

GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
Forrest Hills Mountain Resort and Conference Center
October 30, 2014

MINUTES

The GMRC Council held its regular meeting on Thursday, October 30, 2014, 6:00 p.m. at the Forrest Hills Mountain Resort and Conference Center in Dahlonega, Georgia. The meeting was hosted by Lumpkin County and City of Dahlonega.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairman Sam Norton called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for their attendance. Mr. Gary McCollough, City of Dahlonega Mayor welcomed everyone to Lumpkin County and to Dahlonega and stated how lucky we are to be in this beautiful area. City of Dahlonega was represented by City Councilmen Terry Peters, Roman Gaddis, Mitchell Ridley, and Mayor Pro-tem Sam Norton.

Lumpkin County Commission Chairman Chris Dockery stated that he hoped everyone enjoyed the beautiful ride to Forrest Hills. Lumpkin County and the City of Dahlonega had a number of nice places to meet, but the county wanted to showcase something a little different. Mr. Dockery recognized Mr. J.B. Jones who was the former Lumpkin County Sole Commissioner for a number of years and thanked him for what he had done for Lumpkin County to bring it to the state that it is in today.

Chairman Norton asked the owners of Forrest Hills Mountain Resort to give a little history of the property. The property consists of 140 acres and was purchased for \$50,000 about 37 years ago. When purchased there was no electricity, no running water, only one logging road into the property. Presently, the resort has 100 rooms, 30 couple's cabins with hot tub, group lodging, meeting facilities, wedding chapel, restaurant, horseback riding and dinner wagon rides.

INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

Vice-Chairman Dean Scarborough recognized special guests Cheryl Smith, Georgis Department of Economic Development; Danette Smith, Georgia Department of Labor; and Frank Riley, Chestatee Chattahoochee RC&D.

INVOCATION/ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/DINNER

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

PROGRAM

Executive Director Danny Lewis introduced our speaker Mr. Paul Chambers. Mr. Chambers is the Northeast Georgia Regional Director for AT&T. He covers 26 counties which included our 13 counties. His office is located in Athens, Georgia.

Mr. Chambers spoke about the changes that have taken place with our electronics. AT&T is the landline provider for Hall and Forsyth Counties and a wireless provider for all GMRC counties. They also offered wireless home phone service for people out of the landline area that allows your home phone to connect back to the cell phone service and also offers broadband services. AT&T is also in the process of buying Direct TV. In 2007, the first smart phone was introduced and since that time the data usage has grown 500 times. Due to this increase, AT&T had performed 1,500 cell tower upgrades in Georgia. In the last three months, 500,000 cars have connected to the AT&T network. AT&T expects, by 2017, there will be 10 million cars connect to the network, which will require more cell towers and capacity to handle this. They are installing small cell antenna boxes in large buildings in order for customers to have coverage inside these building. AT&T is striving to keep up with speed, upgrades, and capacity of the growing usage.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Chairman Norton asked for any comments regarding the minutes of the September 25, 2014 meeting. Doug Wayne made a motion to accept the minutes as written and was seconded by Mike Berg. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

Chairman's Report

Chairman Norton stated that he was proud that Georgia Mountains has meeting facilities available for organizations to use. Recently, Georgia Municipal Authority (GMA) held some training meetings in the J.B. Jones room at the GMRC Office.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Danny Lewis reported that this is audit month. The Georgia Department of Economic Development's auditors have been at the GMRC offices this week performing a performance audit for Workforce Development. Mr. Lewis commended Becky Sievers and the finance department for their hard work during this time. An exit interview is scheduled to find out what the auditors found during their audit. The RC has just finished with their financial audit also.

Ms. Lyn Allen will be retiring from the Franklin County Industrial Building Authority. Senator Frank Ginn will be taking her place. She had worked closely with the RC's Economic Development Department and will be missed.

Financial Report

Becky Sievers, Director of Finance, presented the Financial Reports for September. The Cash Position as of September 30, 2014 showed a bank balance of \$1,006,207, receivables of \$193,375 and payables of \$502,684, with an uncommitted cash balance of \$696,898. The Revenue Expenditure Report for the period of July 1, 2014 – September 30, 2014 indicated the Actual Revenue Income of \$1,110,476, Expenditures of \$1,201,063, with 25 percent of the budget being expended for the fiscal year. Jim Conley made a motion to accept the report and was seconded by James Grogan. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Aerial Photography/LiDAR Flyover Project

Faith Bryan reported that at the present time, the RC has 25 participants that have signed a letter of intent to participate in the Aerial Photography, LiDAR, and Oblique Imagery project. The project will reach into the boundaries of five regional commissions with a total project area of 6,259 square miles. The total project amount is \$1.6M which includes \$103,000 in administrative fees that will come back to the RC. The project will be flying January through March and the photography will be available in October. There are six counties that are having the Oblique Imagery done with the understanding that this is a licensed product and cannot be resold. The counties will own the digital and LiDAR projects. Chairman Norton stated that this is such a big project and they would like the Council to ratify that the Executive Director and the Chairman could sign this contract. Jim Conley made a motion to approve signing this contract. Dean Scarborough seconded and motion carried unanimously.

GMRC Annual Meeting

Chairman Norton encouraged all Council Members to secure at least one sponsor for this year's event. He also reminded everyone to order their tickets, and that door prizes are needed for the Annual Meeting. This year promises to be one of the best Annual Meetings that the RC has had. Reception will begin at 4:45 and dinner will follow at 6:00 on December 5th at the Dillard House Conference Center.

NEW BUSINESS

Mass Mutual Financial 401-K Platform

Ms. Andrea Newsom informed the Council that Chris Fleming, the RC's Third Party Administrator (TPA), had suggested that we look at possibly adding the financial services of Mass Mutual to the RC 401K program. This service would allow the employees to have on-line access and do their own trading of their retirement contributions. Mass Mutual would be the RC custodian, record keeper, and co-fiduciary. At the present time, the Trustees, which are Danny Lewis, Becky Sievers, Peggy Lovell, and Chairman Norton, have fiduciary responsibilities and Mass Mutual would take some of this fiduciary responsibility and pass it along to a company that Mass Mutual works with. The RC would still have a broker, Edward Jones, who receives our money. Mass Mutual would educate our employees so they know how and where to make proper investments. Pension Financial Services (PFS) would still be our TPA and keep the RC in compliance with the IRS, inform us of any law updates, and provide us with all required annual reports that need to be filed. The cost will be 1.17% for all three entities and our current cost is 3%. Ms. Newsom introduced Ms. Lisa Brown with Mass Mutual who would be available to answer questions regarding this change after the meeting. To answer a question as to if RFPs were sent out for this selection, professional services are not required to be bid out. After other questions and discussion, Will Wade made a motion to hire Mass Mutual as the RC's co-fiduciary. Dean Scarborough seconded and motion carried with two abstaining.

Budget Amendment

As a recommendation from the RC Auditor, the budget needs to be amended to reflect the Department of Human Services contract for transit services that the RC took on during the

middle of the year. The State asked the RC to take over and be the pass through for the transit program for all our 13 counties. DHS would send the RC an invoice as to how much to pay each county and they would cut the checks. If the budget is not amended to include the DHS contract, it will result in a finding in our Audit. L.J. Harrison made a motion to amend the FY14 Budget. Motion as seconded and motion carried unanimously.

FY14 Audit Review Process

Mr. Bill Chafin, Audit Committee Chairman, commended Becky Sievers and her staff for all their hard work during the last three weeks on three different Audits. The FY14 Financial Audit will be sent out electronically tomorrow for the Council's review. This Audit has had a 600% revenue growth in the past three years due to Workforce Development. We are presently at a ratio of nine to one in leveraging. The Auditors commented that we have done a great job in handling our growth. He is giving the RC an unmodified opinion which is the highest he can give and with no findings. This comes as a recommendation from the Finance and Executive Committees to the Council for review. The Audit will be considered at the November 20th meeting.

Vehicle Purchase

At last month's meeting, the Council approved the new Travel Policy which put us in compliance with all the other RCs in the state. In doing so, we stopped Mr. Lewis' travel allowance and purchased a new fleet vehicle which will be assigned to him. In two years, this vehicle will be placed in the fleet rotation and another vehicle will be bought and assigned to the Executive Director. RFPs were sent out and our lowest bid was for a 2015 Ford Explorer at the price of \$24,972.96 from Jacky Jones Ford. Chairman Norton asked the Council for ratification on the purchase of this vehicle. Motion was made by Jim Conley and seconded by Tray Hicks. Motion carried unanimously.

Vote for GMRC Council Member

Chairman Norton informed the Council that ballots would be emailed to them tomorrow to vote on the GMRC Council Member of the Year. Each Council Member will vote on the top five members that they feel has done the most for the RC and the region during this past year. This award will be awarded at the Annual Meeting on December 5th.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Norton thanked everyone for attending the Council meetings each month. He asked the Council Members to check with their city/county to see if they would sponsor on of our Council meetings during 2015.

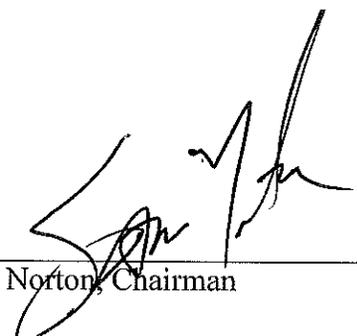
The November meeting will be sponsored by City of Dawsonville and will be held at the City Hall.

DOOR PRIZES

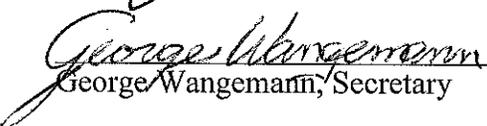
Lumpkin County and City of Dahlonega provided a number of door prizes that were given away to the lucky winners.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.



Sam Norton, Chairman



George Wangemann, Secretary