

MINUTES

Southwest Georgia Regional Commission

Regional Council Meeting

Camilla, Georgia

October 29, 2020

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (RC) held its Council meeting Thursday, October 29, 2020, at the Southwest Regional Commission building in Camilla, Georgia. Due to COVID19 social distancing orders from the Governor, we held a virtual meeting by ZOOM and by phone. Chairman Elaine Mays chaired the meeting and was present. The following council members were present via ZOOM: John Spann, Charlie Williams, Barbara Grogan, Anthony Jones, Raymond Breaux, Casawn Lhuillier-Yheyais, Charlie Sol, Al Hutchins, Freddie Speight, Phillip Drew, Jim Sellers, Dwight Hickman, Chad Griffin, Glenda Battle, Carlos Williams, Ben Hayward, Brenda Peterson, Mitchell Blanks, Tracie Beard, Jack Powell, Donnie Baggett, Wanda Warren, Al Bryan and John McPhaul.

Council members calling to report conflicts were Benny Flowers, Paul Nagy, Billy Poppell, Jon Howard, Jayme Smith, and Nathaniel Keaton.

Council members absent were Chris Moore, Eddie Hopkins, Deidre Evans-Severson, Ferrell Ruis, Virginia Hart, Steve Brock, Kregg Close, Revonn Miller, Freddy Grimsley, Joe Walden, John Wheaton, Kregg Freeman, Danny Palmer, Ernest Johnson, Gregg Satterfield, E. Dice Roberts, Christopher Wheeler, Norma Gilpatrick and Rodney Prince.

Staff members present were Executive Director Suzanne Angell, Deputy Director Barbara Reddick, and Executive Assistant Heather White.

Chairman Mays called the meeting to order at approximately 6:05 p.m.

Executive Director Suzanne Angell gave the attendance report stating that there were 26 members present representing 13 counties and a quorum was present. Early, Seminole, and Thomas Counties had 100% representation.

Chairman Mays asked for a motion to amend the agenda to allow for approval of the 5304 Resolution. Donnie Baggett made a motion to amend the agenda. Barbara Grogan seconded the motion; all agreed. Ms. Mays asked for a motion that the September 2020 meeting minutes to be approved. Al Hutchins motioned the minutes be accepted and Donnie Baggett seconded the motion; all agreed.

Chairman Mays said that the Executive Committee met before the council meeting to address some personnel requests. Executive Director Suzanne Angell discussed personnel requests with the Executive Committee. The first request was from Shelby Rhymes to be allowed to take a temporary part-time bookkeeping job for the City of Meigs outside her Regional Commission employment. Shelby Rhymes is the Administrative Assistant with the SWGRC Planning Department. Ms. Angell reviewed the policies concerning outside employment. She said that there will be a disclosure provided to the SWGRC Council and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, as required by law. The Regional Commission does not provide bookkeeping services so she did not consider this to be a direct conflict of interest. Mrs. Angell asked for a motion to approve this. Chad Griffin made the motion to allow Ms. Rhymes to take the part-time position with the City of Meigs. Barbara Grogan seconded the motion; all agreed. Mrs. Angell said the second request was for Deputy Director Barbara Reddick to serve on the City of Camilla Land Bank Advisory Committee as a representative for the Mitchell Co. School Board. The SWGRC is not directly involved in the Camilla Land Bank. Donnie Baggett motioned to approve the request for Ms. Reddick to serve on the Camilla Land Bank Advisory Committee. Al Hutchins seconded the motion; all agreed.

Chairman Mays asked Deputy Director Barbara Reddick to present the Housing Preservation (HPG) resolution and then to give the planning report. Ms. Reddick stated that we had been awarded a FY20 Housing Preservation Grant

in the amount of approximately \$100,000. As part of the grant package and to in order to accept the award, a resolution will need to be approved and submitted back to USDA, along with other award documents. We have received this grant for several years. Ms. Glenda Battle made a motion to approve the HPG resolution. Mr. Al Hutchins seconded the motion. All Council members agreed.

Ms. Reddick proceeded to her planning report. She said that former employee, Shane Kelsey, has begun working at the Regional Commission part time. The Brownfield Grant was submitted, and the announcements are expected in early April. Rural Zone Designations have been approved for the City of Leesburg, the City of Colquitt, and the City of Donalsonville. The RC submitted applications for Leesburg and Colquitt. The RC wrote the initial application in the prior year and assisted with the resubmission for the City of Donalsonville. The planning department has been working on updating zoning ordinances for several communities. Potential applications for the Community HOME Investment and the Community Development Block Grant programs were included on the planning report. The Hazard Mitigation Plans are being worked on. The kickoff meetings are currently being held. Quarterly reports were submitted to the Department of Transportation. The Regional Rural Transit Plan has been finalized along with the Transportation Needs Assessment and the Grady County Transit Plan. The Needs Assessment and the Rural Transit Plan can be accessed on the SWGRC Planning Website. We have submitted an Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grant for the City of Albany. We are in the process of submitting quarterly reports for EDA. We will also be working with Albany for their CDBG Disaster Relief Grant. There are several more contracts listed in the Planning Report that are underway.

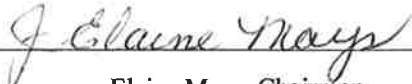
Executive Director Suzanne Angell presented the Financial Reports for the period ending September 30, 2020 for the Council's approval. The General Fund had a surplus of \$1,092.43 bringing the ending fund balance to \$521,602.27. The Revolving Loan Fund had a deficit of \$74.11 bringing the ending fund balance to \$298,873.89. The Regional Transportation Fund had an excess of revenues over expenditures of \$418,332.19 bringing the ending fund balance to \$737,306.98. The Regional Partner's Network has a deficit of \$55.00 bringing their fund balance to \$7,225.08. The Pension Trust Fund had a surplus of \$36,313.68 bringing the balance to \$896,715.65. Barbara Grogan made a motion to accept the September 2020 Financial Report and Jack Powell seconded the motion; all agreed.

Chairman Mays mentioned to the Council that we are in the process of our annual audit. She said most of that is being done virtually.

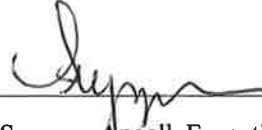
Executive Director Suzanne Angell mentioned that annual applications are due for Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Rural Transit System (5311) and Rural Transit Planning (5304) grants on December 7, 2020. There are formal resolutions that need to be submitted with each of those applications to authorize the RC to submit. Barbara Grogan made a motion to approve the 5311 Resolution. Dwight Hickman seconded the motion; all agreed. Barbara Grogan made a motion to approve the 5304 Resolution. Donnie Baggett seconded the motion; all agreed.

Executive Director Suzanne Angell presented her Executive Director's Report. The AARP Age Friendly and Age Friendly and Livable Communities Program has been on the back burner due to COVID19 travel restrictions and the inability to have in-person meetings. We will have a virtual meeting with County Administrators and the two City Managers who submit their individual Comprehensive Plans. We would like to submit their resolutions of support and the Regional Commission's resolution to the AARP to become the first Regional Friendly and Livable Communities Program in the country. We are still seeking candidates for a Finance Director and a Transportation Director. We received 30 surveys back from the Council on their feelings about returning to in-person meetings and what that would look like. Many people are ready to come back, some are still not ready. Everyone was provided the survey results in their packet. It was determined that we would wait until the beginning of the year at the earliest to consider in person meetings and then possibly meeting at the Camilla Depot to allow for proper social distancing. A vote was taken for the December meeting to be held on December 17, 2020. Wanda Warren made a motion to accept that date. Glenda Battle seconded the motion; all agreed.

Chairman Mays stated if there was no other business, the next meeting will be December 17, 2020 and it will be held virtually. Donnie Baggett made a motion to adjourn. Wanda Warren seconded the motion to adjourn; all agreed. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:55 p.m.



Elaine Mays, Chairman



Suzanne Angell, Executive Director