

Minutes  
Southwest Georgia Regional Commission Meeting  
February 23, 2012

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (RC) held its Council meeting, Thursday, February 23, 2012, at the RC Offices in Camilla, Georgia. Chairman Jack Powell chaired the meeting, with the following council members present: Mr. John Gaines, Mr. John Spann, Mr. Charlie Williams, Mr. Johnny Hardin, Mr. Ferrell Ruis, Mr. Henry Crumley, Jr., Dr. C. T. Stafford, Ms. Janice Baty, Mr. George Washington, Ms. Gloria Gaines, Mr. Christopher Pike, Mr. Raymond Breaux, Mr. Richard Ward, Mr. Al Hutchins, Mr. Jim Sellers, Mr. Joe Walden, Mr. Vincent Cutts, Ms. Jenny Crisp, Ms. Glenda Battle, Mr. Carlos Williams, Mr. Luther Clearman, Mr. Ben Hayward, Mr. W.D. Palmer, III, Mr. David Sullivan, Ms. Brenda Peterson, Mr. Lucius Holloway, Ms. Elaine Mays, Mr. Howard Floyd, and Ms. Karen Rackley.

Those Council members calling to report conflicts were Mr. Eddie Hopkins, Mr. Stephen Kaplan, Mr. Billy Poitevint, Mr. Charles Barrineau, Ms. Brenda Broome, Mr. Courtney Brinson, and Mr. David Herndon.

Council members absent were Ms. Bennie Watts Jones, Mr. Ernie Feille, Ms. Christie Haynes, Mr. Ed Duffy, Mr. Jimmy Haywood, Mr. Max Beverly, Mr. Matt Medders, Mr. William Yearta, Mr. David Maschke, Ms. Elizabeth Millsaps, and Mr. Mills Herndon.

Staff members present were Executive Director Dan Bollinger, Sr., Executive Secretary Anna Singletary, Finance Director Suzanne Angell, Workforce Investment Board (WIB) Director Charles Williams, Economic Developer Robert McDonald, Transportation Director Robert McDaniel, Planner Kerrie Davis and Human Resources Manager Sherry Knighten. Guests attending the meeting were Mr. John Peterson, Ms. Doris Gay, Mr. Dean Nelson, Mr. Donnie Baggett and Ms. Robbie Floyd.

Chairman Jack Powell called the meeting to order at approximately 7:05 p.m. and called on Mr. Dan Bollinger for the Attendance Report. Mr. Bollinger reported that there were 30 members present representing fourteen counties and a quorum was present. He noted that Decatur, Mitchell and Terrell Counties had 100% representation and then introduced guests of the Council. After a brief review of the Consent Agenda, last month's Minutes and Financial Statements, Ms. Elaine Mays moved the approval of the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Danny Palmer. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Powell called on Ms. Elaine Mays for Election of Officers. Ms. Mays presented and read the slate of officers for election: Mr. Jack Powell, Chair; Ms. Gloria Gaines, Vice Chair; Mr. Ben Hayward, Treasurer; Ms. Glenda Battle, Mr. Luther Clearman, Mr. Danny Palmer, and Ms. Brenda Peterson as Executive Committee members. With no nominations from the floor, Ms. Elaine Mays moved the election of officers as presented, seconded by Mr. Lucius Holloway. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Powell called on Ms. Glenda Battle for the Transportation Committee report. Ms. Battle reported that the committee had met prior to the Council meeting for information purposes. She reported that the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) contract would expire effective March 31, 2012, and that the Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) staff was prepared to implement the turnover plan to the awarded company, Logisticare, within two weeks. Ms. Battle reported that utilization rates had significantly increased over the last two years (20,000 scheduled trip increase) with member rates (\$6.39/member/month) not changing to meet the demand. She further reported that for the month of January, the NET program suffered a loss of \$200,000, providing approximately 86,000 trips. Ms. Battle summarized the funding of scheduled trips for a single month whereby an eligible member is provided transportation for an entire month for only a \$6.39 fee per month. She reminded the Council that the RC still operates the Georgia Department of

Transportation (DOT) 5311 program on behalf of 13 counties in the region, with Thomas County operating their own program. Ms. Battle reported that the RC provides the match for equipping the three providers to conduct the trips and after review of the budget, the committee determined to pay for five vehicles as the match for each provider, including Thomas County. She noted that any other equipment requested in the grant would be paid for by the provider. After further discussion regarding the DCH contract expiration, Mr. Bollinger stated that RC and NET staff were conducting themselves in a professional manner with the new administrator, Logisticare.

Chairman Powell called on Dr. Stafford for the Human Resources Committee report. Dr. Stafford briefed the Council on the meeting, calling on Sherry Knighten, for further comments. Ms. Knighten called attention to a training being hosted in April by the RC, the University of Georgia's (UGA) Management Development Program for Governmental employees. She noted that the training consisted of a three course program that lead to certification and noted that several persons already had the first level of the course. Ms. Knighten reported that other training would be offered in efforts to bring the seminars and workshops to a more centrally located area for our region and encourage members to contact the RC with any specialized training they would be interested in being conducted. Dr. Stafford then tasked Ms. Knighten to pursue training relative to small local government.

Mr. Robert McDonald gave the Economic Developer's report reminding the Council that the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) rules had been amended to be less restrictive and encouraged members to direct folks to the RC for loans. He noted that Certified Community Literate Program (CLCP) met quarterly and the annual conference was being scheduled to include an address by Governor Deal and Ronald Jackson, Commissioner of Technical College System of Georgia. Mr. McDonald reported that he continued to work with the City of Albany and the City of Camilla in determining Opportunity Zones and that he also could assist companies with OneGA loans.

Mr. Charles Williams gave the Workforce Investment Director's presenting the members with a report that summarized the mission of Workforce 44 Board, program perspective and staff objectives. He noted the report gave explanation of the service mix offered to clients and encouraged members to contact Workforce 44 with prospective clients and businesses. Mr. Williams gave a brief summary of the composition of the Workforce 44 Board and then gave a summary of the Governor's Go Build Georgia initiative. He noted that the initiative took the place of the Georgia Work-Ready program where the focus was now on those that were unemployed and stated that he had attended the first meeting on the new initiative. Further discussion was held on the initiative relative to the regional variations of conducting a state-wide program of this nature.

Mr. Robert McDaniel gave the Transportation Director's report reporting that for the month of January, the call center received 19,626 calls and scheduled 86,396 trips. He noted that in January 2010 the call center received 11,496 calls and scheduled 61,000 trips. He gave the percentages of types of trips provided and Mr. Bollinger noted that even with the increased utilization, the center was still answering 90% of phone calls. Mr. McDaniel noted that NET staff was finding other jobs and that a severance pay system was in place, with the Georgia Department of Labor (DOL) and Workforce 44 in house also assisting the employees. He then referenced the "turnover plan" as agreed to in the contract whereby clients would be informed of the service transition. Lastly, Mr. Bollinger noted that Transportation Planner Gerald Goosby was in Atlanta attending training on the American Disabilities Act.

Ms. Suzanne Angell gave the Finance Director's report stating that the application for the Department of Human Services (DHS) transportation program was submitted earlier in the month and that the DOT 5311 program application was due March 1st. She further reported that accounting staff had been working normal accounting operations, including 1099s and W2s.

Mr. Dan Bollinger noted that Planning Director Jay Sargent was facilitating a meeting in Grady County and presented the Council with a Planning Program Report. Mr. Bollinger called attention to the Lee County Planning Commissioner training that was conducted earlier in the month and other key points in the planning report.

Mr. Dan Bollinger gave the Executive Director's report noting that he had attended the ACCG meeting. He stated that the Georgia Chamber of Commerce had an initiative called Connect Georgia to market the Transportation Investment Act of 2010, also known as the regional TSPLOST and noted that he had presented information on the tax to area civic clubs. He further stated that DOT had asked that the Transportation Roundtables remain active and that the vote would be conducted on July 31, 2012. Mr. Bollinger noted that he had also attended another Planning Rules Task Force meeting whereby a softening of planning requirements was underway. He further noted that no legislation had been proposed this session that would affect Regional Commissions. Mr. Bollinger noted that the RC had prepared and agreed to facilitate public meetings in Grady County relative to the County adopting a zoning ordinance, and that particular individuals at those meetings had singled out Mr. Bollinger, accusing him of plotting, scheming and lying to the Commission and citizens of Grady County. Mr. Bollinger stated that those accusations were completely unfounded, and that it was an unfortunate circumstance. Lastly, Mr. Bollinger noted his continuous disappointment in DCH due to their unprofessionalism during the process of the request for proposals, their denial of protests and their award and turning over of services to the new administrator. He reported that the RC notified DCH of the contract expiration of March 31<sup>st</sup> and would be meeting with the Commissioner next week to once again reiterate concerns and the contract end date.

Chairman Powell noted that the next Council Meeting would be held at the RC Offices. With there being no further business, Mr. Henry Crumley moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Danny Palmer. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

---

Jack Powell, Chairman

---

Dan Bollinger, Sr., Secretary