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RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Marion County Commission Office
100 East Burkhalter Avenue
Buena Vista, Georgia
October 24, 2018

MINUTES

Members Attending/Representing

(Representing 14 Counties)

A.J. Rivers, Crisp County
Barry Waters, City of Ft. Gaines
Barry Whitley, City of Butler
Bruce Hill, City of Oglethorpe
Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman
Chip Jones, Stewart County
Clinton Perry, Jr. Taylor County,
RVRC Chair
Danny Blackmon, Georgetown-Quitman
Dr. Carole Rutland, Muscogee County
Dr. Edward Lee, Cusseta-Chattahoochee
Evelyn Turner Pugh, Muscogee County
Fred Gordon, Muscogee County
Hobby Stripling, City of Vienna
James R. "Bump" Welch, Marion Co
Jayson Griffin, Macon County
Jeanie Bartee, City of Cordele
Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Muscogee Co.,
RVRC Secretary
Jimmy Bradley, Randolph County
Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County
Maggie McGruther, Sumter County
Melvin Crimes, Webster County
Pam Jordan, Talbot County

Randy Howard, Sumter County,
RVRC Vice Chair
Richard McCorkle, Marion County
Tameka Harris, Taylor County
Terrell Hudson, Dooly County
Tom Queen, Taylor County
Tony Kennedy, Webster County
Walt Rosso, Cusseta-Chattahoochee
Wally Summers, Sumter County

Members Not Present

Carlton Wilson, City of Ellaville
Cecil "Butch" McMickle, Marion Co.
Doug Etheridge, Harris County
Freeman Montgomery, Talbot County
Greg Barineau, Schley County
Harry Lange, Harris County
James Morton, Cusseta-Chattahoochee
Jimmy Babb, City of Lumpkin
Knox Blackmar, City of Talbotton
Lee Hubbard, Clay County
Mickey George, Macon County
Nelson Brown, City of Americus
Patricia Goodman, Randolph County
Ralph Brown, City of Buena Vista
Rebecca Chambers, City of Hamilton

Sam Farrow, Jr., Crisp County
Steve Whatley, City of Cuthbert

Others Present

Dave Wills, ACCG
Laura Gower, Rep. for Senator Isakson
Kathy Burns, Rep. for Senator Perdue
Janet Joiner, City of Vienna
Paul Farr, South GA Tech.
Lindsey Glisson, Columbus
Vickie Wainwright, City of Butler
Mac Moye, Stewart Co. Manager

Staff Present

Patti Cullen, Executive Director
Sarah Walls, Assistant Executive Dir.
Katie Howard, AAA Director
Emily Chambers, Finance Officer
Rick Morris, Planning Director
Gerald Mixon, Planning Director
Jim Livingston, Comm. & Eco. Dev. Dir.
Janice West, WIOA Director
Cheryl Maddox, GeorgiaCares
Coordinator
Becky Holmes, Office Manager

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Welcome and Recognition of Visitors

Clinton Perry, Chair, brought the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and recognized visitors. He then asked Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Secretary, to lead the council in prayer and Randy Howard, Vice Chair, to lead the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review and Approval of Minutes*

Council reviewed the minutes of the September 26, 2018 council meeting that was either mailed or emailed to council members the previous week for their review.

There being no additions or changes, Chair Perry, requested a motion to approve the September 26, 2018 council minutes. Walt Rosso, Unified Government of Cusseta-Chattahoochee County, made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ACCG Update

Dave Wills, Executive Director of the Association of County Commissions of Georgia (ACCG), reflected on his time spent as Chair of the Webster County Commission, Chair of the Middle Flint Regional Development Center and during the merger of the Middle Flint and Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Centers, thru being appointed as the Director of ACCG in April. He explained that the mission of the ACCG is to assist all of the counties in Georgia. Mr. Wills said he is working with Larry Hanson, Georgia Municipal Association Executive Director, to strengthen the relationship between the two organizations. He said he was galvanized by the Regional Commission system and by “working together we will accomplish more than we ever could by ourselves.”

GeorgiaCares

Staff member Cheryl Maddox, Georgia Cares Coordinator, explained that GeorgiaCares is the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). She updated the council on the yearly Open Enrollment period for Medicare (October 15, 2018 – December 7, 2018) and Open Enrollment for Medicare Advantage (Part C) (January 1, 2019 – March 31, 2019) and how the program can help Medicare recipients save money. These time periods are the only time that changes can be made to these plans. She presented a handout explaining the Medicare programs, a schedule of Medicare Premiums and Deductible Rates for 2018 and 2019, and a flyer explaining programs that GeorgiaCares has available. Cheryl said that the RVRC/AAA office in Columbus is happy to help anyone who needs assistance reviewing the health and drug choice plans that are available. She stressed that her office can only explain the programs but cannot tell you which program you should choose.

Cheryl reported that new Medicare cards are being issued that will not have a social security number on the card. The old card should be destroyed. If a call is received requesting that you mail the card in, it is a scam. Do not return old Medicare cards to anyone.

Staff Reports

Jim Livingston, Community and Economic Development Director, gave the staff report for his department. He announced that FEMA would be holding a meeting on Friday, October 26th in Americus to share what assistance FEMA can offer to communities and families. Their staff will also help complete applications for

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assistance, if needed. After Hurricane Michael, Columbus Water Works was able to place mobile generators in our rural counties and cities that had water interruptions due to storm damage.

Jim stated the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Fall Conference was held in LaGrange this year. DCA presented checks to CDBG award recipients that were in attendance. The RVRC region was awarded grants totaling \$2.8 million dollars. RVRC staff received awards for the counties and cities that were not able to attend due to the damage caused by Hurricane Michael. DCA will visit those counties and cities to present checks and celebrate.

He said staff is in the process of receiving Request for Proposals for the FY19 CDBG grant applications. If your community would like to apply for a CDBG grant contact Jim Livingston at 706-256-2910. He also reported that the CEDS committee met before the council meeting and discussed projects and goals for FY19: broadband, education, and TSPLOST.

Janice West, WIOA Director, reported that the WIOA presently had 177 people being served through various programs and that the number will increase as the year progresses thru June 30th, 2019. A Business Services Forum is being planned by WIOA staff to provide information to local employers that are eligible for WIOA On-the-Job Training and Work Experience activities. Staff gave a presentation explaining services available to the Southwest Georgia United YouthBuild program thru the WIOA program.

Katie Howard, Area Agency on Aging Director, reported that the Hunger Summit that was held in Columbus was a great success. The Roselyn Carter Institute held their annual Caregiver Summit in Americus in October. She reported that the first Senior Hunger Coalition meeting was held in Columbus. The group will be meeting 3 times a year.

Katie said the AAA is applying for a Victims of Crime Act grant (VOCA) thru the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. This funding is to ensure victims of a violent crime/abuse are aware of their rights and receive needed support such as emotional, psychological and physical needs, among other services.

Katie explained that some counties/cities in the region have very few seniors on the waiting list for services. She asked that if anyone knows of someone that needs services to contact the AAA office for screening and to find what services are available to them.

Gerald Mixon, Planning Director, gave the staff report for the department. He stated the staff continues to work on comprehensive plans. He reminded everyone that if the county/city comprehensive plan is not up-to-date the county/city will not be eligible to receive funding for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Immediate Threat and Danger Grant (ITAD), and other state funding. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will also hold funds if Pre-Disaster plans are not updated on time. A Planning and Zoning Training was held October 19th in Americus at the South Georgia Technical College with one hundred people attending from across the state. This was a free training. He said staff continues to work on environmental planning and water quality testing.

Emily Chambers, Finance Officer, reported that the RVRC currently had a deficit of approximately \$16,000 due to a software glitch at the Department of Human Services. The finance department has not been able to apply for funds for September and October. When these funds are available it will bring the account back to

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normal. Emily said the auditor will be attending the November council meeting to give an overview of the FY18 Audit Report.

Patti Cullen, Executive Director, reminded everyone that the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions annual conference will be held, November 7th – 9th, in Savannah. She also said that the council had voted at the June council meeting for the November meeting to be held on the 28th and that a council meeting will not be held in December. Patti thanked Walt Rosso of Cusseta-Chattahoochee County and Lee Hubbard of Clay County for serving on the council and explained they would be rotating off the council in January 2019 due to local election results.

Chair Perry asked if there were any other announcements. There being none the Chair ask for a motion to adjourn; Walt Rosso of Cusseta-Chattahoochee County made the motion to adjourn; Vice Chair Randy Howard seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Date November 28, 2019



Clinton Perry, Jr., RVRC Chair



Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Secretary