

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
ATHENS HOLIDAY INN
JUNE 15, 2017
NOON**

MINUTES

Members Present:

Graham, Pat
Denson, Nancy
Houston, Lamar
Lyon, Tommy
Palmer, Bill
Plott, Roy
Shaw, Jim
Pennamon, Carl
Workman, Stone
Dyer, Dave
Gandy, Roy
Ainslie, Andy
Perriman, Fred
Bentley, David
Banes, Marcello
Roseberry, Jerry
Daniell, John
Ivie, Charles
Harden, Amrey
Pittard, Billy
Berry, Rick
Little, Kevin
Chambers, Joyce
Ledford, Howard

Members Absent:

Blechinger, Linda
Jennings, Tommy
Ferrelle, Dodd
Guest, Larry
Smith, Jeffery
Brock, Phil
Crow, Tom
Scarborough, John
Blackmon, Jody
Turner, Frank
Johnson, Jesse
Thompson, Greg
Fordyce, Cary
Roberts, Roy
O'Rouke, Tate

Staff Present:

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

Associate Members Present:

Ouzts, Buddy
Seymour, Joel

Media Present:

Katherine Klimt

Guests Present:

George Chandler
Don Jernigan
Bob Schwartz
Matt Peppers
Daniella Perry
Andrew Seivers
Missy Pittard
Adam Mestres

WELCOME AND APPROVAL OF APRIL MEETING MINUTES

In the absence of Chairman Frank Turner, Vice Chairman Jerry Roseberry called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. He welcomed members, media, guests, and staff. He asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the May meeting. **Such a motion was made by Chairman Tommy Lyon and seconded by Mayor Nancy Denson. The motion carried unanimously.**

ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Jackson County: Mr. Jim Shaw advised that Uline, the leading distributor of shipping, industrial and packaging materials to businesses throughout North America, will relocate from Gwinnett County to a new one million sq. ft. building in Braselton and will employ 600 persons. Amazon has leased an 822,000 sq. ft. spec building in Jefferson that will employ 1,000 persons. Approximately 3.1 million sq. ft. of new spec industrial space is either under construction or recently completed. A Pictometry Project including aerial photography of the County; plus utilities, topos, floodplains, and wetlands, has been completed. Progress is being made on the possibility of establishing a college and career academy. The City of Commerce has a couple of new manufacturing businesses locating in its downtown in existing facilities that have been vacant for some time. The City is purchasing a new pumper/tanker truck with funds from a FEMA grant. Expansion at Fox Trails, a mountain bike trail facility, is growing through an all-volunteer effort. At present, there are five miles of riding and hiking trails.

Jasper County: Norton Packaging has expanded and doubled its size and its workforce to 66 employees. The Jasper County Industrial Park in Monticello is at 80 percent capacity with very little available space. Monticello/Jasper County is in a pilot partnership with the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for a new community initiative that can provide an array of services regarding a diversity of needs to local governments. A kick-off meeting was held in April at DCA, and the next meeting will take place in Monticello in June. The City of Monticello has acquired a 700 acre existing reservoir that will take care of future water needs. The Market on the Square is “in full swing” and continues to be a very successful annual event.

Madison County: In the absence of County Commission Chairman John Scarborough due to illness, Mr. Roy Gandy presented a report on behalf of Madison County. He indicated that the County and Municipalities are seeking to cooperate on a number of initiatives. County leaders have indicated a willingness to participate in a regional transportation initiative should the opportunity present itself.

Morgan County: The City of Madison and the County experienced some very tense hours due to the murder of two prison guards and the escape of the two prisoners wanted for this crime. The County is in the process of finalizing its FY18 Budget, and there will not be an increase in the millage rate in the next Fiscal Year. The County and the BOE are partnering regarding a bus yard. The new Morgan County Charter School System is holding its grand opening on July 18th. A new middle school and high school will be constructed on the same site. A new \$35 million hospital will be constructed on a 24 acre site along the Highway 441 Bypass near Ag South. Residential building permits increased this year, indicating that home growth is “bouncing back” from the economic

downturn. Commissioner Andy Ainslie introduced Adam Mestres, the new County Manager.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit & Finance: Members of the Audit & Finance Committee met prior to the Council meeting and reviewed the financial statements for the eleven-month period ending May 31, 2017. Revenues exceeded expenditures by \$57,739. **A motion to accept the financial report as presented was made by Mr. Amrey Harden and seconded by Mr. David Bentley. The motion carried unanimously.**

Program of Work: There were no requests for technical assistance last month, and the Committee did not meet.

Planning & Government Services: The Committee met prior to the Council meeting to discuss several items of mutual interest. One of the items discussed was the upcoming review of four Developments of Regional Impacts (DRI). The Committee, as well as other affected parties, will provide any advisory comments during this process. No Council action was required pertaining to this report.

Personnel: Committee Chairman Kevin Little advised that the Committee met in April to conduct the annual evaluation of Executive Director Dove. He expressed appreciation for Executive Director Dove's outstanding dedication and leadership. He said, "It is indeed an honor to have him as Executive Director of the organization. Because of him, our Regional Commission is considered the best in the State". **A motion was made by Commissioner Billy Pittard and seconded by Mayor Denson to accept the evaluation stating that Executive Director Dove "Exceeded Expectations". The motion carried unanimously.**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Dove expressed appreciation to the Council for the fine job they do guiding and supporting the Regional Commission and Staff. They are dedicated and loyal, and make every effort to attend meetings to ensure that there is always a quorum.

The annual meeting of the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) will be held in Savannah the last week in June, and GARC will again have an exhibit. Executive Assistant Mott Beck has worked with GMA staff to make arrangements for the booth, and Burke Walker will attend and represent NEGRC at the exhibit.

Executive Director Dove and Ms. Beck will facilitate a Strategic Planning Retreat for the Jackson County Board of Commissioners on June 21st. Since the last Council meeting, they facilitated a retreat for the Walton County Board of Commissioners on May 25th.

Council members were asked to visit the NEGRC website and review the CEDS document. The work on the document is outstanding and was done by Project Specialist Eva Kennedy of the PGS staff. A portion of the CEDS has been used at various meetings over the past few months.

The Regional Commission recently signed a two-year contract with DCA to assist with the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) for the upcoming 2020 Census. Executive Director Dove asked that Council members take full advantage of resources on this effort. It is imperative that the Census effort result in an accurate count.

Oxford City Manager Bob Schwartz, who will be retiring at the end of June, was present at the meeting, and Executive Director Dove expressed appreciation for all he has done for Oxford and for being such a loyal friend to the Regional Commission over the years. Attending with Mr. Schwartz was Matt Peppers, the new Oxford City Manager. The Council and staff wish Mr. Schwartz well in his retirement.

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs plans to adopt revisions to the standards and procedures governing the regional planning requirements. DCA has worked with the 12 regional commissions to review and make permanent revisions of the regional planning program to simplify the requirements, making them more relevant, useful, and less costly for regional commissions. It is anticipated that the DCA Board will act on the proposed rule revisions at its meeting on August 16th. **A motion to forward a letter to Deputy Commissioner Rusty Haygood in support of this initiative was made by Commissioner Lyon and seconded by Mr. Bill Palmer. The motion carried unanimously.**

RECOMMENDATION ON THE REVISED FY17 AND THE PROPOSED FY18 BUDGETS

Council members were e-mailed copies of the Revised FY2017 budget and the Proposed FY2018 Budget prior to the meeting; and at this time, Mr. Harden provided highlights of both budgets. The overall revenues for the revised budget increased by \$179,094 from the original FY17 adopted budget, and the overall expenditures for the revised budget increased by \$179,374 from the original FY17 adopted budget. Total revised revenues for FY17 are projected to be \$13,797,188, and total expenditures are projected to be \$13,768,636 which would result in an excess of revenues over expenditures of \$28,552 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017. Included in the revised FY17 budget is a purchase of a new telephone system for the Division of Aging and increased funding for Money Follows the Person which aids in transitioning elderly adults from assisted living facilities back into the community. The FY18 budget is a balanced budget, and therefore the revenues equal the expenditures. The overall Revenues and Expenditures for the proposed FY18 budget are projected to come in at \$13,026,247. There is an overall reduction of approximately 4.14% from fiscal year 2017 due to a reduction in funding from the Department of Human Services. The FY18 budget supports three new full-time positions and two new part-time positions. This

budget includes the purchase of a new postage machine for the Regional Commission and includes salary increases for NEGRC staff of 4%. The amount necessary to match the different grants that the Regional Commission has is projected to be \$263,566. Considering the amount of federal and state dollars to be received, the leveraging effect of local funds is significant. For every one dollar paid in dues, the region will receive \$19.89 in federal and state funding. To comply with the Department of Audit recommendations, dues are calculated using the most recent region population figures. This results in an increase of \$18,297 in dues for the fiscal year 2018. The Audit & Finance Committee recommended that the Revised FY17 and Proposed FY18 Budgets be adopted as presented, and **a motion to accept this recommendation was made by Mr. Harden and seconded by Mr. Bentley. The motion carried unanimously.**

RECOMMENDATION ON THE FY18 PROGRAM OF WORK

At this time, Executive Director Dove presented the FY2017 Program of Work. As in past years, NEGRC has an ambitious Program of Work and has included all items required by State and Federal grantor agencies. The Regional Commission 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 Annual Program of Work. He asked PGS Director Burke Walker to come forward and give a few highlights of his division's projects, followed by Workforce Development Director Carol Rayburn with highlights of that division. In the PGS Division, highlights include scheduling and conducting Plan Implementation meetings with elected leadership and key staff of six NEGRC counties and their municipalities, assisting local governments in providing accurate address and boundary data for the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA), assisting individual counties with Map-21 and updating transportation data in coordination with the GDOT, and continue updating comprehensive plans. In the Workforce Development Division, staff will continue to provide staff support to elected officials and Workforce Development Board in the full implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in the region, ensure full and accurate implementation of the WorkSource Georgia Branding initiative throughout the region, continue to utilize computer mobile learning labs to provide access to services throughout the region, provide technical assistance to training providers in the development and implementation of short-term occupational skills training programs, and support to employers in the region through access to Business Services/Activities as provided in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This is only a few highlights of the numerous services provided to our local governments throughout the year. **A motion to adopt the FY2018 Program of Work was made by Commissioner Lyon and seconded by Mr. Bentley. 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 Mr. Bentley and seconded by Mayor Roy Plott. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

In other business, it was suggested that future Council meetings be opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. **A motion to accept this idea was made by Mr. Bentley and seconded by Mayor Denson. The motion carried unanimously.**

The Council will not meet in July. The next meeting will be held on August 17th.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha J. Beck
Executive Assistant