

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN
NOVEMBER 15, 2018
NOON**

MINUTES

Members Present:

Graham, Pat
Denson, Nancy
Ferrelle, Dodd
Houston, Lamar
Palmer, Bill
Haynie, Doug
Crow, Tom
Workman, Stone
Ainslie, Andy
Bentley, David
Roseberry, Jerry
Daniell, John
Shearon, Dave
Harden, Amrey
Pittard, Billy
Boggs, Ronnie
Little, Kevin
Fordyce, Cary
Ledford, Howard
Tate, O'Rouke

Members Absent:

Blechinger, Linda
Jennings, Tommy
Lyon, Tommy
Guest, Larry
Smith, Jeffery
Brock, Phil
Shaw, Jim
Pennamon, Carl
Dyer, Dave
Scarborough, John
Blackmon, Jody
Padilla, Bob
Perriman, Fred
Banes, Marcello
Turner, Frank
Berry, Rick
Dally, Hal
Chambers, Joyce
Roberts, Roy

Associate Members Present:

Harold Horton

Guests Present:

Merrill Wilcox
Kevin Poe
Beth Eavenson
Don Jernigan
Andrew Seaver
Brad Williamson
Elizabeth Griffin
Emily Stone
Chris Mixon
Carol Williams

Staff Present:

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

CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Jerry Roseberry called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. He welcomed members, guests, and staff, and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the October meeting. **Such a motion was made by Oglethorpe Commission Chairman Billy Pittard and seconded by Mr. David Bentley. The motion carried unanimously.**

ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Newton County: Reservations are being accepted for the New Leaf Workforce Center. The Newton County Judicial Center, with an additional 28,000 square feet, held its grand reopening on Friday, October 19th. A dedication ceremony was held that day with U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas delivering the keynote address. The Newton County Juvenile Court's Community Resource Center's grand opening was held on Tuesday, Oct. 16th. The Center will create a collaborative environment to network, participate in workshops and find resources. A moratorium for multi-family housing in unincorporated Newton County has been implemented for 90 days following a vote by the Board of Commissioners. The county is in the process of updating all of its development regulations; however, the moratorium on multi-family developments does not apply to any of the county's overlay zoning districts. Newton County will unveil its new Strategic Plan on Friday, November 16th at the Newton Tomorrow meeting.

Oconee County: Fifty-one members of the Volunteer Fire Department are to be commended for their efforts during the fire that occurred at Benson's Bakery recently. Athens-Clarke County and Oglethorpe County also offered assistance during this time. There was a 75% turnout for the recent election. The Oconee County Parks and Recreation Department was named the Parks and Recreation Agency of the Year in District 7 for populations of 20,001 up to 50,000. The Watkinsville tree lighting will be held on the evening of November 30th.

Oglethorpe County: There was a 66% voter turnout for the elections, and distilled spirits by the drink and T-SPLOST were approved. Magnolia Café has opened in the County, and several Broadband meetings have been held in the region. Chairman Pittard attended the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions Annual Training Conference in Savannah recently, and he advised that it was a very successful event. ConEdison has contacted the County regarding the possibility of a 200 megawatt solar project being located there. At this time, Chairman Pittard asked Mayor Nancy Denson to say a few words, since this was her last meeting. She expressed her appreciation to everyone for their support and friendship during her tenure.

Walton County: Walton County passed its SPLOST referendum, and \$17.1 million has been earmarked for roads. Dedication of the Walton County Veterans Memorial will be held at 10 a.m. Friday, November 16th. This effort has been a long time in coming and is the culmination of countless hours of planning, fundraising and volunteering. The County will be 200 years old on December 15th, and an assortment of activities has been planned in celebration of the event.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit & Finance: Members of the Audit & Finance Committee met prior to the Council meeting and reviewed financial statements for the three-month period ending September 30, 2018. Revenues exceeded expenditures by \$1,598.51. Financial activity for the three-month period is approximately 75% of the remaining FY2019 Budget projections overall. The committee also discussed a needed budget adjustment for the WIOA training trailers. Money for these trailers were appropriated in the FY18 revised budget in the amount of \$724,322. However, the trailers were not actually received until October 2018. Staff is requesting the committee to approve a budget adjustment to re-appropriate the \$724,322 from the Revised FY18 budget into the FY19 Budget due to the timing of the receipt of the trailers. **A motion to accept the report and the budget adjustment of \$724,322 to re-appropriate funding for the WIOA training trailers into the FY19 budget was made by Mr. Amrey Harden and seconded by Chairman Pittard. The motion carried unanimously.**

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

- **CITY OF UNION POINT** - Assistance in regaining its Certified Local Government (CLG) status from Georgia's Historic Preservation Division. There is no fee for this assistance unless completion of specific tasks is required.
- **OCONEE COUNTY** - Assistance in developing a 2019 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application. The application will seek financial assistance through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) in expanding the County's existing Senior Center. The fee for this assistance is \$2,000.
- **MORGAN COUNTY** - Assistance in developing Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) application through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The fee for this assistance will not exceed \$1,500.

Based upon recommendation of the Executive Director, **a motion to accept the recommendation of the Committee and approve the technical assistance requests for the month for inclusion in the FY19 Program of Work, effective October 18, 2018, was made by Chairman Pittard and seconded by Mr. Bentley. The motion carried unanimously.**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A delegation from Northeast Georgia was included in the 250 or so persons that attended the 20th Annual Training Conference of the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions held November 7th – 9th 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.

Mr. Dove attended a ribbon-cutting on October 19th in Hall County for the new Lanier Technical College Campus. He reports that it is truly a remarkable facility and a credit to the Technical College System of Georgia. Buildings on campus were named for Governor Nathan Deal, his Chief of Staff Chris Riley, and others who have supported Lanier Tech efforts. It is worth a visit to the campus to view these fine facilities.

For the ninth consecutive year, Mr. Dove and Ms. Beck have facilitated the annual retreat of the Oxford Mayor and Council. The session was held on October 26th and focused on future financial sustainability. Presentations were made on matters such as current finances, activities of the Newton County Water and Sewerage Authority, Electric Operations, and Oxford College activities. An interactive session during the afternoon resulted in 29 separate ideas being brought forward with seven identified as focal points for short term action.

Mr. Dove attended the third and final stakeholders meeting for the GDOT Statewide Aviation Plan Update on October 22nd in Atlanta. The Plan focuses on improvements to local airports throughout the state with the exception of Hartsfield Jackson. A scorecard has been developed for each local and regional airport. \$1.4 billion in improvements were identified. Airports (other than Atlanta) have an economic impact of approximately \$4.8 billion annually in the state. The full report will be released soon to the GDOT Board. Mr. Dove will receive a summary electronically, and ensure the Council receives it as well.

GEORGIA PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION REPORT

At this time, Merrill Wilcox gave a report on the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education. The mission of the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education is to inform and influence Georgia leaders through research and non-partisan advocacy to impact education policies and practices for the improvement of student achievement. Major accomplishments in the past 14 years include leveraging \$30 million in state, private, and local matching funds to turn 51 local school systems into models of academic excellence using programs like the Next Generation School Project (NGSP). The group advocated successfully for such educational reforms as a lottery-funded statewide pre-kindergarten program; a constitutional amendment calling for appointed school superintendents and

elected school boards; and an amendment allowing school systems to hold local referendums to establish sales tax funding for school construction purposes. The Partnership provides non-partisan information for educational policies that ultimately became law, such as increasing the number of Georgia teachers achieving National Board Certification from 111 teachers in 2000 to 2454 teachers by 2008. Legislation has been passed to provide teachers with a financial incentive for obtaining this certification. The Partnership conducted Regional Meetings throughout the state to over 7000 business leaders to highlight the link between education and the economy, and to cite the relationship between poverty, health and school readiness. For more than two decades, the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education has been working to ensure education policies and practices across the birth-to-career pipeline are informed by research and best practices. Many business leaders recognize the importance of a strong education system with data showing that 60 to 80 percent of jobs in Georgia will require at least two years of college education within the next decade.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: REGIONAL MOBILE TRAINING OPTIONS

Workforce Development Director Carol Cofer provided an update on the two Occupational Skills Training Trailers that were received in October. One of the 53 foot trailers is equipped with eight welding bays and is configured to be able to offer MIG, TIG, PULSE and STICK welding training. The other 53 foot trailer is equipped as an industrial mechanics training trailer and can be used to provide training in pneumatics, hydraulics, mechanical and electrical areas. Both trailers are designed to be used to deliver short-term training to unemployed/underemployed persons, high school students, and persons currently employed in the manufacturing field but may need upskilling to meet changing employer needs. Plans are to have the units operational in January 2019.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 17th.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha J. Beck
Executive Assistant

