

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN
JUNE 20, 2013
NOON**

MINUTES

The June meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Council was held on Thursday, June 20, 2013 at the Athens Holiday Inn. Chairman Jim Joiner called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Graham, Pat
Graham, Ernie
Denson, Nancy
Eisenman, Emily
Houston, Lamar
Lyon, Tommy
Palmer, Bill
Finch, Charles
Crow, Tom
Joiner, Jim
Nalls, Billy
Dove, Anthony
Gandy, Roy
Ainslie, Andy
Perriman, Fred
Brooks, Stenette
Ellis, Keith
Roseberry, Jerry
Turner, Frank
Ivie, Charles
Harden, Amrey
Pittard, Billy
Johnson, Jesse
Little, Kevin
Lee, Kay

Members Absent:

Blechinger, Linda
Guest, Larry
Bullard, Ed
Wright, Glenn
Pennamon, Carl
Thurman, Larry
Blackmon, Jody
Davis, Melvin
Boggs, Ronnie
Thompson, Greg
Knight, Harry
Roberts, Roy
Lewis, Vance

Associate Members Present:

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

Guests Present:

Chuck Williams
T.K. Adams
Tim Adams
Kim Adams
Barton Lowrey
Bobby McMillan
Jimmy Hix

Staff Present:

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

WELCOME AND APPROVAL OF MAY MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Jim Joiner called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. He welcomed members, guests, and staff. He asked for a motion to approve the May meeting minutes. Such a motion was made by Mr. Frank Turner and seconded by Mr. Lamar Houston. The motion carried unanimously.

ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Newton County: The budget process is ongoing, and the Tax Digest continues to decrease. A Committee has been appointed to review solid waste issues, and an energy audit will be conducted on all buildings. The County will continue to oversee the Mainstreet Program, and a provision for a Grant Officer is included in the budget. The County has a new high school, and road improvements will be made to roads on and around the campus. Construction at the Baxter site is ongoing.

Oconee County: The new University 16 Cinema located at Epps Bridge Centre is open, and taxes brought into the County's tax base will help support services and education. Once completed, the Centre could produce approximately \$3.5 million in sales and SPLOST taxes. The Oconee County Chamber of Commerce Board has named Kay Keller as its new President. The Board of Commissioners voted to approve a Memorandum of Understanding with St. Mary's Healthcare System for emergency medical transport services to be provided by National EMS. The City of Watkinsville City Council passed a \$1.23 million budget, and revenue projections are approximately \$40,000 lower than the previous year's budget. Caterpillar should have approximately 300 employees by December 2013. Mars Hill road ROW acquisitions and budget have been approved by GDOT for FY14. The County's FY14 Budget was presented to the Board of Commissioners and approved at the June 4th meeting.

Oglethorpe County: The County is midway through the budget process. In April, the Board of Commissioners voted to partner with North Star Destination Strategies to create a branding program for the County. An online survey is being prepared so that local stakeholders can have input in this endeavor. The County's Hazard Mitigation Plan is complete. Renovations to the government building are progressing.

Walton County: There will not be a millage increase this year. Hitachi will undergo an \$80 million expansion. Land acquisition for the Hard Labor Creek project is 99% complete, and construction on the dam will begin in late August. A reception will be held at the Monroe County Club for Nancy Kinsey who is retiring after 19 years of service to the Development Authority of Walton County. Shane Short, formerly with the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, will be Ms. Kinsey's replacement.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Audit & Finance: The Committee met prior to the Council meeting to review the financial statements for the eleven-month period ending May 31, 2013. A review of the account balances indicates the sound financial condition of the Regional Commission, with cash and near-cash assets exceeding total liabilities, excluding the capital lease obligation, by \$78,000. Revenues exceeded expenses by \$17,775. Financial activity for the eleven-month period is approximately 11/12ths of the annual budget. A motion to approve the financial report as presented was made by Mr. Turner and seconded by Commissioner Anthony Dove. 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 WATKINSVILLE** – Assistance in monitoring water quality for Calls Creek. The fee for this assistance is \$1,200, with the project extending over a six-month period.
2. **CITY OF MADISON** – Assistance in developing a Community Development Block Grant Redevelopment Fund (CDBG-RDF) application for submission to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) – The City is seeking financial assistance to support the redevelopment of a site for construction of a 1,200 sq. ft. commercial property. The fee for this assistance is \$2,000.
3. **BARROW COUNTY** – Assistance in updating the County's Short-Term Work Program (STWP). This project will be cost-shared with the NEGRC's DCA Planning Contract for a local fee of \$750.
4. **CITY OF PORTERDALE:** Assistance in amending the City's Urban Redevelopment Plan (URP) and applying for Opportunity Zone designation. Any applicable NEGRC fees will be determined based on subsequent meetings with City staff.

Based upon recommendation from the Executive Director, a motion to approve the technical assistance requests for the month for inclusion in the 2013 Program of Work, effective June 20, 2013, was made by Commissioner Billy Pittard and seconded by Dr. Stenette Brooks. The motion carried unanimously.

Personnel: At the Council meeting in April, the Personnel Committee met to conduct the annual evaluation of the Executive Director, and again in May to review and discuss a draft of the evaluation. After it was finalized, a copy was forwarded to Council members for review and comment. As noted in the evaluation, the Executive Director has enjoyed another successful year and performed his duties in an outstanding fashion. There were no negative comments or suggested changes, and a motion to accept the evaluation was made by Vice Chairman Little and seconded by Mr. Joel Seymour. The motion carried unanimously. The Evaluation will be fully executed and placed in the Executive Director's Personnel File.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Dove advised that he recently attended the NADO Summer Board meeting in Santa Fe. Attendees were advised that the Economic Development Administration (EDA) budget may be increased even though funds for planning grants may be slightly decreased, along with funds for public works projects. It appears that the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) budget will remain stable. On a related matter, Executive Assistant Mott Beck will attend the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) Annual Conference in Savannah June 21st – 25th.

Executive Director Dove and Ms. Beck will be conducting a Planning Retreat for the Development Authority of Elberton, Bowman, and Elbert County in August. The date is to be determined.

It is again time to consider appointments of Private Sector representatives to the Council. Notices will be forwarded the week of June 24th.

The Council will not meet in July. The next meeting will be held on August 15th.

RECOMMENDATION REGARDING THE REVISED FY13 AMENDED BUDGET AND PROPOSED FY14 BUDGET

Council members were e-mailed copies of the Revised FY2013 and the proposed FY2014 Budget prior to the meeting. Mr. Turner provided highlights of both budgets. In FY2013, the total expenditures are to be \$13,245,728, and total revenues are expected to be \$13,286,121. These expected expenditures and revenues will produce an expected excess of revenues over expenses of \$40,393. A motion to approve the Revised FY2013 Budget was made by Mr. Turner and seconded by Mr. Houston. The motion carried unanimously. In FY14, anticipated expenditures are \$12,151,612, and total revenues are expected to be \$12,196,055. This will result in an expected excess of revenues over expenses of \$44,443. The amount necessary to match our different grants is expected to be \$245,451. Considering the amount of federal and state dollars to be received in FY2014, the leveraging effect of local funds is considerable. The FY2014 Budget includes a 3% salary adjustment for NEGRC staff. A motion to approve the proposed FY14 Budget was made Mr. Turner and seconded by Mr. Roy Gandy. The motion carried unanimously.

RECOMMENDATION ON THE FY14 PROGRAM OF WORK

At this time, Executive Director Dove presented highlights of the FY14 Program of Work. Copies of the document were e-mailed to Council members prior to the meeting. As in past years, the NEGRC has an ambitious Program of Work and has included all items required by state and federal grantor agencies. The RC will be continuing a number of ongoing efforts and will continue to present new technical

assistance requests to the Council each month for approval and inclusion in the yearly Program of Work. A motion to adopt the FY2014 Program of Work was made by Commissioner Kevin Little and seconded by Mr. Jesse Johnson. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

As customary each year in June, the Council conducts the annual NEGRC evaluation based on performance standards adopted in September 2009. Executive Director Dove read the standards, and a motion stating that the Regional Commission has met the performance standards was made by Dr. Brooks and seconded by Commissioner Tommy Lyon. The motion carried unanimously.

COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

At this time, Comptroller Brinson gave an update on the Coordinated Transportation Program. NEGRC is completing its first year as Contractor, and all-in-all it has been a successful year. Subcontractors for FY2014 have been chosen and include Elbert County Transit, Greene County Transit (ABHS), Jackson County Transit, Morgan County Transit, Thorne Transportation, and Walton County Transportation, and senior centers. Approximately 148,000 trips will be provided during FY2013 and 168,000 during FY2014. That is an increase of 13.5% between FY2013 and FY2014. The average cost per trip in FY2013 is \$14.20, and it is projected that the average cost per trip for FY2014 will be \$12.48. This is a decrease of 12.2%. The overall cost savings expected for FY2014 is estimated to be \$280,000. This figure is based on program funding remaining stable. When the Human Services Committee began reviewing the Coordinated Transportation Program in February, it was the strong desire to make the program more efficient, i.e. more trips for the same or less money. With the team of subcontractors and the guidance from the Regional Transportation Coordinator, this goal should be realized.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

The next item on the agenda was a presentation by Workforce Development Director Carol R. Cofer regarding the Workforce Investment Board Summer Youth Program and other activities. There are 170 youth working at 110 worksites throughout the 12-county region. They began work on June 10th and may work up to five weeks at 30 hours per week. They will earn the minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, and will be covered by WIB's Workmen's Compensation Insurance. Worksites include libraries in Barrow, Elbert, Jasper, Newton and Walton Counties. A number of youth are working in occupational areas that they have an interest in pursuing after high school graduation including medical, barber, and mediation, veterinarian, fire and rescue, and media productions. Some are working in government offices, chambers of commerce offices, boys and girls clubs, recreation department summer day camps, senior centers, and schools. Ms. Cofer also gave an overview of the services provided during Program

Year 11. The number of individuals served through Workforce Investment Act Formula Funds was 1,639, and an additional 810 persons received follow-up/post training services during this period.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

The individual receiving this special award was not present last month at the annual award presentations, so at this time Vice Chairman Little presented the Chairman's Award to current Chairman Jim Joiner. He expressed appreciation to Chairman Joiner for an outstanding job during the past two years.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held on August 15th.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha J. Beck
Executive Assistant