MINUTES
Southwest Georgia Regional Commission
Regional Council Meeting
Camilla, Georgia
May 28, 2015

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (RC) held its Council meeting Thursday, May 28, 2015, at the Southwest Regional Commission building in Camilla, Georgia. Chairman Danny Palmer chaired the meeting. The following council members were present: Kevin Coker, John Spann, Eddie Hopkins, Charlie Williams, Dollie Crumley, Henry Crumley, Raymond Breaux, Nathaniel Clark, Charlie Sol, Al Hutchins, Freddie Speight, Joe Walden, Rick Muggridge, Dwight Hickman, Glenda Battle, Jerry Bush, Jim Sellers, Carlos Williams, Luther Clearman, Ben Hayward, Darrell Hampton, Ernes: Johnson, Jack Powell, Elaine Mays, Donnie Baggett, Randy Hill, and Karen Rackley.

Council members calling to report conflicts were Ferrell Ruis, Revonn Miller, Alfred Bryan, Mike Cosby, and Courtney Brinson.

Council members absent were Betty Murdock, Benny Watts Jones, Paul Nagy, Dennis Brinson, Clinton Johnson, Tommie Postell, Ray Prince, Robert Ramsey, Benjamin Brooks, Brenda Peterson, Virginia Harrison, Christopher Wright, Max Beverly, and David McSely.

Staff members present were Executive Director Robert McDaniel, Deputy Director Suzanne Angell, Planning Director, Barbara Reddick, Grants Administrator Brenda Wade, Administrative Assistant Heather White, and Steve O’Neil, Planner II.

Guests present were Ms. Hampton, Ms. Battle, Ms. Walden, Mr. Lincey, Mr. Marshall, Ms. Johnson, and Mr. Williams (W.I.A).

Chairman Danny Palmer called the meeting to order at approximately 7:03 p.m. Mr. McDaniel gave the attendance report stating that there were 28 members present representing 13 counties and a quorum was present. He noted that Baker County, Early County and Miller County had 100% representation and then introduced the guests of the Council. Danny Palmer asked that the April Minutes be approved. Henry Crumley motioned the minutes be accepted and Elaine Mays seconded the motion; all agreed.

Danny Palmer announced Lucius Holloway has decided not to serve another term as SWGRC Council Member. At that time Mr. Palmer read a resolution being presented to Lucius Holloway for his long term service to the Commission. Mr. Ernest Johnson accepted on Mr. Holloway’s behalf.

Mr. Robert McDaniel then called up staff member, Brenda Wade to accept an award celebrating her 20 years with the Regional Commission. Next, he called Barbara Reddick up to celebrate her 15 years with the Regional Commission by presenting her with an award.

Danny Palmer called Barbara Reddick up to give her staff report for the Planning Department. Stronger Economies Together is trying to get additional input from college and universities. The Planning Department has submitted two grants, Sustainable Community Innovation Grant and a Rural Business Development Grant. They are also
working on Hazard Mitigation plans. She expressed how well the Annual Housing Conference went. Ms. Reddick talked of the success of the Bike and Pedestrian Safety area at Gnat Days and the Teens In the Driver’s Seat Safety Course. She also briefed the Council on the two applications for the redevelopment funds for the communities of Blakely and Arlington. Farmers Market Grants are about to begin with Sylvester and Arlington. Comprehensive Economic Strategy update is coming up in September. Comprehensive Plans are being worked on and next year’s plans are being prepared.

Ben Hayward was called to give the Audit Committee Report, he deferred to Suzanne Angell. She discussed the Audit Proposal Requests. Six firms expressed interest, three firms showed up at the conference, and three submitted bids. The Audit Committee evaluated the bids using formulas set up by Department of Audit and Accounts. All three firms received a perfect score on the technical evaluation. The lowest cost bid came from Valenti, Rackley and Associates. The Committee’s recommendation was to hire Valenti, Rackley and Associates for the 5 year contract. Henry Crumley motioned to hire the recommended firm and Raymond Breaux seconded the motion. With no opposition from the Council, all approved. Motion passed.

The Executive Committee report was presented to the Council by Suzanne Angell. She first discussed the FY15 Budget Amendment Proposal. After going over the proposal that the Council had a copy of, she asked for a motion to approve the proposal. Randy Hill made the motion to approve the FY15 amended budget and Dwight Hickman seconded the motion. All approved. Motion passed. Next, Ms. Angell discussed the Proposed Budget for FY16. After going over the proposed budget the Council was informed that the budget would be tabled for 30 days and presented for approval at the June Council Meeting.

Karen Rackley presented the report from the Human Services Committee to the Council. They learned about the Regional Work Plan and the Regional Partners Network. She mentioned wanting to redefine a quantity of Human Services Committee Members that constitute a quorum so that they can proceed with business since they have not had a quorum.

Suzanne Angell presented her April Financial Reports to the Council. In the General Fund for the month of April there was an excess of revenues over expenditures of $13,150.09 which brought the year-to-date excess of revenues over expenditures to $96,209.68. Total reserves for the General Fund are $238,942.17. In the Transportation Fund, there was an excess of revenues over expenditures of $6,977.77 bringing the year-to-date excess to $27,260.10. Total Reserves of the Transportation Fund are $120,831.33. Ms. Angell then asked for a motion to approve the April Financial Reports. Darrell Hampton motioned to approve them, Dwight Hickman seconded the motion. All approved.

Steve O’Neil, Southwest Georgia Regional Commission Planner II, made a presentation to the Council and guests about the Dixie Highway and the progress of it becoming a Historical Scenic Byway. First Mr. O’Neil went over the history of the Dixie Highway. Next, he went over the steps thus far taken on the way to getting a Historical Scenic Byway Designation. He mentioned that it will be coming up in front of the steering committee at the Department of Transportation on June 17th. He anticipates approval on June 18th. He has been working on this project since 2011. One of the benefits is an increase in tourism to the smaller communities. He finished the briefing by showing a map of the Scenic Byway.

Robert McDaniel gave the Executive Director’s Report. He stated that the next meeting will be in Thomasville, hosted by Thomas County. The meeting will be on June 25, 2015. RSVPs were encouraged.

With no further business, Mr. Palmer asked for a motion to adjourn. Raymond Breaux made the motion and Dwight Hickman seconded the motion, all agreed. The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Glenda Battle, Vice-Chairman

Robert McDaniel, Secretary