

GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Yonah Mountain Vineyard
Cleveland, GA
September 25, 2014

MINUTES

The GMRC Executive Committee met on Thursday, September 25, 2014, 5:00 p.m. at the Yonah Mountain Vineyard in Cleveland, Georgia. The meeting was hosted by White County Commission.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Sam Norton called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for attending. The following members were present:

Executive Committee Present

Sam Norton, Chairman
Dean Scarborough, Vice Chairman
George Wangemann, Secretary
Mike Berg
Bill Black
Bill Chafin
Rex Farmer
Leslie George
David Stovall
George Wangemann

GMRC Staff Present

W. Danny Lewis, Executive Director
Peggy Lovell, Executive Assistant
Kevin Tallant, Attorney
Becky Sievers, Finance Director
Andrea Disharoon, HR Specialist

Guest

David Strickland

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Chairman Norton asked for consideration of the minutes of the August 28, 2014 Executive Committee Meeting. Motion for approval of the minutes was made by Dean Scarborough, seconded by David Stovall, and motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

Executive Directors Report

Executive Director Danny Lewis stated that Saralyn Stafford would be tonight's program. She is the DCA Deputy Commissioner and has assumed the role of Appalachian Regional Commission State Director. Ms. Stafford is our go-to person for ARC grants. She is already making visits around our region.

OLD BUSINESS

Annual Meeting Report

Sponsors are still needed for the Annual Meeting. The ticket prices are remaining at \$40 even with a slight increase in the contract. Mr. Lewis negotiated with the Dillard House and got the room rental and linen charges removed from the contract. They indicated that they would be going up \$1.10 per meal, but he was also able to get that reduced to \$.50. He had also spoken with Forsyth Conference Center about the possibility of having this facility as a backup if prices could not be negotiated with the Dillard House. The Forsyth Conference Center does not allow the sale of alcohol on the premises due to it being on school property and the meal price would most likely be higher.

Mr. Lewis discussed with the Committee that the account for Friends of Georgia Mountains is not a 501C(3) entity. It was suggested that the Legal Counsel look into what would need to be done to obtain this.

CEDS Document

The 2014 CEDS Document was emailed earlier to the Council for review. Bill Chafin made a motion to recommend approval of the 2014 CEDS document. Bill Black seconded the motion and carried unanimously.

Aerial Photography/LiDAR Flyover Project

Mr. Lewis reported that the RC has previously thought there were 20 counties participating in the Flyover Project, but three counties that are not in our region have dropped out. But at the same time, one city in our region has signed up and also the City of Atlanta's Watershed. The Flyover encompasses other RC regions. This project will be over a \$1M.

NEW BUSINESS

GMEBS Resolution

The GMRC employee life and health insurance is through Georgia Municipal Employee Benefits System. Chairman Norton presented the GMEBS renewal policy agreement. Bill Chafin made a motion to renew the insurance agreement with GMEBS for next year. Motion was seconded by Rex Farmer and carried unanimously.

Becky Sievers, Finance Director and Andrea Newsom, HR Specialist gave an update on the Blue Cross-Blue Shield (BCBS) Insurance and Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NEGMC) situation. If an agreement is not reached before October 1st NEGMC, the Heart Center, and the Physicians Group will no longer accept BCBS as an in-network provider. Since GMRC employees have BCBS insurance and NEGMC being the local hospital, it will affect each of them. Negotiations are still on-going.

401K Platform

Becky Sievers explained that the RC's 401K is the employees Social Security replacement. In 1986, the RC opted out of SS and started their 401K plan with a private broker which, at this time, is Edward Jones. Edward Jones serves as the advisor of investments to the employees. Pension Financial is our Third Party Administrator (TPA). The TPA's role is to write our Retirement Plan updates as the laws change and test our Plan for compliance. The TPA has recommended that the RC go with a financial group such as Mass Mutual. They would set up a platform of investments and would also take on a co-fiduciary responsibility. Since inception, a group of trustees (3) within the RC staff were responsible for the employees' investments. As long as total investments remains above \$1M, Mass Mutual would only charge 1.17%. If the investments drop below this amount percentage would increase. Mass Mutual's rates are the cheapest. It has been recommended that the RC obtain Mass Mutual services to take some of the fiduciary responsibility off the RC trustees. Leslie George made a motion to hire Mass Mutual and was seconded by Dean Scarborough. Motion carried unanimously.

Proposed GARC Travel Policy

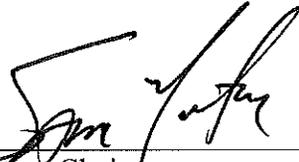
The State Department of Audits has recommended that all RCs adopt the draft GARC Travel Policy that was previously emailed to the Executive Committee. This policy includes some changes such as using per diem for meals, furnishing the Executive Director a fleet vehicle, etc. The State basically wants all the RCs to use the same travel policy. The State is mandating that the RC adopt this, but it has been questioned if we have to go by their rules, why do we not get the same number of holidays and benefits that they get. If GMRC has not adopted this policy by the time of their Department of Audit and Accounts audit, the RC will be written up. This policy will be effective November 1, 2014.

After discussion, a motion was made by Mike Berg to adopt the GARC Travel Policy and was seconded by Bill Chafin. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Norton discussed with the Executive Committee the fact that with the adoption of this policy, Mr. Lewis will lose his car allowance (\$9,600) plus mileage reimbursement. Instead, he would have a new fleet vehicle assigned to him, which will be maintained and insured by the RC. He suggested that to compensate Mr. Lewis for some of this loss, he recommended a compensation adjustment to make him whole. The Chairman stated that Mr. Lewis' salary is mid-range of other Executive Directors in the state with the number of service years. Several figures were discussed at length and it was decided that the Executive Committee would postpone this decision until next month.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was recessed to the Council Meeting at 5:45 pm.



Sam Norton, Chairman



George Wangemann, Secretary