

Minutes
Southwest Georgia Regional Commission Meeting
March 29, 2012

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (RC) held its Council meeting, Thursday, March 29, 2012, at the Camilla Depot in Camilla, Georgia. Chairman Jack Powell chaired the meeting, with the following council members present: Mr. John Gaines, Mr. John Spann, Mr. Eddie Hopkins, Mr. Charlie Williams, Ms. Bennie Watts Jones, Mr. Johnny Hardin, Mr. Henry Crumley, Jr., Dr. C. T. Stafford, Mr. George Washington, Ms. Gloria Gaines, Mr. Christopher Pike, Mr. Raymond Breaux, Mr. Al Hutchins, Ms. Christie Haynes, Mr. Billy Poitevint, Mr. Jim Sellers, Mr. Joe Walden, Mr. Ed Duffy, Mr. Vincent Cutts, Ms. Jenny Crisp, Ms. Glenda Battle, Mr. Jimmy Haywood, Mr. Carlos Williams, Mr. Luther Clearman, Mr. Ben Hayward, Mr. W.D. Palmer, III, Mr. David Sullivan, Ms. Brenda Peterson, Ms. Brenda Broome, Mr. Lucius Holloway, Ms. Elaine Mays, Mr. Alfred Bryan, Mr. Randy Hill, Ms. Karen Rackley and Mr. David Maschke.

Those Council members calling to report conflicts were Ms. Janice Baty, Mr. Stephen Kaplan, Mr. Richard Ward, Mr. Charles Barineau, Mr. Howard Floyd, and Mr. Courtney Brinson.

Council members absent were Mr. Ferrell Ruis, Mr. Max Beverly, Mr. Matt Medders, Ms. Elizabeth Millsaps, Mr. Mills Herndon and Mr. David Herndon.

Staff members present were Executive Director Dan Bollinger, Sr., Executive Secretary Anna Singletary, Finance Director Suzanne Angell, Human Resources Manager Sherry Knighten, Workforce Investment Board (WIB) Director Charles Williams, Economic Developer Robert McDonald, Transportation Planner Gerald Goosby, Transportation Director Robert McDaniel, Planner Kerrie Davis, Planner Steve O'Neil, Planner Shane Kelsey, GIS Manager Heidi Penny, and IT Manager Brad Hurst. Guests attending the meeting were Mrs. Dolly Crumley, Mr. John Peterson, Ms. Faye Williams, Mr. Harold Reheis, Mr. Howard Small, Mrs. Alice Hutchins, Ms. Queenie Jones and Department of Community Affairs Regional Representative Mr. Dean Nelson.

Chairman Jack Powell called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. and called on Mr. Dan Bollinger for the Attendance Report. Mr. Bollinger reported that there were 36 members present representing fourteen counties and a quorum was present. He noted that Baker, Calhoun, Grady, Lee, Miller, Mitchell and Terrell Counties had 100% representation and then introduced the Council guests and new members of the Council, Mr. Alfred Bryan and Mr. Randy Hill. Mr. Bollinger also noted the passing of Council Member Ernie Feille. **After a brief review of the Agenda, last month's Minutes and Financial Statements, Ms. Elaine Mays moved the approval of the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Al Hutchins. The motion was unanimously approved.**

Chairman Powell called on Ms. Jenny Crisp for the Environmental – Natural Resources Committee report. Ms. Crisp reported the committee had met prior to the Council meeting to discuss a reservoir concept and called on Mr. Bollinger for explanation. Mr. Bollinger reported that the committee, upon hearing a presentation by Mr. Harold Reheis on the Aquifer Storage Recovery (ASR), had voted to recommend to the Council to move forward with a grant application to conduct a pilot ASR system in the region. Committee member Howard Small reported that aquifers were low and storage solutions were needed. Mr. Bollinger then introduced Mr. Reheis, former Georgia Environmental Protection Division Director, and now an environmental consultant with Joe Tanner and Associates. Mr. Reheis gave a summary of Aquifer Storage Recovery and explained the grant being offered by Governor Deal through the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority. **Ms. Jenny Crisp moved for the RC to apply for the grant with the assistance of Mr. Reheis and his associates, seconded by Ms. Christie Haynes.** After further discussion relative to the geographic target area of the grant and the particulars of how the work would be conducted using a bidding process, **the motion was unanimously approved.**

Chairman Powell called on Mr. Robert McDonald for the Economic Developer's report. Mr. McDonald reported that there were still funds available to be loaned through the Revolving Loan Fund. He further reported that he had attended the Certified Literate Community Program's (CLCP) conference, and that the cost of GED testing was increasing and was moving to

computer based testing. Mr. McDonald stated that he was continuing his work with Opportunity Zones for the City of Camilla, City of Albany, the City of Cairo and Grady County.

Chairman Powell called on Mr. Charles Williams for the Workforce Development Director's report. Mr. Williams called attention to the Workforce 44 report provided to the Council, noting the report summarized staff and program activity for the month. He reported that staff was also working on the transition from working with the Georgia Department of Labor (DOL) to the Governor's Office. Mr. Williams encouraged members to attend the workforce development board meetings and visit the workforce website, www.workforce.

Chairman Powell called on Robert McDaniel for the Transportation Director's report. Mr. McDaniel reported that for the month of February, the Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) program had received 15,328 calls and scheduled 77,374 trips. He further reported the last day of providing services was March 30th and that DOL and Workforce 44 staff would be assisting the last remaining Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) employees with filing for unemployment. He noted that the new broker's telephone number was forwarded to all clients and providers to schedule services for April. Mr. McDaniel reported that the loss for February was \$106,000. Ms. Angell noted the total loss for the life of the program is estimated to be at approximately \$300,000. She noted that there are reserves in other funds to cover the loss of the program, however explained that cash flow would be tight because most other RC grants/contracts are paid several months in arrears. To supplement cash flow, the Retirement Trustees approved for funds to be temporarily withdrawn from the retirement plan. Ms Angell then explained that the monies would be returned to meet the requirement of having a full funded retirement program over the course of the following year, following the actuarial analysis that would be performed in the early months of FY13. She further explained that the majority of the NET employees were not vested and the contributions for those employees that had been anticipated and paid into the retirement account would be in excess of the required contributions when those employees terminated.

Chairman Powell called on Mr. Gerald Goosby to report on transportation planning. Mr. Goosby reported that he had been working with communities on their Americans with Disabilities Act Transition plans. He further reported that Connect Georgia had conducted a meeting to inform and promote the TSPLOST for the Georgia Chamber and further meetings had been scheduled. Mr. Goosby then noted that the RC was exploring to see if federal funding was available for vehicles to convert gas vehicles to propane as an alternative fuel source and that a pilot project was being considered by one of our transportation providers.

Chairman Powell called on Ms. Suzanne Angell for the Finance Director's report. Ms. Angell noted that the RC was selling vehicle surplus via a closed bid process. She stated that bids were due April 13th, and vehicles would be awarded to the highest bidder.

Chairman Powell called on Mr. Dan Bollinger for the Executive Director's report. Mr. Bollinger reported that the City of Camilla Downtown Development Authority (DDA) had requested that the RC consider moving to another property owned by the DDA. He stated that the property was known as McRee Hall and gave a brief summary of the renovations made to the property and how the DDA had acquired the space. Mr. Danny Palmer, member of DDA, explained that the RC would enter into an acceptable lease-purchase agreement and that payment on McRee Hall would not exceed the current lease being paid by the RC to occupy the A.A. McNeil Building. He further stated that the total purchase price was \$432,000 and that standard maintenance would be the RC's responsibility, but that any maintenance required costing over \$2,500 would be paid by the DDA. Mr. Bollinger reported that the RC would also vacate the Harney Street building that housed the NET program and Workforce 44 and move Workforce 44 to another front street property in Camilla that better suited the workforce development program. After further discussion, Chairman Powell reported that the Executive Committee had met a week prior to the Council meeting to consider the move and inspect the property and further recommended that Council move forward with the acquisition of McRee Hall. **At the recommendation of the Executive Committee, Ms. John Gaines moved to accept the lease negotiations, seconded by Ms. Christie Haynes. The motion was approved, with Mr. Danny Palmer abstaining.** Mr. Bollinger noted that occupancy of the building was undetermined.

Mr. Bollinger then announced that after 18 years of employment with the RC and numerous years in the profession, he would be retiring effective June 30th. He gave a history of his employment and thanked the Council for their continued support and service, and then commended the RC Staff. Mr. Bollinger noted that he was interested in pursuing other avenues with his wife and family.

Chairman Powell then called for an Executive Session to review the recommendation of a new Executive Director.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Jack Powell, Chairman

Dan Bollinger, Sr., Secretary

NOTES:

Committee voted to recommend to the Council to move forward with the ASR. Dan – simply take excess water, put it down into an aquifer and pump it out in times of drought. Howard Small – 16 to 20 lower in the aquifer than last year in Miller County. Aquifers are low. House wells will feel the brunt. Dan wanted authority from the board to move forward with the application. Harold career GA EPD for 32 years, 12 years fighting water war. Gov Deal working to bring peace. Gov has main funding of water supply part of his administration 300 million in water supply. Gave an summary of aquifer water storage. 3 aquifers not being used. Project would be to go deeper that had storage capacity. Would take water out of streams when could. Haha he said critters. Replenish the streams during the drought. Will take federal heat of the farmers. It will also allow the north end water last longer and make corps of engineers meet their requirement. Study would take about a year. Will have permanent wells in SWGA. Will not harm farmers in anyway.

Jenny moved vote to approve, Haynes seconded. Geographic area south Dougherty, miller county, providence state park River Valley, funded through GEFA. App submitted Apr 30th Q: adverse affects – will stay out of aquifer.... Mays who will conduct study – Joe Tanner Assoc, David Pine – group will conduct study, and work would be bid depth 1,000 feet . Moved.

ECON DEV – RLF spreading the word, not yet taken. 150,000 to loan. CLCP attended conf, Gov Deal, cost of GED is going up...moving to computer based testing. Opp Zones Albany, Grady – Cairo

WIA – 3 members here – report in packet working to transfer from DOL to Gov office

Trans - need numbers...tomorrow is the last day – intentions are to have DOL in tomorrow and Monday. Charles and WIA are working with them for placement and training 10 find full time positions. 4 left early. 12 midnight – rolls over to Logisticare. Number for the new provider. Robert, Brad, and finance will remain. LOSS 106,000...won't...life of program 98,000. Suzanne - Projecting 300,000 loss. We have plan – we have other reserves in transportation programs... other plan 30 NET program has been projecting to be part in retirement...authorized to remove from retirement...will help with immediate cash flow... get paid in arrears. DCH shorted us on per member per month. We are here because of contract not award and utilization rate significantly increased. 300,000 no restriction on use on of money....

Gerald – ADA transition plans – 5 counties and cities have expressed interests MOA?? This afternoon Doug Callaway, Connect GA, promote tax to GA...attendance, chambers, roundtable, counties, cities. Competitive edge in GA and nation.

Converting 5311 vehicles to propane – perhaps a pilot program, federal funding available Apr 9 9am todd long mcmurry project delivery.... **Education BROCHURE**

Suzanne – closed bids on 8 vehicles April 13th AD IN PAPER

Dan – space City of Camilla provides space currently and consider taking offices to McRee Hall. Opp to save rent money. Danny Palmer DDA has property. Selling to 423,000 lease purchase agreement – payment paid same as what renting now downtown. Total rent 8,600... WIA would move into front street facility...sublet other facility... Rc will take care of standard maintenance, anything over 2500 city will cover...professional inspection complete. Executive Committee met twice this month

Gaines moved, Haynes , Palmer abstained. Moved....occupancy undetermined.

Dan 18 years... retirement. Announcement retirement effective June 30th

Moved to executive sessions

Mr. Paul Forgey gave the Planning Director's report noting that

Mr. Robert McDaniel gave the Transportation Director report reporting that

Ms. Suzanne Angell gave the Finance Director's report stating that

Mr. Charles Williams gave the Workforce Investment Director's report

Mr. Robert McDonald gave the Economic Developer's report stating that

Mr. Dan Bollinger gave the Executive Director's report noting that

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