

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION  
COUNCIL MEETING  
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN  
JANUARY 20, 2011  
NOON**

**MINUTES**

The January meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Council was held on Thursday, January 20, 2011 at noon at the Athens Holiday Inn. Chairperson Stenette Brooks called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Yearwood, Danny  
Thompson, Chip  
Graham, Ernie  
Denson, Nancy  
Houston, Lamar  
Lyon, Tommy  
Guest, Larry  
Brown, Terry  
Sanders, Bud  
Bicknell, Hunter  
Short, Shane  
Nalls, Billy  
Dove, Anthony  
Gandy, Roy  
Ainslie, Andrew  
Brooks, Stenette  
Morgan, Kathy  
Roseberry, Jerry  
Turner, Frank  
Davis, Melvin  
Harden, Amrey  
Pittard, Billy  
Crawford, Charlie  
Little, Kevin  
Knight, Harry  
Lee, Kay

**Members Absent:**

Mercer, Jim  
Wright, Glenn  
Mayers, Tom  
Joiner, Jim  
Hill, Charles  
Newsome, Glenn  
Faust, Ron  
Perriman, Fred  
Walter, Joe  
Yeany, Russell  
Thompson, Greg  
Summerour, Allyson  
Roberts, Roy  
Lewis, Vince

**Staff Present:**

Mott Beck, Executive Assistant  
Evans Brinson, Comptroller  
Carol Rayburn Cofer, Workforce Development Director  
Burke Walker, Director of Planning & Local Gov't. Services

**Associate Members Present:**

Seymour, Joel  
Jackson, Julian

**Guests Present:**

Bob Thomas  
Jack Bernard  
Nancy Cleveland  
Marcela Mellinger

**CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MEETING MINUTES**

Chairperson Brooks welcomed members, guests, and staff. She asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the November meeting. Such a motion was made by Mr. Roy Gandy and seconded by Commissioner Danny Yearwood. The motion carried unanimously.

## ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

**Barrow County:** Commissioner Yearwood praised his staff for their efforts associated with the recent winter storm. The County is moving forward with sewer projects being funded with a GEFA loan acquired last year. A twelve-movie Carmick theatre is locating in the County, and an industry that rebuilds automobiles will be housed in an existing building. A SPLOST referendum will be held in March. The County continues to have an 8% decline in revenues.

**Clarke County:** Athens-Clarke County recently launched a new website which more uniform and will be easier to access by the public. A called meeting will be held on the evening of January 20<sup>th</sup> for the swearing in of the Mayor and an agenda setting session. Also at this meeting, the Commission anticipates hiring an Architect that will design an addition to the Classic Center. Mayor Denson advised that there was very good participation in the Day of Service on Martin Luther King Day. The Citizen Police Academy will begin on February 20<sup>th</sup> and will last for 16 weeks.

**Elbert County:** The Waste to Energy Plant has decided not to locate in the County. A German industry that makes plastic parts for Volkswagen, Mercedes, and BMW has located in Elbert County. This company will create 70 new jobs. Another industry that makes insulations materials has also opened in the County. After six months, the County is 1% under budget, and the Auditors anticipate they will have their fourth year in the black. This year's SPLOST includes roads, the hospital, and three fire stations.

**Greene County:** The County has let the bid for Phase I of the East-West Corridor that will connect to State Route 44. In addition, two phases being planned will connect to White Plains. Due to lack of revenue, the County has reprioritized the SPLOST. Originally the SPLOST was to be \$31 million, but it is now projected to be \$21 to \$25 million. The groundbreaking for the hospital has been delayed indefinitely. The budget year ended on September 30, 2010, and Vice Chairman Bud Sanders was happy to announce that the County received a clean audit and completed the year in the black. During the past year, there were no layoffs nor furloughs.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Audit & Finance:** The committee met prior to the Council and reviewed the financial statements for the six month period ending December 31, 2010. A review of the account balances indicates that the Regional Commission is in good financial condition. Cash and near cash assets exceed total liabilities, excluding the capital lease debt, by \$718,000. Revenues exceed expenses by \$683. Financial activity for the six month period is approximately ½ of the annual budget. A motion to approve the financial statement as presented was made by Mr. Frank Turner and seconded by Commissioner Bud Sanders. 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 PORTERDALE** – FY 11 Transportation Enhancement (TE) Grant Application – Streetscape Improvements.
1. **OGLETHORPE COUNTY** – Parcel Updates.
2. **CITY OF HOSCHTON** – Zoning Ordinance.

Based upon recommendation from the Executive Director, a motion to approve the technical assistance requests for the month for inclusion in the FY2011 Program of Work, effective January 20, 2011, was made by Mr. Charlie Crawford and seconded by Commissioner Yearwood. The motion carried unanimously.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

In the absence of Executive Director Jim Dove, the report was given by Executive Assistant Mott Beck.

An orientation for newly elected officials, and any others that would like to attend, will be held on Wednesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> at headquarters. It will begin at 10:00 a.m. and conclude around 1:30 p.m. Lunch will be served. This orientation is provided on an annual basis to increase awareness of programs and services offered by the organization and gives attendees an opportunity to meet the department heads.

Executive Director Dove was asked to make a presentation at the Newly Elected County Commissioners' Conference at the Georgia Center on December 7<sup>th</sup>. He discussed the importance of regionalism and the roles of regional commissions and entertained questions from the new commissioners. He was introduced by ACCG Board Member and Walton County Commission Chairman Kevin Little. There were more than 150 newly elected commissioners in attendance.

Executive Director Dove and Executive Assistant Mott Beck set up and manned the booth for the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions at the Georgia Biennial Legislative Institute, also held at the Georgia Center the week following the previously mentioned Commissioners meeting. They had an opportunity to see and talk with virtually every legislator from the 12-county Northeast Georgia region and many from other parts of the state.

Council members were advised of the resignation of Principal Planner Lee Carmon. Ms. Carmon had been employed with the Regional Commission since 1988. She has been very involved in planning efforts during the past 22 years and will be moving to another position in the public sector.

With the passage of HB 1216 and the transition from regional development centers to regional commissions, the State Department of Audits is required to undertake a performance audit of each regional commission every three years. The NEGRC served as the pilot for this statewide effort....in other words, NEGRC was the "Guinea Pig". Efforts on this audit began almost two years ago. State officials met with

Executive Director Dove and Comptroller Evans Brinson on January 4<sup>th</sup> to brief them on the draft report. The Auditors seemed to be very impressed with the organization and its management. Once finalized, there will be some recommendations, but nothing of significance.

Since the last Council meeting, the Regional Commission reviewed two Developments of Regional Impact and issued the following findings:

**DRI #2156 Highway 20 Transfer Station, Walton County** was reviewed by the DRI Committee on November 23, 2010. The proposed project is a 10,000 square ft. Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) transfer station. It was found not to be in the best interest of the region and state. As per the Regional Commission's DRI procedures, approval of the full Council is required for issuance of a negative finding. Therefore, a motion to accept the DRI Review Committee finding was made by Commissioner Billy Pittard and seconded by Mr. Joel Seymour. The motion carried unanimously.

**DRI #2175 Northeast Georgia Cancer Care Center, Athens-Clarke County** was reviewed by the DRI Committee on December 14, 2010. The proposed project consists of the construction of a 220,000 square foot regional cancer care center. It was found to be in the best interest of the region and state and does not require action by the Council.

### **WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT PROGRAM YEAR PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW**

At this time, Workforce Development Director Carol Rayburn Cofer provided an overview of services provided through Workforce Investment Act funds in Northeast Georgia for the period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010. Services were provided to over 3,059 persons, with \$5.8 million expended providing services to these individuals. Mrs. Cofer provided information on the Summer 2010 Youth Work Experience activity which provided an opportunity for an additional 448 youth to work in local communities. She advised that, based on current information, there does not appear that there will be any supplemental funds to operate a large stand alone summer youth work experience program outside of the activity that would provide currently enrolled in-school youth the opportunity to work during the Summer 2011.

### **SCORE – BUSINESS MENTORING**

The next item on the agenda was a presentation by Jasper County Commissioner Jack Bernard on SCORE, a Small Business Administration affiliate that provides free counseling to start-ups and existing businesses. SCORE can give entrepreneurs real-world advice and know-how. Services include face-to-face consultations with business experts, on-site evaluations at the place of business, and a team of counselors that will provide the business professional with specialized assistance in a wide range of business areas. The relationship with SCORE can last a few sessions or a number of years, based on needs. SCORE workshops are a valuable

way to learn more about doing business and a convenient forum for networking with other professionals who can help a business succeed.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

For many years, Charlie Crawford has served as the Council's representative to the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC). Mr. Crawford has served admirably in this role, and his many contributions are appreciated. He recently requested to be relieved of these duties, and Chairperson Brooks reluctantly agreed to appoint another Council member. Therefore, at this time, Chairperson Brooks appointed Mr. Lamar Houston to be the Northeast Georgia Council representative to the GARC, effective immediately. Mr. Houston agreed to accept this appointment.

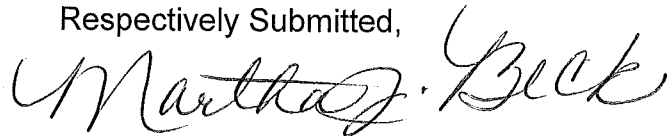
Another item of business concerned the appointment of Associate Members to the Council. The Bylaws includes these appointments and provides an opportunity for the Council to maintain association with some former Board members who could not continue to serve after the transition in 2009 from a regional development center to a regional commission. Associate members are not eligible to serve as an officer or vote on matters coming before the Council, and the appointment is concurrent with the fiscal year. Those who have previously served and have expressed an interest in continuing their service are Buddy Ouzts, Harold Horton, Joel Seymour, Larry Postell, David Nunn, Louise Adams, Flemmie Pitts, and Julian Jackson. A motion to accept the appointment of these Associate members was made by Commissioner Melvin Davis and seconded by Commissioner Kevin Little. The motion carried unanimously.

The next meeting will be held on February 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectively Submitted,



Martha J. Beck  
Executive Assistant