

MINUTES

Southwest Georgia Regional Commission

Regional Council Meeting

Camilla, Georgia

October 31, 2019

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (RC) held its Council meeting Thursday, October 31, 2019, at the Southwest Regional Commission building in Camilla, Georgia. Chairman Elaine Mays chaired the meeting. The following council members were present: John Spann, Eddie Hopkins, Charlie Williams, Benny Flowers, Paul Nagy, Ferrell Ruis, Virginia Hart, Preston Jimmerson, Steve Brock, Revonn Miller, Billy Poppell, Anthony Jones, Jon Howard, Raymond Breaux, Freddy Grimsley, Casawn-Lhullier Yheyais, Charlie Sol, Freddie Speight, Al Hutchins, June Knight, Jim Sellers, John Wheaton, Dwight Hickman, Glenda Battle, Carlos Williams, Ben Hayward, Nathaniel Keaton, Brenda Peterson, Mitchell Blanks, Tracie Beard, Jack Powell, Donnie Baggett, Al Bryan, Elaine Mays, Joe Gaines, Christopher Wheeler, Norma Gilpatrick, and Rodney Prince.

Council members calling to report conflicts were Chris Moore, Deidre Evans-Severson, Kregg Close, Joe Walden, Chad Griffin, Danny Palmer, and Ed Wade.

Council members absent were Nicole Nixon, Jayme Smith, Ernest Johnson and Terry Scott.

Staff members present were Executive Director Suzanne Angell, Executive Assistant Heather White, GIS Manager Heidi Penny, Grants Administration Manager Brenda Wade, Planner Kay Olubowale, Planner Kim Brooks, and Receptionist Abby Casey.

Guests present were Julian Knight, Lucius Hayes, Shirley King, and John Peterson.

Chairman Mays called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. She asked for a motion to amend the agenda to include a vote on a Resolution to Execute Contract. Mitchell Blanks made the motion to amend the agenda. June Knight seconded the motion; all agreed.

Executive Director Suzanne Angell gave the attendance report stating that there were 38 members present representing 14 counties and a quorum was present. She noted that Colquitt County, Dougherty County, Early County, Worth County and Seminole County had 100% representation and then introduced the guests of the Council.

Chairman Elaine Mays asked for a motion that the September 2019 meeting minutes to be approved. Glenda Battle motioned the minutes be accepted and Billy Poppell seconded the motion; all agreed.

Chairman of the Nominating Committee, Norma Gilpatrick, gave her report. She said that the committee's nominations were tabled for 30 days for the additional members for the Executive Committee. She asked for any comments from the Council. With no comments she asked for a vote. Al Bryan made the motion to add Paul Nagy and Anthony Jones as members of the Executive Committee. Donnie Baggett seconded the motion; All agreed.

Chairman Elaine Mays asked Paul Nagy, Chairman of the Ethics Committee to give his Ethics Committee report. Mr. Nagy told the Council that the role of the Ethics Committee was discussed. He also encouraged everyone to attend the Ethics class that is offered by ACCG. A member of the Council asked if non-ACCG members could attend the Ethics classes. Ms. Angell stated that she would contact ACCG to find out and would report back to the Council.

Chairman Mays asked Transportation Committee Chairman Raymond Breaux to give the Transportation Committee report. He said that the Transportation Committee met just before the meeting and are recommending to the council to pass the 5304 and 5311 Resolutions. These resolutions authorize staff to apply for these program funds. Ms. Angell added that we apply for these funds every year. Donnie Baggett made a motion to accept the 5304 Resolution. Billy Poppell seconded the motion; all agreed. Donnie Baggett made a motion to approve the 5311 Resolution. Ferrell Ruis seconded the motion; all agreed.

Grants Administration Manager Brenda Wade addressed the Council. She passed out a report of her grant administration activities. The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission received a total award of \$1.2 million

dollars in CHIP funds. She has also been administering a project through the EDA for the City of Albany. She has been working on a project for the cities of Blakely, Sylvester, Cairo and the counties of Grady and Dougherty for the upcoming CHIP round. In Deputy Director Barbara Reddick's absence, she gave the planning report and mentioned that if anyone has any questions they can reach out to Barbara Reddick.

Chairman Mays asked GIS Manager Heidi Penny to give her GIS report to the Council. Ms. Penny has been working on parcels. She has been working on parcels for Early County and Decatur County this month. She has been working on the City of Cairo's zoning and building permit maps. She has been helping Grady County with their back-ups since they are installing new computers and will be helping with their software. She has been working on Decatur County and Thomas County for MAP21. The LUCA materials for 36 local governments came in last month and were reviewed. Jeff Hamilton filed appeals for 8 counties and 16 cities. Jeff has been working on CHIP maps and Albany housing maps.

Chairman Mays asked Suzanne Angell to give the Finance Report in Finance Director Barbara Wilbon's absence. Mrs. Angell presented the financial report for the period ending September 30, 2019 for the Council's approval. The General Fund had a net surplus of \$20,953.65 bringing the ending fund balance to \$576,983.53. The Revolving Loan Fund had a net surplus of \$1,013.59 bringing the ending fund balance to \$298,779.34. The Regional Transportation Fund had a net surplus of \$26,436.78 bringing the ending fund balance to \$253,817.49. The Pension Trust fund had a deficit of \$39,162.26 with an ending balance of \$877,713.70. Dwight Hickman made a motion to accept the September 2019 financial report and Donnie Baggett seconded the motion; all agreed.

Chairman Mays invited the Executive Director to give her report. Executive Director Angell asked Planner Kimberly Brooks to tell the Council about the Youth Summit that just took place. Ms. Brooks said that there were 30 kids from four schools from 3 counties that participated. Those were Colquitt County, Calhoun County, and Mitchell County. The theme of this year's summit was Real World 101.

The Executive Director then gave her report. Mrs. Angell asked the Council to reference the handout she sent in the packets from the Southeast Regional Director's Institute (SERDI). She said SERDI can facilitate an assessment of Regional Commissions for a fee if the Council is interested in pursuing that. It would cost \$4,500 plus travel expenses. Mrs. Angell went over what the proposed assessment would entail and answered questions from the council. She stated the assessment may be helpful in determining what our local governments expect from us and how we may or may not be meeting those expectations. It could also provide her with valuable information as to which direction the RC should be heading. A question was asked if any of the other RCs had gone through this assessment process. Ms. Angell stated she knew some of them had at some point, but she would reach out to the other Executive Directors in the state and any other references she may be able to get and report back with that information at the next meeting. Donnie Baggett motioned that this be tabled until December. Glenda Battle seconded the motion; all agreed.

Director Suzanne Angell said she has spoken with the Georgia Department of Audit and Accounts about their draft report. She said two of the findings that were labeled as not addressed in the draft report have been changed to partially addressed, due to the responses she submitted. She is expecting the final DOAA report to be delivered soon. She discussed the Revolving Loan Fund meeting that was held on October 30th. The loan has been conditionally approved in the amount of \$40,000. The annual audit is continuing on schedule.

Mrs. Angell viewed, via remote access, the recent House Rural Development Council meeting held in Kingsland. She discussed House Bill 511, which is a transportation bill that did not pass during the last legislative session. It is expected to be reintroduced, with changes, in the upcoming legislative session. It would bring about big changes. She stated that she attended the Executive Director's meeting in Macon. She attended Seminole County's planning implementation assessment meeting. She met with Bainbridge City Manager Chris Hobby about writing and administering two EDA grants. She said we are currently writing five or six EDA Disaster grants. There is over 600 million dollars available in those grants right now. She also attended the DCA Fall Conference in LaGrange and the GDOT Statewide Transit Plan Steering Committee in Atlanta. A forum for Economic Developers was recently held at the Regional Commission and was very well received. She and the River Valley RC Executive Director Jim Livingston met with Representative Gerald Greene last Friday for a "meet and greet" and general discussion. She felt it was a productive meeting. She also participated on a Regional Resource Panel for the GA Academy of Economic Development, of which, she is also a current participant. We are also planning to hold a City /County Manager's Meeting in mid-January. Ms. Angell also quickly reviewed other upcoming meetings and conferences.

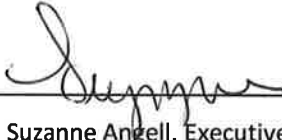
Mrs. Angell next stated that the Council would need to vote on a resolution to execute the USDA Housing Preservation Grant (HPG) agreement. Anthony Jones made the motion to accept the resolution. Raymond Breaux seconded the motion; all agreed.

Chairman Mays asked for suggestions for the combined November-December meeting. After discussion there was a vote for Thursday, December 12th. Donnie Baggett made the motion to accept the December 12th date. Glenda Battle seconded the motion. A vote was taken and, with a majority, the motion passed.

Chairman Mays stated no other business, the next meeting will be December 12, 2019. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.



Elaine Mays, Chairman



Suzanne Angell, Executive Director

