

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
HILTON GARDEN INN
FEBRUARY 16, 2017
NOON**

MINUTES

Members Present:

Jennings, Tommy
Denson, Nancy
Ferrelle, Dodd
Houston, Lamar
Lyon, Tommy
Palmer, Bill
Smith, Jeffery
Crow, Tom
Plott, Roy
Shaw, Jim
Pennamon, Carl
Workman, Stone
Scarborough, John
Gandy, Roy
Ainslie, Andy
Perriman Fred
Bentley, David
Banes, Marcello
Roseberry, Jerry
Daniell, John
Ivie, Charles
Pittard, Billy
Johnson, Jesse
Little, Kevin
Chambers, Joyce
Fordyce, Cary
Ledford, Howard
O'Rouke, Tate

Members Absent:

Graham, Pat
Blechinger, Linda
Guest, Larry
Brock, Phil
Dyer, Dave
Blackmon, Jody
Turner, Frank
Harden, Amrey
Berry, Rick
Thompson, Greg
Roberts, Roy

Associate Members Present:

Horton, Harold
Seymour, Joel
Adams, Louise
Pitts, Flemmie

Guests Present:

Paul Tanner
Scott Susten
Mary Jaden
Eric McRae
Nancy Bobbitt
Daniella Perry
Annaka Woodruff
Mike Renshaw
George Chandler
Keith Ellis
Melvin Baker
Jon Herschell

Staff Present:

Jim Dove, Executive Director
Mott Beck, Executive Assistant
Alicia Page, Comptroller
Burke Walker, Director of Planning & Government Services
Kenny Gilbert, GIS Planner
Michele Kelley, Area Agency on Aging Deputy Director

CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF JANUARY MEETING MINUTES

Vice Chairman Jerry Roseberry called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. He welcomed members, guests, and staff. He asked for a motion to approve the minutes

of the January meeting. **Such a motion was made by Commissioner Billy Pittard and seconded by Commissioner Tommy Lyon. The motion carried unanimously.**

ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Jasper County: A special election will be held in March to elect a Commissioner to fill the unexpired term of the late Gene Trammell. Commissioner Carl Pennamon, who has been with the Jasper County Government for 33 years, was chosen by the Commission to serve as Chairman. Plans are ongoing for a potential by-pass around the City of Monticello. Jasper County, along with Morgan, Newton, and Walton Counties, worked together to obtain the Stanton Springs property and the subsequent construction of Baxter International. The four counties will reap benefits from this venture for many years to come.

Jackson County: A special election will be held on March 21st to elect a new Commissioner to replace the late Dwain Smith. The new animal shelter recently opened. The County is completing three new EMS stations throughout the County, and LMIG paving projects for 2017 are underway. An update to E-911 is ongoing, and the County is gearing up for the Next Generation 911. Grant funds from the Georgia Department of Natural Resource's Historic Preservation Division will be used for restoration of the 2nd floor of the Historic County Courthouse. GDOT has held the first round of public hearings for widening I-85 to three lanes up to Highway 129. Approximately four million sq. ft. of spec industrial space was recently completed or is under construction. The City of Jefferson issued 225 new home permits in 2016, and Kubota will undergo a \$16 million 600,000 sq. ft. expansion project. The City of Braselton awarded the Water Spray Park contract to KORKAT, and is finalizing design on the downtown parking deck. The City of Commerce has expanded its fiber network to I-85 industrial facilities and is taking fiber to the Banks County Industrial Park.

Madison County: Chairman John Scarborough expressed everyone's pride in agriculture in Madison County, and hopes to entice more business over the next few years. Ribbon cutting for Jordan Heating & Air was held recently.

Morgan County: The County, partnering with the Board of Education, has two ongoing projects that will be a huge benefit to both. The BOC and the BOE have invested in a 160 acre tract of property along the bypass that the County will utilize for recreation expansion, and the BOE will construct a maintenance shop and bus fueling depot. A movie, Friday the 13th Part 13, will be filmed at Hard Labor Creek State Park, and Phase II of Farmview Market will begin this year, with the addition of a creamery. A number of companies have announced small expansions. The Carl Vinson Institute of Government assisted the County with review and selection of a new County Manager, and it is anticipated that one will be named very soon.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit & Finance: The Committee met prior to the Council meeting, and members reviewed the financial statements for the seven-month period ending January 31, 2017. Revenues exceeded expenses by \$10,912.66. Financial activity for the seven-month period was approximately 58% of the FY2017 Budget. Additionally, staff discussed with the Committee the need to increase an existing purchase order for Money Follows the Person Program in the AAA. This is the first full Fiscal Year that this program has been implemented with an original goal of transitioning 14 individuals. The Department of Human Services asked that there be a push to increase the original goal. To date, the Regional Commission has transitioned 25 individuals, with anticipation to transition ten more prior to the Fiscal Year end. Therefore, staff has recommended, and the Audit & Finance Committee has approved, an increase to the existing purchase order of \$100,000 to \$485,125 for a total increase of \$385,125. Reimbursement from Medicaid for these expenses will come in incremental checks received by the Regional Commission approximately every two weeks. **A motion to approve the report as presented was made by Mr. Houston and seconded by Commissioner Pittard. The motion carried unanimously.**

Program of Work: The Committee did not meet this month.

Planning & Government Services: The Committee met prior to the Council meeting and discussed several items of mutual interest. They learned that PGS staff will assume the contractual duties for administering the Georgia Department of Human Services' Coordinated Transportation Program. Our Committee will similarly provide oversight to this Program going forward. The Committee supports this endeavor. No action by the Council is required.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

NEGRC Council Member Tate O'Rourke, Director of Economic Development of the University of North Georgia (UNG), invited Executive Director Jim Dove and Executive Assistant Mott Beck to a meeting and tour of the Dahlonega Campus on January 25th. While there, they had an opportunity to meet with Associate Vice President Dr. Edward Mienie and Undergraduate Admissions Assistant Director Ethan Penland. UNG enrollment at its five campuses exceeds 18,000. It is the second oldest public institution of higher education in the state, and it is designated as a state leadership institution and the Military College of Georgia. Interacting with students on the campus, and visiting various buildings and classrooms were quite impressive. UNG officials will make a presentation to the NEGRC Council later in the year.

Since the last meeting, Mr. Dove and Ms. Beck facilitated a two-day retreat for the City of Jefferson, and on Friday, February 17th, they will be going to Bobby Brown Park for the Elbert County retreat. On the 24th they will facilitate the Braselton session

at their offices, and on Monday the 27th they will be doing the Madison retreat in the NEGRC Conference Room.

Mr. Dove was asked to serve by GDOT leadership to serve on their State Aviation System Plan Stakeholders Committee. The first meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 28th in Atlanta. They will probably meet three times over the next year and a half. Mr. Dove will keep the Council update on this initiative.

Within the next week, Mr. Dove will ask the Department Heads to begin the annual performance evaluations of employees under their direct supervision. They will be completed over the next month or so.

Mr. Dove and Council Member Lamar Houston went to Atlanta on February 2nd to attend the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions quarterly policy meeting. Executive Directors meet monthly, and persons like Mr. Houston meet every three months with the Executive Directors. At the meeting in Atlanta, they received a legislative update from Terry Mathews, discussed possible changes to GARC Bylaws, and heard from DCA representatives.

Georgia ranks 9th in the nation for senior hunger rates, and older Georgians face food insecurity daily, skimping to make it from one meal to the next. They do not know from day-to-day whether they will have food to put on the table tomorrow. Some things must be done, and there will be a listening session Tuesday, March 14th to talk with other community members and leaders about senior hunger. This session will be held at the Oconee County Senior Center in Watkinsville. The input from this listening session will help the Georgia Department of Human Services develop a comprehensive State Plan on Senior Hunger, the first of its kind for Georgia.

At this time, Mr. Dove presented a Resolution that the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission be designated by the Georgia Department of Human Resources as the Area Agency on Aging to plan, develop, and coordinate a comprehensive system of services for older citizens in the twelve counties of Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Jasper, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee Oglethorpe, and Walton Counties; and further, to execute any documents required for that purpose in accordance with the applicable provisions of Georgia Law. **A motion to adopt said Resolution was made by Commissioner Tommy Lyon and seconded by Commissioner Pittard. The motion carried unanimously.**

CHANGES TO APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION GRANT TIMELINE

Annaka Woodruff, Program Manager for the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) office at DCA, gave an updated timeline on submission of ARC grants. Pre-applications are due to DCA by April 1, 2017, and full applications are due April 14, 2017. A free Application Workshop will be held in Albany on February 24th. Eligible activities include economic development, workforce training, infrastructure, and natural

and cultural asset preservation and promotion. Another round of applications is anticipated in fall 2017.

MAP 21 PROGRAM

At this time, Paul Tanner with GDOT and Eric McRae of CVIOG gave an overview of the MAP 21 Program. Over the next several years, NEGRC is partnering with the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC), UGA's Carl Vinson Institute of Government and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) in an effort to address problems with incorrect and out-of-date road data. This federally mandated and funded program will involve coordinating with our twelve member counties to collect and verify various bits of information about local roads throughout the region. Information like surface, ownership, lanes, name, and so forth will be collected, verified, and ultimately compiled into a publically available statewide dataset of local roads. This program is intended to address challenges across the nation related to increased safety, improved infrastructure condition, decreased traffic congestion, efficiencies in freight movement, protecting the environment and changing delays in product delivery. Each Regional Commission is required to collect this data for three of its counties per year. Realizing the importance of local knowledge, in the coming weeks and months the NEGRC will be reaching out to our member communities to gauge those interested in beginning this effort. There is no cost to our member governments to participate.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held on March 16th.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha J. Beck
Executive Assistant