called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Vice-Chairman Ferrelle informed the attendees that a quorum was not established so all Council business would be addressed at the June meeting.



Items of Local Interest

Vice-Chairman Ferrelle announced that no county reports would be given.

Audit & Finance Committee – Fred Perriman

The Audit & Finance Committee met and reviewed one item that required Council action and would be addressed at the June meeting. The Committee reviewed the March 2026 financial statements for the 9th month of the fiscal year that reported revenues in excess of expenditures by \$259,697. Currently there is 43% of the annual budget remaining for the rest of the fiscal year.

The Committee also reviewed FY26 Revised and FY27 Proposed budgets and their recommended funding.

There was an overall decrease in the original adopted FY26 budget of 10% amounting to \$1,571,590.

The Division of Aging had an overall decrease of \$1,045,222 in expenditures including additional general fund match of \$5,165.

The Division of Planning & Government Services had an overall increase in expenditure of \$6,789 including additional match of \$4,006

The Division of Workforce Development had an overall decrease of \$533,157 in expenditures.

The FY27 budget is a balanced budget therefore, the revenues equal the expenditures.

The overall revenues and expenditures are projected to come in at \$11,893,471.

There was an overall decrease of 19.39% from the revised FY26 budget

The amount required to match the NEGRC's programmatic grants is project at \$352,702.

To comply with DCA requirements, annual dues are calculated using the most recent estimates provided by the U.S. Census Bureau's population estimates program (PEP). This year's population numbers reflect an increase of \$32,778 in dues for fiscal year 2027 from \$709,853 to \$742,631.

Mr. Fred Perriman stated that these items would be considered at the June meeting.

Programming and Government Services – John Howard

The PGS Committee met earlier today and reviewed six project requests.

The six (6) requests include:



- Retreat facilitation for Elbert County.
- Two CDBG grant applications for Jackson County and the City of Oxford.
- Administration of an ARC grant for Madison County.
- Public survey assistance for Greene County.
- A trails master plan for Barrow County.

The second item that required Council action was the adoption of the NEGRC's Regional Plan Annual Implementation Report. This report is required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and outlines the progress made during FY2026 on the Regional Plan Work Program. The PGS Committee recommended approving the report, as written, by resolution.

Based on recommendations by the Executive Director followed by the Committee's review, these items will be recommended for Council approval at the June meeting.

Executive Director's Report – Eva Kennedy

Executive Director Eva Kennedy greeted the Council and thanked everyone for their attendance. She had no items that required Council action.

Building Updates

Executive Director Kennedy shared updates on the NEGRC building renovations.

Grant Opportunities

Executive Director Kennedy stated that there were planning & bridge project grants available through the FHWA Bridge Investment Program.

The Community Connection Program also had broadband funding opportunities for rural areas. Interested parties can connect with local providers to coordinate applications.

State Updates

Executive Director Kennedy stated the pre application period was open until October 16, 2026 for the GOSP (Georgia Outdoor Steward Program).

The pre application period for LWCF (Land and Water Conservation Fund) was open through October 2, 2026.

Workshops for both of these grants will be held in June.

Executive Director Kennedy discussed the Vince Dooley Battlefield Trust Fund Program for preserving and permanently protecting Georgia's historic battlefields. The grants may cover up to 50% of appraised value of eligible land acquisitions or permanent conservation efforts. Eligible applicants include nonprofits (ex. land banks) or state entities.

Executive Director Kennedy introduced Ms. Sarah Hovater, Director of the Marigold Collective in Winterville to share their story and showcase a successful public-nonprofit partnership in the Northeast Georgia region.

**Other Business**

Vice-Chairman Ferrelle expressed his appreciation for the assistance of Beth Eavenson (DCA) and Jody Graichen (NEGRC) with the Marigold Collective Project to restore the old blacksmith shop. He presented both with keys to the city of Winterville.

Adjournment

With no further business before the Council, Vice-Chairman Ferrelle adjourned the meeting at 1:17 p.m.

Amber Bailey, Executive Assistant
Northeast Georgia Regional Commission

Date Approved