

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN
APRIL 16, 2015
NOON**

MINUTES

The April meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Council was held on Thursday, April 16, 2015 at noon at the Athens Holiday Inn. Chairman Kevin Little called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Graham, Pat
Blechinger, Linda
Eisenman, Emily
Houston, Lamar
Lyon, Tommy
Palmer, Bill
Duvall, Valerie
Plott, Roy
Trammell, Gene
Dyer, David
Dove, Anthony
Blackmon, Jody
Gandy, Roy
Ainslie, Andy
Perriman, Fred
Bentley, David
Roseberry, Jerry
Turner, Frank
Davis, Melvin
Ivie, Charles
Harden, Amrey
Pittard, Billy
Boggs, Ronnie
Johnson, Jesse
Little, Kevin

Members Absent:

Graham, Ernie
Denson, Nancy
Guest, Larry
Bullard, Ed
Brock, Phil
Crow, Tom
Fenn, Josh
Ellis, Keith
Thompson, Greg
Fordyce, Cary
Roberts, Roy

Associate Members Present:

Ouzts, Buddy
Horton, Harold
Seymour, Joel
Adams, Louise
Crawford, Charlie

Media Present:

Blake Giles, Ocone Enterprise

Guests Present:

Ken Howerton
Scott Joost
Jamie Dove
Carol Williams
T.K. Adams
James Coile
Lynn Shedd
Tate O'Rourke
Danielle Belton
Kathy Papa
Guy Herring
Chuck Williams

Staff Present:

Jim Dove, Executive Director
Mott Beck, Executive Assistant
Evans Brinson, Comptroller
Carol R. Cofer, Workforce Development Director
Burke Walker, Director of Planning & Government Services

CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF MARCH MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Kevin Little called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. He welcomed members, guests, media, and staff. He asked for a motion to approve the March meeting minutes. Such a motion was made by Commissioner Gene Trammell and seconded by Mayor Linda Blechinger. The motion carried unanimously.

ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Newton County: Tom Garrett recently resigned his position as County Manager for Newton County to accept the Director of Public Works position in Barrow County. Planning Consultant Kay Lee is in Seattle making a presentation to the American Planning Association regarding the 2050 Plan, which received an award from that Association last year. Issues that are pending and in discussion to be determined in the future include landfill, reservoir, water resources, and form of government.

Oconee County: The Watkinsville City Council approved the permit for construction of a 13,887 sq. ft. building that will accommodate Extra Special People. Groundbreaking is slated for June 1st and completion is anticipated for May 2016 in time for Summer Camp. The Watkinsville streetscape is moving forward. There are lots of housing starts in the County, and the City has two new commercial buildings under construction.

Oglethorpe County: The final phase of renovations to the Historic Depot has begun, and the grand opening of the newly renovated Historic Jail will be held soon. The Georgia Trust Spring Ramble will be in the City of Lexington on Sunday, April 19th. A ribbon cutting for the new tennis courts will be held on April 25th, and Commissioner Billy Pittard expressed appreciation to Mr. Ronnie Boggs for his contributions to this effort. The joint paving project between Elbert, Madison, and Oglethorpe Counties will begin soon, and the final phase of renovations to the courthouse has begun.

Walton County: For the seventh year in a row, Walton County has finished the Fiscal Year with over \$20 million in the Fund Balance. The Social Circle Bypass should be open by late summer and should have a big impact on traffic in the area. Due to a traffic congestion problem at Chick-fil-a in Monroe, GDOT Deputy Commissioner Todd Long was requested to provide assistance. The City, County, and GDOT will work together to provide an additional west bound lane.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Audit & Finance: The Committee met prior to the Council meeting and reviewed the financial statements for the nine-month period ending March 31, 2015. Revenues exceeded expenses by \$15,521. Financial activity for the nine-month

period was approximately 3/4ths of the FY2015 Budget projections. A motion to approve the report as presented was made by Mr. Frank Turner and seconded by Mr. Boggs. The motion carried unanimously.

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

1. **CITY OF OXFORD** – Assistance in providing planning information and facilitating discussion to Newton County Tomorrow, a group interested in local plan implementation and community collaboration. There is no fee for this technical assistance.
2. **CITY OF PORTERDALE** – Assistance in reviewing and assisting in the renewal of their Revitalization Area Strategy. There is no fee for this assistance at this time, and any fees for assistance related to the renewal application will be quoted at a later date.

Based upon recommendation from the Executive Director, a motion to approve the technical assistance requests for the month to be added to the FY2015 Program of Work, effective April 16, 2015, was made by Commissioner Pittard and seconded by Mr. David Bentley. The motion carried unanimously.

Planning & Government Services (PGS)

The Committee met prior to the Council. PGS staff is currently developing the contract elements of the work programs for Fiscal Year 2016 for both the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). These draft elements will be submitted and reviewed to the respective agencies over the next several weeks. This report required no action of the Council.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Dove recently received the latest population projections from the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), and a copy was distributed to members. These figures are used when calculating Per Capita Dues for local governments.

Evaluations have been completed on all staff and placed in their Personnel File. The Executive Director reviewed each evaluation prior to the Department Head discussing with staff.

Executive Director Dove attended the Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA) meeting in Washington on March 21st – 24th. This meeting was held concurrently with the National Association of Development Organizations

(NADO) Policy Conference. He will be attending the ACCG Annual Conference in Savannah on April 18th – 20th, where he will be manning the GARC exhibit. Executive Assistant Mott Beck will be attending the GMA Annual Meeting in June.

Since the last meeting, Executive Director Dove and Ms. Beck facilitated retreats for the Barrow County Board of Commissioners and the City of Jefferson Mayor and Council. They have facilitated 15 sessions since the first of the year.

On May 3rd – 5th, Lamar Houston, PGS Director Burke Walker, and Executive Director Dove will be attending the Annual Economic Development Conference of the GARC at Lake Lanier Islands. This meeting is held on an annual basis, and persons attending hear from an array of informative speakers.

CHANGES RESULTING FROM WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT TRANSITION TO WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

At this time, Workforce Development Director Carol Cofer gave a presentation regarding ongoing efforts regarding a transition from the current Workforce Investment Act to the upcoming Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA). There are three steps to be undertaken regarding the transition. First, designation as a Local Workforce Development Area by Local Elected Officials action, or initial request by the Chair of the Local Elected Officials, must take place no later than April 24th. Second, prior to June 30th, the new WIOA Local Elected Officials Agreement designating the fiscal agent, election of Chair, and Workforce Development Board member appointment process must be executed. The third step pertains to Workforce Development Board Certification – current WIB may be grandfathered, or a new WIOA Board that meets WIOA composition requirements may be certified. If grandfathered, the Board would have to meet the new WIOA requirements by July 1, 2016. Ms. Cofer concluded by indicating that we will continue to provide quality services to in excess of 1,500 citizens of the region during the transition.

BAXTER INTERNATIONAL STATUS REPORT

The next item on the agenda was a status report on Baxter International by Ken Howerton and Scott Joost. In April 2012, Baxter International announced that it would be making the biggest capital outlay in its corporate history; investing a billion dollars over five years to build a state-of-the-art plasma products manufacturing facility in Stanton Springs near Covington, Georgia. The Georgia site was chosen for a number of reasons: logistics, geographic diversity compared to other plants, the skill base of the people, and the attractiveness of the site for people to locate. Also, the state has some great programs, such as the Quick-Start training program. Adjacent to the Baxter facility, the first biopharmaceutical training facility is under construction. The facility broke ground on August 1, 2012 and began construction in early 2013 on a 162-acre site 40 miles from Atlanta. The campus will eventually span approximately 1.2 million

square feet of developed space including three primary manufacturing units as well as a warehouse, utilities buildings, administrative facilities, and laboratories. Once construction and validation/commissioning are completed in 2015 and 2018, respectively, the facility will have created approximately 2,000 new jobs.

APPOINTMENT OF AWARDS COMMITTEE

Each year at the May meeting, the annual awards are presented; Local Government Administrator of the Year and Distinguished Northeast Georgian. At this time, Chairman Little appointed the following members to the Nominating Committee; Lamar Houston, Chairman; Jerry Roseberry, and Billy Pittard. The Committee will meet immediately following the Council meeting to consider nominees for the aforementioned awards.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held on May 21st.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha J. Beck
Executive Assistant