

BRINSON TO RETIRE; PAGE NAMED COMPTROLLER

NEGRC Comptroller **Evans Brinson** recently announced his retirement, effective January 31st, and will be succeeded by **Alicia Page**. Mr. Brinson joined the organization in a staff accounting role in October 1990, and was promoted to his current position in March 1992. He has worked closely with the Commission's Audit and Finance Committee and senior staff in preparation and management of the organization's annual budget. In addition, he has provided accounting assistance to the Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority since its inception. In recent years, he has directed the NEGRC Coordinated Transportation Program. Executive Director **Jim Dove** stated, "Evans has been instrumental to the overall success of this Commission for nearly 27 years...every audit during his tenure is a reflection of his outstanding service."

Ms. Page was selected to fill the Comptroller position and joined the Commission staff on November 1st. She was employed by the City of Gainesville from 2009-2016, and most recently served as Interim Chief Finance Officer and Administrative Services Officer. She graduated Brenau University with a Bachelor's in Business Administration. A Level I and II Certified Local Government Finance Officer, she served recently as President of the Georgia Government Finance Officers' Association. Dove indicated, "We are very fortunate that our search resulted in the hiring of Alicia for this position. Her talents and expertise should serve us well."

Mr. Brinson and Mrs. Page



OXFORD PLANNING RETREAT HELD

The City of Oxford's Annual Planning Retreat was held on Friday, November 11th and facilitated by Executive Director **Jim Dove** and Executive Assistant **Mott Beck**. Participants included Mayor **Jerry Roseberry** and members of the City Council, Tree Board, Planning Commission, and staff. Matters discussed included the City's relationship with Oxford College, the City's relationship with the Newton County Board of Commissioners, the upcoming SPLOST Referendum, terms of office/succession planning, and the upcoming comprehensive plan and short term work program. The group was joined by **Kendra Mayfield**, Associate Director of Operational Programs at Oxford College, who provided an update on ongoing and upcoming projects. In closing, Mayor Roseberry indicated "the session was very beneficial and possibly the best such retreat held for the City".



Oxford Retreat Participants

PLAN FIRST APPLICATION DEADLINE APPROACHING

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) annual May 15th deadline to apply for “PlanFirst” designation for your community is fast approaching. The program, now entering its fourth year, recognizes communities that have proven a commitment to planning through a demonstrated track record of implementing their Comprehensive Plan’s work items, as well as a history of good plan development.

Being designated as a “PlanFirst” community allows access to incentives such as an increased level of visibility, eligibility for funding, and reduced interest rates on certain DCA and Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) programs. It also provides eligibility for PlanFirst communities to apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding each year, rather than every other year following an award.

Four communities within our region have been designated “PlanFirst” communities in the first two years of the program. They include: Athens-Clarke County, Braselton, Madison, and Porterdales. Once awarded, the designation lasts for three years. Communities interested in receiving or renewing their “Plan First” status are encouraged to apply, or reapply. The NEGRC’s Planning and Government Services staff are available to offer guidance to interested communities as they navigate the application process.

For information about the “PlanFirst” program regionally and application materials, contact **Justin Crighton**, NEGRC Planner, at jcrighton@negrc.org or (706) 369-5650. For statewide programmatic information, please contact **Adriane Wood**, DCA Planning Outreach Coordinator, at adriane.wood@dca.gov.

MANAGEMENT TRAINING SCHEDULED

The Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA) that works in partnership with the **Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)** is providing a 1 ½ day management training session. This training provides professional development for a broad range of mid-to-high level managers. It is particularly well suited for all types of local government managers and Board members.

The “**DDAA 2017 Management Training**” will be held in Greenville, South Carolina from January 18th – 19th, 2017 and conducted by **Walt McBride**, Senior Public Services Associate, of the University of Georgia’s **Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG)**. The two broad topic areas include: (1) Supervising for Peak Performance; and (2) The Supervisor as Manager and Leader.

Each of these areas will explore specifics related to motivation, conflict, multi-generational management, and theories of leadership.

Registration cost for the conference is \$95 with conference hotel room rate available for \$159 per night. For further information, visit the DDAA website at: www.ddaa-idd.org or contact **Burke Walker**, NEGRC Director of Planning & Government Services, at: bwalker@negrc.org or (706) 369-5650.

REMINDER

The next meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Council will be held on **Thursday, January 19th at Noon at the Athens Holiday Inn**. Information on the meeting will be forthcoming.

ORIENTATION SCHEDULED

An orientation for newly elected officials and incoming Council members, focused on roles and responsibilities of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, will be held on **February 9th at 9:30 a.m. in the E.H. Culpepper Conference Room at NEGRC headquarters**. Senior staff will provide a history of regional planning in our state, particularly in Northeast Georgia; and presentations will be given on activities of our administrative, planning & government services, aging, and workforce development divisions. The session will provide an opportunity for attendees to ask questions of presenters and learn more as to services provided to local governments. The orientation will wrap up with lunch, at which time officials may speak individually with members of the staff. Should you wish to attend, please contact **Mott Beck** at mbeck@negrc.org or (706) 369-5650.

2016 WIOA YOUTH CONFERENCE

On Saturday, November 19th, ACTION, Inc. staff hosted a Youth Conference for students enrolled in the WIOA In-School Youth Program throughout our 12-county service area. Parents were invited to attend as well. The event was held at Monroe Area High School in Walton County.

The conference included workshops for the high school students and parents that were engaging, interactive, and educational. The workshops for students included “Presenting Yourself to the World,” “Establishing Goals,” and “Communicating without Words.” The parents’ workshops included “Financing your Child’s Future,” “Building a Relationship with your Child’s School,” and “Setting your Child up for Success.” Both groups attended

a panel discussion about Post Graduation options where representatives from Athens Technical College, Kennesaw State University, Georgia Student Finance Commission, and current college students answered questions. The students and parents were given an opportunity to meet with college representatives from several schools including Georgia College, Georgia Military College, and Lanier Technical College.

The Youth Conference provided a great learning experience for both students and parents, enabling them to take home some good ideas and plans for the future.



Youth conference participants



BE THERE 4 SENIORS RALLY

Georgia seniors will gather at the south wing of the State Capitol on January 19th at 11:00 a.m. to call on legislators to support budget requests that would remove seniors on the waiting list for aging services.

Hundreds of older adults and supporters are expected to attend the rally, *Be There 4 Seniors*, to advocate for \$10 million in additional state funding for home and community based services in FY 2018. These programs can delay nursing home placement for 50 months, on average, at a fraction of the cost.

The End the Wait Campaign involves a request for increased funding for services that help older adults remain in their homes and in their communities for as long as possible. The

new funding would help reduce long waiting lists for essential services such as home delivered meals, caregiver support and transportation. These programs help promote independence, support caregivers, and protect the vulnerable.

For additional information, contact **Peggy Jenkins** at: pjenkins@negrc.org or (706) 583-2546.

2017 CDBG APPLICATION CYCLE UNDERWAY

In December 2016, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) presented a three-day "Applicants Workshop" in Macon to kick off the 2017 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) cycle. Applications can seek financial assistance for a range of activities to benefit low-to-moderate income persons. Examples of activities include water and sewer infrastructure, senior centers, Boys & Girls Clubs, and head-start facilities.

One possible addition to this year's application cycle is an increase in potential award amounts. Previously, grant awards were capped at \$500,000 but that limit may increase to \$750,000 (pending final approval, expected in January 2017). In Northeast Georgia, applications compete against other projects statewide; resulting in a very competitive review environment. Local governments are eligible applicants and are strongly encouraged to begin early to allow time to fully complete grant applications. Several local governments from Northeast Georgia attended the December workshop as well as four members of the NEGRC's Planning and Government Services Division.

For further information about CDBG applications and/or project eligibility, contact Mr. Walker at bwalker@negrc.org or (706) 369-5650.





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Update

REGIONAL MEETINGS
JANUARY

10	8:30 a.m.	Workforce Development Board	Atrium
10	11:30 a.m.	CARE-Net	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
19	Noon	NEGRC Council	Athens Holiday Inn
19	3:30 p.m.	Rails to Trails Advocacy Group	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
25	9:30 a.m.	Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
25	10:00 a.m.	Main Street Managers	Atrium



Sincerely & Respectfully,