

## NORTHEAST GEORGIA'S BETHLEHEM

Designated by local leaders as “the little town under the star”, the Town of Bethlehem is located off S.R. 316, 18 miles west of Athens and four miles south of Winder. The current population is 612. Historians agree the Town received its name from Bethlehem Methodist Church, which was established in 1796. Because of its Biblical name, Bethlehem is always the scene of special activity during the holiday season. Hundreds, if not thousands, of persons mail cards and parcels from the local post office in order to get the Bethlehem cancellation. Harrison Poultry Inc., located in the Town, is the second largest employer in Barrow County with more than 1100 employees. The business began in 1948, and grew from a hatching/broiler house to a processing facility, and today processes a million chickens per week. Town leadership includes Mayor **Sandy McNab**, and Councilmembers **Tommy Buchanan**, **Scott Morgan**, **Tommy Parten**, **Joe Price**, and **Wayne Ridgeway**. The Town Clerk is **Kathy Bridges**.



*City Hall*



*Town Gazebo*



*Bethlehem Methodist Church*

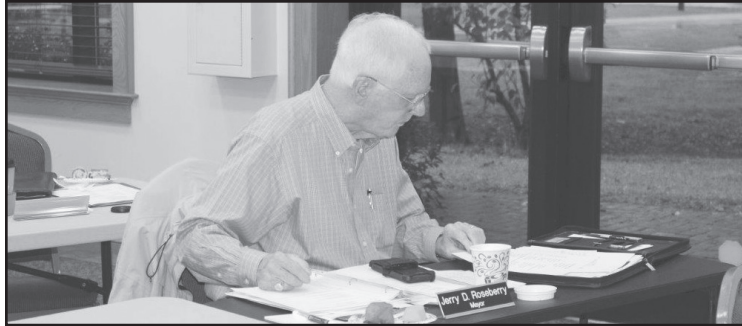
## OXFORD RETREAT HELD

For the 9<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, **Jim Dove** and **Mott Beck** facilitated the Annual Retreat of the City of Oxford Mayor and Council. This year's session, held on October 26<sup>th</sup> at the City Hall, focused on Future Financial Sustainability. The morning session focused on four presentations on subject areas of interest to participants and guests. Those included a financial report by CPA **Charles Hall**, a presentation on current and proposed activities of the Newton County Water and Sewerage Authority by **Mike Hopkins**, an overview of electric operations by **Holly Bisig** of MEAG, and a presentation on activities related to Oxford College by **Danielle Miller** with assistance from **Laura Gafnea**.

After remarks by Mayor **Jerry Roseberry**, participants engaged in an interactive session concerning items related to ensuring a secure financial future for the City. A total of 29 ideas were brought forward. After considerable discussion, there were seven focal points identified for action. These included:

- **City/Emory College partnership and collaboration.**
- **Creating quality of life infrastructure and opportunity for future residents.**
- **Management of revenue.**
- **Address energy policies.**
- **Support local entrepreneurs.**
- **Encourage additional lodging facilities.**
- **Investigate possibility of Cook Road development.**

Participants are already looking forward to next year's session and a review of progress made.



*Mayor Roseberry*



*City Manager Matthew Pepper*



*Retreat Participants*

## **REMINDER**

### **THE COUNCIL DOES NOT MEET IN DECEMBER.**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup> at Noon at the Athens Holiday Inn.

Information on the meeting will be forthcoming.

## **GARC ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

Approximately 250 persons attended the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Conference of the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC), held November 7<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> at the Marriott Riverfront in Savannah. Attendees from Northeast Georgia included Council Members **Lamar Houston**, **Kevin Little**, **Tommy Lyon**, and **Billy Pittard**, and staff members **Jim Dove**, **Mott Beck**, **Carol Cofer**, **Eva Kennedy**, **Michele Kelley**, **Alicia Page**, and **Burke Walker**.

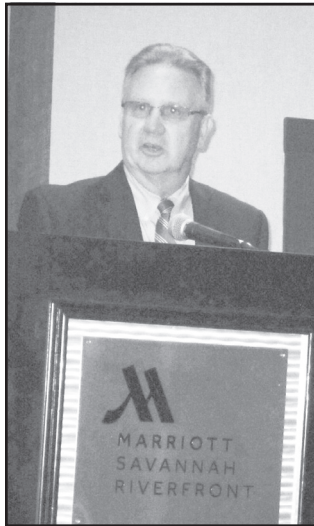
The Conference began with technical training for Planners and GIS Staff on Wednesday afternoon, followed by the GARC Board of Directors' meeting. Mr. Houston serves as GARC Vice Chairman, and Mr. Dove has served as President for the past four years. Thursday morning featured a presentation by **Mike Beatty**, Director of the USDA Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, a Georgia Department of Transportation Update with Chief Engineer **Meg Pirkle** and GDOT Vice Chairman **Tim Golden**, and ACCG and GMA Updates by **Todd Edwards** and **Tom Gehl**. Several interesting and informative break-out sessions were conducted Thursday afternoon. The Friday morning sessions included a presentation on Georgia Department of Community Affairs Activities by Commissioner **Christopher Nunn**, and the 2018 Election Analysis by **Todd Rehm**, Editor of GaPundit.com.

The Conference returns to the King and Prince at St. Simons Island in 2019.



*NEGRC Representatives with Dooly County Commissioner Terrell Hudson*





*Golden*



*Duke and Dove*



*Dove, Nunn, and Duke*



*Lyon and Pittard*



*Houston and Little*

## NEGRC COUNCIL/STAFF DEPARTURES

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission will miss three prominent members of its governing Council. **Stone Workman**, Mayor Pro-Tem of Monticello, resigned recently due to an employment conflict. Councilman Workman was a former State Director of USDA-Rural Development, and joined our Council in January 2016. He served with distinction on the Audit & Finance Committee. He recently accepted a position with the Jasper County School System which precludes his attendance at our monthly meetings.

Elbert County Commission Chairman **Tommy Lyon** is retiring from public service at the end of this year and will leave our Council. Chairman Lyon has served 12 years in that position in Elbert County and has been a member of our Council since March 2007. He was an excellent Chair of our Planning & Government Services Committee for a number of years. It should also be noted that Chairman Lyon is a Past President of ACCG.

Athens-Clarke Mayor **Nancy Denson** is term limited and will leave that position and our Council at the end of December. Mayor Denson previously served as a member of the Athens City Council and as Clarke County Tax Commissioner. A dedicated public servant, Mayor Denson joined our Council in January 2011, and served as a member of the Program of Work Committee. She was also a member and Vice Chair of the Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority.

Staff member **Kim Havener** retired on November 30<sup>th</sup>. After a previous stint as a member of our staff, she rejoined the organization on July 29, 1997. A Certified Options Counselor in our Area Agency on Aging, Kim served with distinction in efforts to improve the quality of life for Northeast Georgia Seniors. She plans to spend considerable time traveling and attending Atlanta Braves baseball games.

*We wish all of you  
a safe and happy  
Holiday Season!*

*NEGRC Council  
and Staff*





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*Update*

**REGIONAL MEETINGS**  
**DECEMBER**

18	10:00 a.m.	ADRC Advisory Council	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room
18	1:30 p.m.	NEGA Emergency Medical Services	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room



*Sincerely & Respectfully,*