

GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
City Hall
Dawsonville, Georgia
November 16, 2017

MINUTES

The GMRC Council held its regular meeting on Thursday, November 16, 2017, 6:00 p.m. at the City Hall in Dawsonville, Georgia. The meeting was hosted by City of Dawsonville.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairman Dean Scarborough called the meeting to order and thanked the Council and guests for their attendance. Mayor Pro Tem Jason Power for the City of Dawsonville welcomed everyone to Dawsonville and recognized City Council Members Caleb Phillips and Mike Sosebee, City Manager Bob Bolz, City Clerk Sara Bearden, City Attorney Dana Miles, and Nascar Museum Coordinator Gordon Pirkle. He thanked Mr. Pirkle and the Dawsonville Pool Room for catering the meal.

Chairman Scarborough thanked City of Dawsonville for hosting tonight's meeting.

INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

Secretary George Wangemann recognized other special guests Kathy Papa, Department of Community Affairs; Andrew Seaver, Senator Perdue's Office; Amy Turner, Senator Isakson's Office; Scott Maxwell, Mathews and Maxwell; and Todd Edwards, Georgia Association of County Commissioners of Georgia; Charlotte Davis, Georgia Municipal Association; and Molly Knight, Small Business Development Center.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/DINNER

Will Wade gave the devotion, invocation. Mr. Wade recognized and thanked all veterans in attendance for their service and asked them to lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PROGRAM

Heather Feldman introduced Representative Kevin Tanner, Todd Edwards with Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG), and Charlotte Davis with Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) to discuss the topic of Rural Broadband. Each one spoke on the topic. Speaker of the House David Ralston appointed a Broadband Study Committee and Senator Steve Gooch, Rep. Kevin Tanner, and Rep. John Wilkinson from our area serves on this Committee. The Committee has held six meetings throughout the state and one of the main concerns that was heard was how the businesses and industries are affected by the lack of broadband. Tonight's panel participants discussed issues that our state faces with Broadband. Some areas in the state do not even have broadband. It is difficult when you have businesses and industries inquiring about moving to your area and their first inquiry is about broadband. In most cases, if broadband is not available they go elsewhere. The internet is not regulated and there are small companies

which are trying to make money off it. Some other issues that affect broadband are right-of-ways, cutting edge in technology (speed), and historic districts. Georgia has been voted for the last five years as the “Best State to do Business With”, but if we don’t have broadband access will this continue.

Rep. Kevin Tanner also spoke to the Council about the Statewide Transit Committee that was appointed this year. He serves as Chairman of this Committee along with other members that are the Who’s Who in transportation for the State. Georgia is the fifth lowest in funding for transit. The Committee is looking at how the State can increase their funding for transit. Georgia has got to have ways of moving people other than building more roads and adding more lanes. Several large businesses have inquired about building businesses in Georgia, but we don’t have the transit that they need and want. There are 120 separate rural transit services in Georgia. Most of these are not working efficiently for the area and need to be able to combine services. The Committee is encouraging the cities and counties to partner with their RC on transit issues. Three RCs have taken over the regional transit operation in their area. Federal money comes down through the RCs to fund these programs. Billions are also being spent to improve roads and bridges but we need to focus on other forms of transit.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES AND ATTENDANCE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Chairman Scarborough asked for any comments regarding the minutes and attendance report for the October 26, 2017 meeting. Doug Wayne made a motion to accept the minutes and attendance report as presented and was seconded by Jim Conley. Motion carried. (Attendance report attached)

REPORTS

Executive Director’s Report

Executive Director Heather Feldman thanked Chairman Scarborough and Council Members Lamar Paris and Natalie Crawford and all staff who attended the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC) Annual Conference in St. Simons. The conference had excellent topics including updates on the upcoming Census 2020, Georgia Department of Transportation, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and an Economic Forecast to name a few. Also, was fortunate to have U.S. Senator David Perdue speak to the group.

Proud to announce the GMRC was recognized as being the first region in the state to achieve 100% of LUCA Registrations on the county level and 94% at the city level. Faith Bryan was asked to speak at the Conference about the best practice in our region. Congratulations to Faith on this achievement.

The RC received the draft Department of Audit and Accounts Performance Audit today. The RC has until the 21st to respond. Upon receipt of the final Audit, it will be forwarded to the Council for their review.

GMRC will be holding a series of Focus Groups around the region between now and the beginning of January as a way to hear from our Council Members and our member governments as we develop the finishing touches to the Strategic Plan. Council Members were encouraged to attend the Focus Group that will be held in their area.

Ms. Feldman recognized and thanked the Finance staff for their hard work during the time of the audit.

2017 GMRC Audit

Clay Pilgrim with Rushton and Company presented a Powerpoint presentation to the Council regarding the 2017 GMRC Audit. Mr. Pilgrim also thanked the Finance staff which made the process go smoothly. He reported that the GMRC is in great shape financially. The RC had one finding this year, but pleased to report that it was discovered by the Finance Department and resolved before the Audit was every performed. When the new software system that was installed last year and an update was ran, the software did not apply personal leave appropriately. Normally, it would not have been a finding, but due to the amount of the funds that were affected it needed to be listed as a finding. The software issue has been resolved. Mr. Pilgrim explained the different facets of the audit and asked if there were any questions.

OLD BUSINESS

Consideration of the 2017 GMRC Audit

Bill Chafin, Chairman of Finance/Audit Committee reported that the Audit has previously been sent to the Council for their review. A motion was made by Bill Chafin on behalf of the Finance/Audit Committee, to accept the 2017 GMRC Audit as presented by Rushton and Company. Motion was seconded by Sam Norton and motion carried unanimously.

Annual Meeting Report

Angela Whidby, Annual Committee Chair recognized the Committee members and thanked them for they hard work preparing for this event. She informed the Council that we are maxed out on the number of attendees for this year. Cities and counties were asked to bring door prizes. Reception will start at 4:45 pm and the dinner at 6:00 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

No New Business

DOOR PRIZES

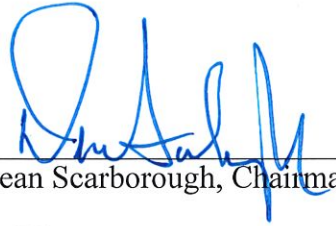
City of Dawsonville provided door prizes which were awarded to the lucky winners.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next month's Council meeting will be the GMRC Annual Meeting/Awards Dinner at the Dillard House Conference Center on December 1st.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.



Dean Scarborough, Chairman



George Wangemann, Secretary

GMRC COUNCIL
ATTENDANCE SHEET
2017-2018

COUNTY	COUNCIL MEMBER	7/27/17	8/31/17	9/28/17	10/26/17	11/16/17	12/1/17	1/25/18	2/22/18	3/29/18	4/26/18	5/31/18	6/28/18
BANKS	Danny Maxwell	P	P	A	P (R)	P (R)							
	Jerry Payne	P	P	A	P	P							
	Leslie George	P	P	P	P (R)	P							
DAWSON	Billy Thurmond	A	P	A	A	P							
	James Grogan	P	P	P	A	A							
	David Headley	P	A	P	P	P							
FORSYTH	Pete Amos	P	P	P	P	A							
	Chuck Welch	P	P	P	P	P							
	Robert Long	P	P	P	P	P							
FRANKLIN	Thomas Bridges	P	P	P	P	P							
	Ralph Owens	P	P	P	A	A							
	Gerald Voyles	P	P	A	P (R)	P							
HABERSHAM	Natalie Crawford	A	P	A	P	A							
	Audrey Turner	P	P	P (R)	P	A							
	Ken Schubring	P	P	P	P	P							
HALL	Richard Higgins	P (R)	P (R)	P (R)	P (R)	P (R)							
	George Wangemann***	P	P	P	A	P							
	Deborah Mack	P	P	A	P	A							
HART	Ricky Carter	P	P	P	P	P							
	Tray Hicks	P	A	A	P (R)	A							
	Bill Chafin	P	P	P	P	P							
LUMPKIN	Chris Dockery	P	P	P (R)	P	A							
	Sam Norton*	P	P	A	P	P							
	J.B. Jones	P	A	P	P	P							

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RABUN	Greg James	P	A	P (R)	P (R)	P (R)							
	Debbie Chisholm	P	A	P	A	A							
	Douglas Wayne	P	P	P	P	P							
STEPHENS	Dean Scarborough**	P	P	P	P	P							
	David Austin	P	P	P	A	A							
	Connie Tabor	P	P	P	A	A							
TOWNS	Cliff Bradshaw	P	P	A	P	P							
	Andrea Gibby	A	P	A	P	A							
	David Stovall	A	P	P (R)	P	P (R)							
UNION	Lamar Paris	P	A	P	P	P							
	Jim Conley	P	P	P (R)	P	P							
	Mitch Griggs	A	P	P	P	P							
WHITE	Travis Turner	P	P (R)	P	P (R)	P (R)							
	Annie Sutton	A	P	P	P	P							
	Bill Black	P	P	P	A	P							
GOV APPT.	Rex Farmer	P	P	P	P	P							
	Angela Whidby	P	P	P	A	P							
	Will Wade	A	A	P	P	P							
	Vacant												
SPEAKER APPT.	Vacant												

P = PRESENT A = ABSENT R = REPRESENTED V = VACANCY E = EXCUSED N = NEW MEMBER

* Chairman
** Vice Chairman
*** Secretary