

GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING

Civic Center
Gainesville, GA
January 26, 2012

MINUTES

The GMRC Council held its regular meeting on Thursday, January 26, 2012, 6:00 p.m. at the Civic Center in Gainesville, Georgia. The meeting was hosted by City of Gainesville.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME/DINNER

Chairman David Stovall called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for their attendance. He also expressed his appreciation to the City of Gainesville for hosting the meeting and to Rochester and Associates for sponsoring the dinner.

Chairman Stovall recognized City of Gainesville Mayor Danny Dunagan for local introductions. Mayor Dunagan welcomed everyone to the City of Gainesville and introduced the City Council that was present, Bob Hamrick, Myrtle Figueras, and George Wangemann; City Manager, Kip Padgett; and Assistant City Manager, Angela Sheppard. He also thanked Rochester and Associates Engineering Firm for sponsoring the meal for tonight's meeting and recognized Darrell Rochester.

INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

Vice-Chairman Sam Norton recognized other special guests Kathy Papa, DCA; David Weikel, Aide to Congressman Graves' Office; and Connie Smith, new Region 2 DOL Regional Coordinator. He also introduced the new Forsyth County GMRC Council Member, Mr. Jim Boff, who also serves as the Forsyth County Commission Chairman.

Chairman Stovall also welcomed Mr. Boff to the Council and encouraged everyone to introduce themselves and welcome him to the Council.

INVOCATION/ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/DINNER

L.J. Harrison, GMRC Chaplain, gave our devotion, invocation, and followed with the pledge of allegiance.

After dinner, Chairman Stovall reconvened the meeting and again thanked Rochester & Associates for sponsoring tonight's meal and Two Dog Café for preparing it.

PROGRAM

Executive Director Danny Lewis introduced Mr. Steve Watson, Hall County Chief Appraiser. Mr. Watson spoke to the group on the process of tax assessments, appraisals, and appeals on property. He also spoke on the forecast for tax digest and the history of tax digests for our thirteen county area and how Senate Bill 346 will affect the cities and counties. Mr. Watson answers questions that the Council had regarding the property tax process.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Chairman Stovall asked for any comments regarding the minutes of the November 17, 2011 and December 2, 2011 meetings. Angela Whidby made a motion to accept the minutes as written and was seconded by Doug Wayne. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

Chairman's Report

Chairman Stovall reported that Mr. Lewis serves as the President of the GARC Executive Directors and this group has their Policy Officials Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 31st and he and Mr. Lewis would be attending. He also informed the Council that last year the Council was involved in the Governor's Competitiveness Initiative meetings that were held around our region. The Initiative Report has been published and will be posted on the GMRC website for everyone to review.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Danny Lewis stated that the GMRC is fully staff once again due to promotions of several people within the office and also hiring some new employees. He recognized Ms. Heather Feldman which worked as Economic Development Representative under David Sargent. With Mr. Sargent's retirement, Mr. Feldman was promoted to his position as Economic Development Director. Mr. John Phillips also worked as an Economic Development Representative and was promoted to WIA Director over the Workforce Development staff. Ms. Nancy Smallwood and Mr. Patrick Larson were hired to fill these two Economic Development Representative positions. Ms. Smallwood comes to the RC from Children's Healthcare and she also previously worked for Forsyth County. Mr. Larson was previously employed as the City of Thomaston's Assistant City Manager. Ms. Meisa Pace was promoted from the front desk to Grants Administrator for the Economic Development Department. This completes the Economic Development staff. Ms. Ginger Little was hired as the WIA Intake Specialist. Ms. Andrea Disharoon has been employed as Human Resources Specialist and was previously employed by Dawson County. Ms. Marissa Smith was hired to fill the position at the front desk as Receptionist/Administrative Secretary. Ms. Smith previously worked with the RC part-time about two years ago.

Mr. Lewis reminded the Council that the vote on the TSPLOST for the Transportation Investment Act would be on July 31, 2012. Adam Hazell and Mr. Lewis have been making

presentations to groups in order to educate them on this issue and to encourage them to vote. He stated that if you are happy with the roads you have today, and you think that you will be happy with the width, patching, and paving of the roads you have today in ten years, vote against it. But, if you think the roads in this region are going to bring the people to the point that we need new roads, you need to think about what you are going to do.

The RC received word from GMA that the RC's insurance would increase by 10-12% for the next year. After they found out that we had doubled our staff by taking on the WIA, GMA agreed to hold our insurance at the previous rate.

Financial Report

The Financial Report was given by GMRC Director of Finance, Becky Sievers. The Cash Position as of December 31, 2011 showed a bank balance of \$220,470, receivables of \$160,979 and payables of \$261,420, with an uncommitted cash balance of \$120,029. The Income-Expense Report for the period of July 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011 indicated income of \$421,368, expenses of \$520,452, accounts receivable of \$105,069, with 38 percent of the budget being expended for the fiscal year. Angela Whidby made a motion to accept the report and was seconded by Dean Scarborough. Motion carried.

Workforce Development Program

Mr. John Phillips, Director of WIA, discussed how the Workforce Development staff can help each city and county with the aspects of the employment and unemployment in their area. The Adult and Dislocated Workers Program works with adults that are unemployed due to being laid off or by businesses closing or moving out of the country. They work with these adults to get them educated, trained and back into the workforce. The Youth Program works with youth that have dropped out of school or are still in school and need help to advance to a higher grade. They assist them with helping them to graduate from high school or obtain their GED for the ones that have dropped out. Without a high school diploma or a GED they cannot enroll in any technical school/college or apply for many jobs. Mr. Phillips explained that they need everyone's help to identify potential customers in the GMRC region. Beginning in February, they will visit each county to perform an assessment overview of that county and will visit one county every other week during the year.

Mr. Phillips also announced that Workforce Development will be working with a new program where the court system will require, as part of the offenders sentence, that they obtain a GED. They will be working with Hall and Dawson Counties first on this program.

Coosa North Georgia Watershed

GMRC Planning Director Adam Hazell and GMRC Council Member Mike Berg discussed a proposal for the GMRC to provide a letter of support to the Coosa-North Georgia Watershed Planning Council whereby the GMRC and the Northwest Georgia RC would be assigned, and accept partial responsibility for, the administration and implementation of the Watershed

Management Plan (WMP) for that district. The WMP is the result of representatives from 18 counties charged with this special effort by EPD, and at their recommendation the two existing RCs represented the best bodies to carry the WMP forward. If both RCs agreed, the Watershed Planning Council would send letters to EPD officially recommending their involvement and suggesting that EPD allocate funding to support the work of the RCs. Mr. Berg offered more information about the WMP and his involvement in the meetings to develop the document, then Mr. Hazell outlined the general terms of the letter to be provided on behalf of the GMRC, before sending to Chairman Stovall for a formal motion. After discussion, a motion was made by J.B. Jones to send such a letter, with Chairman Stovall adding the stipulation that said letter must be circulated among the GMRC Council for review and comments three days prior to being sent to the Watershed Planning Council. Motion was seconded by L.J. Harrison and the vote was unanimous.

OLD BUSINESS

Annual Meeting Report

Leslie George recognized and thanked the Council Members that served on the Annual Meeting Committee. She also thanked Calvin Byrd for securing the entertainment and the GMRC staff for all their hard work that went into making this event possible. She stated that she felt this year's Annual Meeting was the largest and best event that we have ever had. Evaluation forms were previously sent out to all Council Members and she encouraged everyone to return those with your thoughts regarding this event. The Committee will be meeting next week to review the comments and discuss what needs to be improved on and begin working on next year's event.

NEW BUSINESS

SBA 504

Mr. Ron Simmons with the Small Business Development Center spoke to the Council about an existing product that they have available through September 2012. This loan is available to businesses that have been in business for at least a few years and are financially stable. This program is a facility oriented and job creation product. This loan is for an existing business which possibly needs to update their equipment, facility, or inventory and at the same time create new jobs. Mr. Simmons made materials available on this program and asked if Council Members know of any businesses that might benefit from this to give him a call.

New DOL Regional Coordinator for Region 2

Georgia DOL has hired Ms. Connie Smith as the new Regional Coordinator for Region 2, which will serve our region. Ms. Smith lives in Cartersville and will be working closely to bring more jobs to our area. DOL is known primarily as the "unemployment office" and is so often viewed as the last of the line for employment. DOL is currently taking a new focus on economic development. They are focusing more on the initial end of employment for prospective businesses or for new/expanding businesses. She is proud to be one of the 13 Economic Development Coordinators for the State of Georgia and to be able to work closely with other

partners and the local economic developers to provide timely labor data and to also enter into the initial conversation of bringing more jobs to this region. She stated that she is looking forward to working this region.

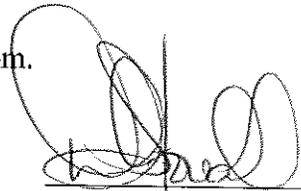
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Stovall referred to the Council Meeting Schedule for 2012. He thanked the cities and counties for stepping up and said they would sponsor one of our meetings this year. With this being the first month of the year, he was proud to announce that all meetings have been spoken for with the exception of one and hopefully that one will be taken by our next meeting.

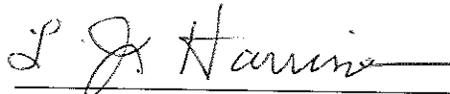
Chairman Stovall commended this Council for their work and attendance to these meetings. He stated that he has severed on the Council for a number of years and with attending other meetings, he feels this is the most involved, most advanced, and most driven Council in the State. During this year, this Council has organized the Transportation Bill Committee, obtained the Workforce Development Program, appointed the WIA Board, doubled the Regional Commission's staff, and is now talking about getting involved in the water issues. He also commended the Regional Commission with having the best staff of any organization in the State.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.



David Stovall, Chairman



L.J. Harrison, Secretary

GMRC COUNCIL
ATTENDANCE SHEET
2011-2012

COUNTY	COUNCIL MEMBER	7/28/11	8/25/11	9/29/11	10/27/11	11/17/11	12/2/11	1/26/12	2/23/12	3/29/12	4/26/12	5/31/12	6/28/12
BANKS	Sammy Reece	P	P	A	A	P	A	P					
	Jerry Payne	P	P	P	A	P	P	P					
	Leslie George	A	P	A	P	P	P	P					
DAWSON	Mike Berg	P	A	P	P	A	P	P					
	Calvin Byrd	P	A	P	P	A	P	P					
	Charlie Auvermann	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
FORSYTH	Jim Boff							(N)P					
	Ralph Perry	P	A	A	A	A	P	P					
FRANKLIN	James McCoy	P	A	P	P	A	A	A					
	Angela Whidby	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
	Ralph Owens	P	A	P	P	A	P	P					
HABERSHAM	Gerald Voyles	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
	Lee Mulkey	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
	Audrey Turner	P	A	P	A	P	P	P					
HALL	Todd Pealock	(N)P	P	A	P	P	P	P					
	Vacant												
	George Wangemann	P	A	A	P	A	A	P					
HART	Deborah Mack	A	P	A	A	A	P	P					
	Bill Myers	P	P	P	P	A	A	P					
	Tray Hicks	P	P	P	A	A	P	A					
LUMPKIN	Bill Chafin	P	P	P	A	P	P	P					
	Dr. John Raber	P	P	A	P	P	P	P					
	Sam Norton**	P	P	P	P	A	P	P					
	J.B. Jones	P	A	A	P	P	P	P					

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RABUN	Stan Darnell	(N)A	A	P	P	A	P	P					
	Debbie Chisholm	P	P	P	P	P	P	A					
	Douglas Wayne	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
STEPHENS	Dean Scarborough	P	P	P	P	A	P	P					
	Ron Seib	A	P	P	P	A	P	A					
	L.J. Harrison	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
TOWNS	Bill Kendall			P	P (R)	P (R)	P	P (R)					
	Andrea Gibby							(N)P					
	David Stovall*	P	P	P	A	P	P	P					
UNION	Lamar Paris	P	P	P	P	P	P	A					
	Jim Conley	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
	Mitch Griggs	P	P	A	P	P	P	A					
WHITE	Travis Turner	P	A	P (R)	P	P (R)	P	A					
	Annie Sutton	A	P	P	P	A	P	A					
	Bill Black	P	A	P	P	A	P	P					
GOV APPT.	Rex Farmer	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
	Paul Kreager	P	P	A	P	P	P	P					
	Will Wade	P	P	P	P	P	A	P					
LT. GOV. APPT.	Kevin Tallant	P	P	P	P	A	P						
SPEAKER APPT.	Peter Hill	P(N)	P	P	P	P	P	P					

P = PRESENT A = ABSENT * = REPRESENTED V = VACANCY E = EXCUSED (N) = NEW MEMBER

* Chairman
** Vice Chairman
*** Secretary