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RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Marion County Commission Office

100 East Burkhalter Avenue, Buena Vista, Georgia

Minutes

October 25, 2017

Members Attending/Representing

(Representing 16 Counties)

Bruce Hill, City of Oglethorpe
Carlton Wilson, City of Ellaville
Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County
Chip Jones, Stewart County
Clinton Perry, Jr. Taylor County, RVRC Chair
Danny Blackman, Georgetown-Quitman County
Debbie Stone, Stewart County
Doug Etheridge, Harris County
Dr. Edward Lee, Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
Evelyn Turner Pugh, Muscogee County
Fred Gordon, Muscogee County
Freeman Montgomery, Talbot County
Harry Lange, Harris County
Hobby Stripling, City of Vienna
Jayson Griffin, Macon County
Jeanie Bartee, City of Cordele
Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Muscogee County
Jim Lawrence, Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
Jimmy Bradley, Randolph County
Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County
Knox Blackmar, City of Talbotton
Maggie McGruther, Sumter County
Melvin Crimes, Webster County
Mickey George, Macon County
Pam Jordan, Talbot County
Patricia Goodman, Randolph County
Ralph Brown, City of Buena Vista
Randy Howard, Sumter County
Richard McCorkle, Marion County
Shirley Ann Christian, City of Fort Gaines
Tameka Harris, Taylor County
Terrell Hudson, Dooly County, ACCG
Tom Queen, Taylor County
Tommy McKenzie, Macon County

Members Not Present

A.J. Rivers, Crisp County
Barry Whitley, City of Butler
Cecil "Butch" McMickle, Marion County
Dr. Carole Rutland, Muscogee County
Greg Barineau, Schley County
James Morton, Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
James R. "Bump" Welch, Marion County
Jason Hoch, Schley County
Lee Hubbard, Clay County
Nelson Brown, City of Americus
Rebecca Chambers, City of Hamilton
Sam Farrow, Jr., Crisp County
Steve Whatley, City of Cuthbert
Tony Kennedy, Webster County
Wally Summers, Sumter County

Others Present

Kelvin Mullins, State TIA Administrator
Kenneth Franks, TIA Regional Coordinator
Megan Haley, Census 2020 Program Consultant, DCA
Lindsey Glisson, Deputy Clerk of Council, Muscogee County
Kathy Burns, Senator Perdue's Representative
Sarah Lee Crumbs, Georgetown-Quitman County Family
Connections Coordinator
Ricky Hood, City of Hamilton
Paul Farr, Director of Business & Industry Services, SGTC

Staff Present

Patti Cullen, Executive Director
Sarah Walls, Assistant Executive Director
Katie Howard, Area Agency on Aging Director
Gerald Mixon, Planning Director
Allison Slocum, Senior Planner
Mariyana Kostov, GIS Specialist
Jim Livingston, Community & Economic Development Dir.
Tenisha Tookes, WIOA Specialist
Becky Holmes, Office Manager

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Welcome and Recognition of Visitors

Clinton Perry, Vice Chair, brought the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. He welcomed everyone and recognized Megan Haley, Census 2020 Program Consultant with the Department of Community Affairs and Lindsey Glisson, Deputy Clerk of Council, Muscogee County. Mr. Perry then asked Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Secretary, to lead the council in prayer. Randy Howard, Vice Chair led the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review and Approval of Minutes*

Council reviewed the minutes of the September 27, 2017 council meeting that was mailed or emailed to council members the previous week, for their review.

Harry Lange, Harris County, made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Update of TIA Projects in the Region

Kelvin Mullins, State Transportation Investment Act (TIA) Administrator, gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting some Transportation Investment Act (TIA) projects that are complete, in progress, or are future projects planned in the region. Mr. Mullins explained that \$635 million in TIA funds have been collected to date for the three TIA regions. Of the \$635 million, \$208 million was the River Valley region's share. Seventy-five percent (\$156 million) has been or will be used on the regional projects list and \$52 million is discretionary funds and has been distributed to local governments. He explained that the Transportation Investment Act has been so successful that Middle Georgia and Southern Georgia Regional Commissions are looking at having another vote to pass TIA in their regions.

Kenneth Franks, TIA Regional Coordinator, shared information about ongoing and future projects in the River Valley region. Some of the projects were:

- US41 Passing lanes, \$6 million, Dooly County
- South Georgia Parkway, will be finished early next year, \$15million,
- US 27 Completed, Randolph County, \$30 million
- US 280 Bridge over Lake Blackshear, driving piles, 3-year construction, Crisp County
- Metra Operations and Facilities Expansion-New Park-n-Ride facilities, new routes, new busses, \$22 million, Muscogee County

Upcoming 2020 Census

Megan Haley, Census 2020 Program Consultant with the Department of Community Affairs, spoke to the council about the importance of each county and city registering with the LUCA (Local Update of Census Addresses) program. Thru this program, counties and cities will be able to update census addresses as needed. This will be the only opportunity to add addresses to the database. The registration deadline is December 15, 2017. She noted that federal programs use Census information to determine distribution of federal funding.

Mariyana Kostov, River Valley Regional Commission GIS Specialist, then gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the benefits the cities and counties in the region will receive by registering with LUCA. She explained that RC staff would help with the update of addresses but

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local governments will have to select the RC in their registration documents to be their liaison. She noted that only seven of the 16 local governments have registered with LUCA. If you choose not to register, new addresses cannot be added to the Census, which means any developments since the 2000 Census will not be counted. Each person not counted in the state is a loss of approximately \$17,000 per person. Mariyana said if a local government did not receive the LUCA packet, she has blank forms available for registration. She said if anyone would like to contact the LUCA office the phone number is 844-344-0169.

Approval to Apply for an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Assessment Grant

Jim Livingston, Community and Economic Development Director, explained that the Regional Commission would like to submit an application for Crisp, Dooly, Macon and Sumter counties for a Brownfield Assessment Grant. He said this grant would assist the communities to identify brownfield sites and secure funding for environmental assessments of these properties.

Jim then requested approval of the council to submit the Brownfield Assessment Grant application. Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County, made a motion to approve submittal of the Brownfield Assessment Grant application; Mickey George, Macon County, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Staff Reports

Jim Livingston, Economic and Community Development Director, reported that staff continues to work on 21 grant projects. Jim explained that USDA Rural Development approved the loan service area be expanded to include Harris County. This approval will allow all businesses in the River Valley Regional Commission region to be eligible for loans, except Columbus/ Muscogee County due to population restrictions. The CEDS document has been submitted to EDA and is receiving good feedback.

Tenisha Tookes, Workforce Specialist for the WIOA program gave the staff report in the absence of Janice West, Director of the WIOA program. She stated that 193 individuals were being served by various programs from July 1, 2017 thru October 15, 2017. Tenisha said that Big Tex Trailers located in Cordele would be an On-the-Job-Training (OJT) site for the WIOA program. During the 12-week program participants will learn welding and how to construct a trailer. Tyson Foods will also be participating in the OJT program again this year; they have participated for the past 10 years. Tenisha said there will be a Job Fair at, South Georgia Technical College, on November 28 and invited everyone to attend.

Katie Howard, Area Agency on Aging Director, gave the staff report for the Aging Department. Katie explained the next CareNet meeting would be held on Tuesday, October 31 at the Alzheimer's Association. Cheryl Maddox, River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) GeorgiaCares Coordinator, will be speaking about Open Enrollment for Medicare. She said if there were any groups that would like Cheryl to speak about Open Enrollment to contact the office. She said that an Aging Advocacy Coalition meeting will be held at the Columbus RVRC office on Friday November 3 at 10:00 a.m. and invited anyone to attend that could.

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Gerald Mixon, Planning Director, presented the staff report for the Planning Department. He asked that the RC counties and cities research and make sure their local government is in compliance with the State. All state funding is linked to being in compliance. Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) funding is not competitive and is set aside for your county or city but your government still must be in compliance.

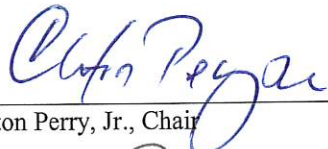
Patti Cullen, Executive Director, presented the staff report for the Finance Department in the absence of Emily Chambers and Tammy Collins, Finance Officers. She reported that thru August 31 there was an increase of approximately \$86,000 in the general fund balance. Operating expenses were approximately 1 percent below the budget, the fringe rate was 44 percent, and indirect was 50 percent thru August 31.

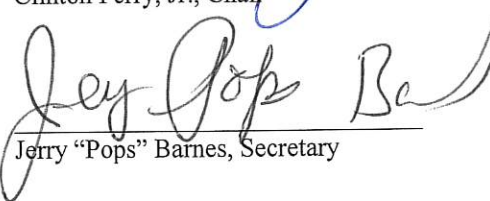
Clinton Perry, Chair, explained to the council that the Executive Committee had met before the council meeting to discuss emails and phone calls that council members of the RVRC had been receiving. He assured the council that the allegations were unfounded and that the Executive Committee was seeking legal counsel. Randy Howard, Sumter County, updated the council concerning reimbursements of EMS-911 payments. He explained the Middle Flint E-911 Center's reimbursement was short \$46,000 and statewide there was a shortage of \$5 million. He said it is now under investigation. Jerry "Pops" Barnes explained that yearly funding is being slashed for many senior programs and everyone was urged to advocate for these programs. He announced there would be a Coalition of Aging Advocates meeting held in the River Valley Regional Commission office, in Columbus, on November 3, at 10:00 a.m. and urged everyone to attend.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the council, Harry Lange of Harris County, made a motion to adjourn; Melvin Crimes, Webster County, seconded the motion. The meeting then adjourned.

November 29, 2017
Date


Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair


Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Secretary