

MINUTES

Southwest Georgia Regional Commission
Council Meeting
Camilla Chamber of Commerce, Camilla, Georgia
October 28, 2021

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (RC) held full Council meeting on Thursday, October 28, 2021, at the Camilla Chamber of Commerce in Camilla, Georgia. The Council met in person and via ZOOM.

Committee members present at the meeting were John Spann, Eddie Hopkins, Charlie Williams, Benny Flowers, Johnsie Handfield, Steve Brock, Kregg Close, Revonn Miller, Billy Poppell, Anthony Jones, Raymond Breaux, Casawn-Lhuillier Yheyais, Charlie Sol, Al Hutchins, Jr., Freddie Speight, Joe Walden, Dwight Hickman, Jayme Smith, Danny Palmer, Mitchell Blanks, Donnie Baggett, Wanda Warren, Elaine Mays, and John McPhaul.

Council members virtually attending the meeting via Zoom were LaFaye Copeland, Tracie Beard, Tammy McCrary, Brenda Peterson, Al Bryan and Rozanne Braswell.

Council members calling to report a conflict was Paul Nagy, Barbara Grogan, Jim Sellers, John Wheaton, Chad Griffin, Ben Hayward, Nathaniel Keaton, and Christopher Wheeler.

Absent was Chris Moore, Deidre Evans-Severson, Ferrell Ruis, Jon Howard, Kregg Freeman, Carlos Williams, Ernest Johnson, Jack Powell, E. Dice Roberts, and Rodney Prince.

Guests present were Queenie Grimes (Benny Flower's mother), William Morton (husband of Wanda Warren), Michael Bryant with Congressman Sanford Bishop's office, and Katheryn Speight (Freddie Speights's wife).

Guests virtually attending the meeting via ZOOM were guest speaker Sam Hyatt of the Corporate Tax Advisors and Blakely's Mayor Travis Wimbush.

Staff members present were Executive Director Suzanne Angell, Deputy Director Barbara Reddick, Finance Director Traci Hall, Executive Assistant Heather White, and Receptionist/Assistant Harrison Edwards.

Vice-Chairman Anthony Jones called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Jones asked Executive Director Suzanne Angell to give the attendance report.

Mrs. Angell gave the attendance report stating that there were 30 council members in attendance, including six on ZOOM. A quorum was present. Counties with 100% were Decatur, Early, Seminole, and Thomas.

Mr. Jones asked for a motion that the September 2021 Council meeting minutes to be approved. Al Hutchins, Jr. made a motion to accept the minutes. Kregg Close seconded the motion; all agreed.

Vice-Chairman Jones introduced the guest speaker, Sam Hyon of CTA (Corporate Tax Advisors). Mr. Hyon spoke about was leveraging tax incentives and credits. He spoke of the three most underutilized tax credits and incentives. These included the Georgia Job Tax Credit, R&D Tax Credit, and 179D Commercial Building Tax Incentives.

Mr. Jones asked Deputy Director Barbara Reddick to give the Planning Report. Mrs. Reddick stated that everyone should have received the planning report in their council packets that were mailed out. She said that the planning department is working on several grants. Some have been submitted and some are being prepared to be submitted. We are working on 13 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) applications for our local governments. We are working on one Recreational Trails Grant through the DNR (Department of Natural Resources). We have seven communities we will be working on for the Community HOME Investment Program (CHIP) Grant. These are due in January. We are working on several pre-hazard mitigation plans. We have four that are under review and five that are under development. We recently had a virtual training under the Southwest Georgia Housing Taskforce for the eviction process since the eviction moratorium has ended under COVID. We partnered with Georgia Legal Services on that training. The PowerPoint is on our planning website. We are working on comprehensive plans. We are also working on the regional plan. This includes scheduling and attending a multitude of listening sessions in our region.

Vice Chairman Anthony Jones asked Suzanne Angell to present the financial report for the period ending September 30, 2021. The General Fund had a net surplus of revenues over expenditures in the amount of \$2,136.15, bringing the ending fund balance to \$567,530.56. The Revolving Loan Fund had a net surplus of \$1,715.09, bringing the ending fund balance to \$577,253.49. The Revolving Loan Fund is made up of two different funds. The first being the RLF legacy fund, and the second is the CARES Act RLF fund. EDA granted the SWGRC \$500,000 to kick off the CARES RLF fund. To date, \$305,000 has been disbursed. The balance needs to be disbursed by June 30, 2022. These funds are available to businesses financially affected by COVID. The Regional Transportation Fund had surplus of \$8,351.55, bringing the ending fund balance to \$2,791,350.63. The Regional Partner's Network had an excess of revenues over expenditures of \$1 bringing the ending fund balance to \$7,196.08. The Pension Trust Fund had a deficit of revenues over expenditures in the amount of \$10,527.16, bringing the fund balance to \$1,060,545.57. Mr. Jones asked for a motion to accept the financial report as presented. Billy Poppell made a motion to accept the financial report. Jayme Smith seconded the motion; all agreed.

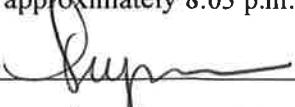
Suzanne Angell gave the Executive Director's report. She announced that the new Director of Finance was in attendance and introduced Ms. Traci Hall. Ms. Angell said the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission is very busy writing grants. An email was received by EDA saying a decision will be made to defederalize the Revolving Loan Fund by the end of October. So far, no decision has been received. We are in the middle of our annual audit. The draft audit report will be presented at the November/December meeting. The St. Simon's GARC conference will be cancelled again this year due to COVID. Our GIS department, Heidi Penny and Jeff Hamilton are researching how we can serve you for your redistricting needs.

Mr. Jones stated that the November/December meeting is combined into one and opened discussion for a possible date in early to mid-December for that meeting. Mitchell Blanks made a motion to have the November/December meeting on December 16, 2021. Elaine Mays seconded the motion; all agreed.

Vice-Chairman Anthony Jones adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:03 p.m.



Paul Nagy, Chairman



Suzanne Angell, Executive Director