Minutes
Southwest Georgia Regional Commission
Regional Council Meeting
Camilla, Georgia
June 27, 2013

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (RC) held its Council meeting, Thursday, June 27, 2013, at the RC Offices in Camilla, Georgia. Chairman Jack Powell chaired the meeting, with the following council members present: Ms. Connie Hobbs, Mr. John Spann, Mr. Eddie Hopkins, Mr. Charlie Williams, Ms. Bennie Watts Jones, Mr. Johnny Hardin, Mr. Ferrell Ruis, Mr. Henry Crumley, Mr. Russell Smith, Ms. Janice Baty, Ms. Revonn Miller, Mr. Christopher Pike, Mr. Stephen Kaplan, Mr. Raymond Breaux, Ms. June Merritt, Mr. Al Hutchins, Mr. Marshall Hooks, Mr. Jim Sellers, Mr. Rick Muggridge, Mr. Vincent Cutts, Ms. Jenny Crisp, Mr. Kreg Freeman, Mr. Luther Clearman, Mr. Ben Hayward, Mr. Benjamin Brooks, Ms. Brenda Peterson, Mr. Lucius Holloway, Mr. Alfred Bryan, Mr. Randy Hill and Ms. Karen Rackley.

Those Council members calling to report conflicts were Ms. Dolly Crumley, Ms. Gloria Gaines, Ms. LaFaye Copeland, Ms. Glenda Battle, Ms. Elaine Mays, Mr. Donnie Baggett and Mr. Courtney Brinson.

Council members absent were Mr. Demitrus Love, Mr. Joe Walden, Mr. Carlos Williams, Mr. W. D. Palmer, Mr. Charles Barineau, Ms. Brenda Broome, Mr. Christopher Wright, Mr. Max Beverly, Mr. Mike Cosby, Mr. David Maschke, Ms. Elizabeth Millsaps, Mr. Mills Herndon and Mr. David Herndon.

Staff members present were Executive Director Robert McDaniel, Executive Assistant Anna Singletary, Senior Planner Barbara Reddick, GIS Manager Heidi Penny, HR Clerk Leigh Twitty and Administrative Assistant Heather White. Guests attending the meeting were Ms. Emma Holloway, Ms. Jo Childers, Mr. John Peterson and Ms. Doris Gay.

Chairman Jack Powell called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. Mr. McDaniel gave the attendance report stating that there were 31 members present representing 14 counties and a quorum was present. He noted that Baker, Calhoun, Decatur and Early Counties had 100% representation and then introduced the guests of the Council. After a brief review of the Agenda, May Minutes and Financial Statements, Mr. Henry Crumley moved the approval of the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Luther Clearman. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Powell called on Ms. Barbara Reddick for the Planning activities report. Ms. Reddick reported that the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) had approved the update of the Regional Work Program and presented the Council with a Resolution to Adopt. Mr. Alfred Bryan moved to adopt the annual update of the Regional Work Program as presented, seconded by Mr. Randy Hill. The motion was unanimously approved. Ms. Reddick reported that projects were being finalized for the Stronger...
Economies Together (SET) program and that the projects would be implemented in 2014. She further reported that a Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) and a bike and pedestrian plan were underway. Ms. Reddick noted that the Healthy Watershed Initiative was being written and studies being conducted on the water quality of the Kinchafoonee Creek. She then presented the Council with a speaker schedule for activities conducted by the Southwest Georgia Housing Task Force. Ms. Reddick noted that a “Call to Connect” event is scheduled for Saturday, October 5, 2013. Citizens will call in with questions about housing, foreclosure and credit counseling. Resident’s questions will be answered or a referral will be made to other agencies for follow-up. She also reported that a Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) was due June 28th to further expand opportunities for the annual Youth Summit.

Chairman Powell called on Mr. Robert McDaniel for the Executive Director’s report. Mr. McDaniel reported that the Council had been given thirty days to review the FY 14 Preliminary Budget that included the dues increase for the local governments. He noted that the Executive Committee had recommended adopting the said budget as presented. Discussion was held as to the due increases in that local governments would be given discounts for fees for services rendered. After further discussion, Mr. Luther Clearman moved to adopt the Preliminary FY14 Budget as presented and recommended by the Executive Committee, seconded by Lucius Holloway. The motion carried with Mr. Charlie Williams, Mr. Russell Smith, Mr. Alfred Bryan, Mr. Jim Sellers, Mr. Henry Crumley, Mr. Ferrell Ruis, Mr. Johnny Hardin, Ms. Connie Hobbs, Mr. Kreg Freeman and Ms. June Merritt opposing. Ms. Janice Baty, Ms. Revon Miller and Mr. Marshall Hooks abstained.

Mr. McDaniel then reported that a Request for Proposals to provide transportation services for the region was issued with four providers having responded. In response to Transit Operator Request for Proposals and evaluations thereof, Mr. Raymond Breaux moved to approve the issuing of contracts to operate the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) 5311 transportation program and provide transportation services for the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) to the following providers: Destiny Transportation Group, Inc., MIDS, and RMS; and to continue the intergovernmental agreement with Thomas County Transit for said services; seconded by Ms. Jenny Crisp. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. McDaniel gave a personnel update in the Executive Assistant Anna Singletary would be resigning and that RC Grant Administrator Brenda Wade would handle the Council management. He then introduced Ms. Heather White and noted that she would be the new administrative assistant.

Mr. McDaniel then called on GIS Manager Heidi Penny for an update on the Aerial Photography Project. Ms. Penny summarized the project in that the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) would be key agencies involved in the data collection. Further discussion was held as to the particulars of the regional flyover, with Ms. Penny noting that project delivery was scheduled for summer of 2014.

Mr. McDaniel introduced Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Team Georgia Regions 8 and 10 Manager, Jo Childers. Ms. Childers discussed programs provided by the department that included
the Georgia Academy, a leadership initiative for professionals. She reported that DCA would be under the new leadership of Gretchen Corbin in that former Commissioner Mike Beatty would be heading up the Great Promise Partnership. Ms. Childers called attention the DCA newsletter and playbook. Ms. Barbara Reddick noted that a forum would be scheduled on a council meeting night to discuss all types of resources available from agencies around the state.

Mr. McDaniel then reported that Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) would be awarded in September and that communities needed to select projects for the Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) grants due in December. He reminded the Council to turn in the Performance Evaluations and noted that the RC had been officially recognized as a Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) Certified Organization of Ethics.

With the being there being no further business, Mr. Luther Clearman moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Jenny Crisp. The meeting was adjourned.

Jack Powell, Chairman
Robert McDaniel, Secretary