

Minutes
Southwest Georgia Regional Commission Meeting
January 26, 2012

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (RC) held its Council meeting, Thursday, January 26, 2012, at the offices of the Regional Commission, Camilla, Georgia. Chairman Jack Powell chaired the meeting, with the following council members present: Mr. John Spann, Mr. Eddie Hopkins, Mr. Charlie Williams, Mr. Johnny Hardin, Mr. Ferrell Ruis, Mr. Henry Crumley, Jr., Dr. C. T. Stafford, Ms. Gloria Gaines, Mr. Christopher Pike, Mr. Stephen Kaplan, Mr. Raymond Breaux, Mr. Richard Ward, Mr. Al Hutchins, Mr. Billy Poitevint, Mr. Joe Walden, Mr. Vincent Cutts, Ms. Jenny Crisp, Ms. Glenda Battle, Mr. Carlos Williams, Mr. Luther Clearman, Mr. Ben Hayward, Mr. David Sullivan, Ms. Brenda Peterson, Ms. Brenda Broome, Ms. Elaine Mays and Mr. Howard Floyd.

Those Council members calling to report conflicts were Mr. Ernie Feille, Ms. Janice Baty, Ms. Christie Haynes, Mr. Jim Sellers, Mr. Jimmy Haywood, Mr. W.D. Palmer, III, Mr. Lucius Holloway, Mr. David Maschke, Mr. Courtney Brinson and Mr. David Herndon.

Council members absent were Mr. John Gaines, Ms. Bennie Watts Jones, Mr. George Washington, Mr. Ed Duffy, Mr. Max Beverly, Mr. Matt Medders, Mr. William Yearata, Ms. Karen Rackley, Ms. Elizabeth Millsaps, and Mr. Mills Herndon.

Staff members present were Executive Director Dan Bollinger, Sr., Executive Secretary Anna Singletary, Finance Director Suzanne Angell, Planning Director Jay Sargent, Planner Kerrie Davis, Planner Barbara Reddick, Workforce Investment Board (WIB) Director Charles Williams, Economic Developer Robert McDonald, Transportation Planner Gerald Goosby and Transportation Director Robert McDaniel. Guests attending the meeting were Mrs. Alida Ward, Ms. Robbie Floyd and Mr. John Peterson.

Chairman Jack Powell called the meeting to order at approximately 7:15 p.m. and called on Mr. Dan Bollinger for the Attendance Report. Mr. Bollinger reported that there were 25 members present representing 13 counties and a quorum was present. He noted that Dougherty County had 100% representation and then gave introductions of the Council guests. **After a brief review of the Consent Agenda, last month's Minutes and Financial Statements, Mr. Henry Crumley moved the approval of the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Elaine Mays. The motion was unanimously approved.**

Chairman Powell called on Ms. Elaine Mays for the Nominating Committee report. Ms. Mays reported that the committee met prior to the Council meeting and presented the Council with a slate of officers for nomination: 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. Ms. Mays thanked the prior committee members for their service and then recommended that the Officers and Executive Committee members be adopted at the next council meeting.

Chairman Powell called on Ms. Glenda Battle for the Transportation Committee report. Ms. Battle presented the Council with a Resolution whereby the RC would continue to provide transportation service for the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) 5311 program. She noted that the funds help to operate the program, buy equipment and replacement of vehicles. **Mr. Henry Crumley moved to adopt the 5311 Resolution and to submit said resolution to DOT, seconded by Mr. Raymond Breaux. The motion was unanimously approved.** Ms. Battle further reported that the committee has authorized RC staff to renegotiate funds requested by the DOT 5311 program transportation providers because the RC FY13 capital budget did not have enough funds to allow all requested expenditures. Ms. Battle stated a Letter of Intent would be delivered to the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) in order to continue providing transportation services for the agency. Ms. Battle reported that Connect Georgia, an initiative of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, was scheduled to present to the Committee and Council about the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 (TIA), commonly known as the Regional TSPLOST, however the

group had cancelled. She noted that the Executive Director had information and would be available to any community to present the facts of the tax. Lastly, Ms. Battle reported that the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) had yet to comment on the protest and that the committee has authorized Mr. Bollinger to begin negotiations with strict requirements if another contract extension was offered. She expressed concerns of operating under the current terms of the current contract and gave explanation of the terms to be negotiated. Mr. Bollinger gave further explanation of the circumstances of operating under the current contract.

Chairman Powell called on Robert McDonald for the Economic Developer's report. Mr. McDonald reported that he was working on a third opportunity zone for the City of Albany and two more in the City of Meigs and the City of Camilla. He further reported that the requirements for the RC's Revolving Loan Fund had been altered to include direct loans and encourage members to contact him with prospective loan opportunities.

Chairman Powell called on Charles Williams for the Workforce Investment Director's report. Mr. Williams reported that the workforce investment program had a new website, www.workforce44.org. He noted that the Competitive Initiative report was available with workforce being one of the top priorities of the Governor. Mr. Williams gave an explanation of the Go Build Georgia initiative that encouraged trade skills and of the Gold Card initiative that helps veterans find employment. He reported the orientations had been held for the RC's transportation employees to further help them in finding employment as well. He then gave recent statistics of unemployment for the region, with Ms. Gaines noting that Dougherty County was adding more jobs than the State as a whole.

Chairman Powell called on Mr. Robert McDaniel for the transportation report. He noted that for the month of December, the Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) program had received 16,166 calls and scheduled 82,145 trips; comparing the numbers to last December 2010 of 11,187 calls received and 74,900 scheduled trips. Transportation Planner Gerald Goosby reported that he was working on the DOT bike and pedestrian plans and monitoring providers under the 5311 program. He further reported that companies had demonstrated GPS tracking equipment to the providers and noted that American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds were available to purchase said equipment. Mr. Goosby noted that in addition to the RC's 5311 Resolution, he had received individual Resolutions from the communities that participate in the 5311 program for the RC to apply for the funds on their behalf. Lastly, he further noted that with recent elections, the TIA roundtable member roster would be amended accordingly.

Chairman Powell called on Mr. Jay Sargent for the Planning Director's report. Mr. Sargent noted that the Regional Agenda had been approved as amended by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and recommended that the Council approve the plan as well. Mr. Sargent read the resolution as follows, "A resolution by the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission to adopt the Regional Agenda portion of the Southwest Georgia Regional Plan." **Ms. Elaine Mays moved the adoption of the Regional Agenda, seconded by Dr. C.T. Stafford. The motion was unanimously approved.** Mr. Sargent then highlighted current planning activities that included production of Pre-Hazard Mitigation Plans, a grant writing workshop and a youth summit scheduled for February 25th. He noted that five Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) grants had been closed out, with five more CHIP applications being submitted this year.

Chairman Powell called on Ms. Suzanne Angell for the Finance and Management report. Ms. Angell presented the final Audit, noting that there were no changes made since the draft, only the Management's Discussion and Analysis was added. She noted that the Audit was submitted to the appropriate authorities in a timely manner. **Mr. John Spann moved to accept the Audit as presented, seconded by Mr. Luther Clearman. The motion was unanimously approved.**

Chairman Powell called on Mr. Dan Bollinger, Sr., for the Executive Director's report. Mr. Bollinger noted that the New Member's Orientation would be held next month at 2:00 p.m. prior to the regularly scheduled Council meeting. He reported that the building next door to the commission was finished, and a retail business desired to lease the first floor. He stated that the RC was committed to lease the first floor from the contractor for 10 years at \$976 per month and recommend to the Council to

sublet the space to the business at \$750 per month. **Ms. Brenda Broome moved to sublet the space as recommended, seconded by Ms. Jenny Crisp. The motion was unanimously approved.**

Mr. Bollinger commented on Connect Georgia cancelling their presentation and reiterated that he was available to present information and facts on the regional TSPLOST to any community and other civic organization. Mr. Bollinger reported that staff was looking for alternative uses for the Call Center that could possibly include a regional 511, 311 or 911center; further explaining that the equipment was in place but that software and training would be needed. He called attention to the Georgia Trend Setter award given to Dougherty County/City of Albany for their 311 system. Mr. Bollinger reported that he had attended the Georgia Municipal Association conference and encouraged members to be aware of possible legislation regarding open meeting and open records.

Mr. Bollinger presented the Council a summary of events regarding the DCH contract and noted that approximately \$20,000 had been rendered for attorney expenses in filing the protest. He stated that current contract was extended through March 31st which was one of the objectives of hiring an attorney to file the protest. He stated that at the direction of the Transportation Committee, he would begin to negotiate rates and terms of another extension, if one should arise. He further explained that the liability of disruption of services was of great concern if the current contract was extended due to increased utilization of the program, NET employees leaving to find other employment and transportation providers exiting the program. Mr. Bollinger summarized how the recent contract extension was originated and how the RC was forced to accept the current terms or take blame for a disruption in services. Further discussion was held to the current contract and retaining the attorney for continued services.

Lastly, Mr. Bollinger presented the Council with a resolution of the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC) whereby the GARC “endorses the proposed Responsibilities the Commission on Regional Planning and the proposed Plan of Action of carrying out of the listed Responsibilities.” He noted that GARC would be meeting January 31st to adopt the resolution and recommended to the Council to approve Mr. Powell, member of GARC, to adopt the resolution as presented accordingly. **Mr. Stephen Kaplan moved to approve Mr. Powell to sign the GARC Resolution, seconded by Mr. Raymond Breaux. The motion was unanimously approved.**

Chairman Powell noted that the next Council Meeting would be held at the RC Offices. **With there being no further business, Ms. Elaine Mays moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Jenny Crisp. The motion was unanimously approved.** The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Jack Powell, Chairman

Dan Bollinger, Sr., Secretary