



Pinnacle

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Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

Executive Director's Report



- ◆ Thanks to all who gave a personal invitation to our Legislators in late May. It was a great session with outstanding attendance by our Legislators and our Council and staff. Thanks to all who assisted with our FY15 Budget, especially Finance Director Becky Sievers and staff, Council Chairman Sam Norton, and Finance/Audit Chairman Bill Chafin.
- ◆ Remember our next meeting will also be huge with **Rabun County** hosting us at The Waterfalls Resort and Bayne Smith, DOT District Engineer and Teri Pope will be bringing us a DOT Update as our program. It will be June 26th at 6:00pm. Please RSVP to Marissa Smith at 770-538-2626 or msmith@gmrc.ga.gov
- ◆ The Aerial Mapping Program has expanded to 25 counties and four different regions. Some counties have indicated they are now expecting 50% reduction in costs based on what our bids show compared to their estimates if they were to do their county alone. This has the possibility of being a \$1.2 million project. What a savings for our counties and cities. I am so glad that this project is under our operations and specifically being led by Faith Bryan.

Chairman Report



GMRC Council,

I continue to be honored and humbled by the opportunity to lead this Council as Chairman. The level of staff competence is evident at all levels of our organization.

I had the privilege to attend the GARC Economic Development Conference in Young Harris last month where once again our staff shined. Whether on a committee or presenting on panel, we are blessed to have such capable staff that takes leadership positions at the state regional level. I believe that it is no accident that Georgia Mountains staff raises to the top among peers. We, as a group, are committed and it shows. We have some of the most dedicated and capable staff of any regional commission, led by an equally capable Executive Director, Mr. Lewis. It is evident that Mr. Danny Lewis has developed and nurtured his staff to give the most to this region. We are ready to assist or lead, in any situa-

tion that comes our way. This is no accident. There is an old saying that still holds true today – inspect what you expect. Our Executive Director does inspect and he does expect.

This Council supports our Executive Director and his staff and for that, I as your Chairman, am grateful.

Sincerely,

Chairman Norton

Employee Spotlight



Gloria Dodd is a case manager for GMRC Workforce Development (WD). She originally hails from Gastonia, N.C. Although her mom and sister still reside in the Carolinas, Gloria has made the Georgia Mountains area home for more than 30 years. Gloria has been employed in Workforce Development for 22 years, beginning her career with the Job Training Partnership Act. Gloria attended Lanier Tech and studied Business Office Technology. She also raised two daughters, three step-children, and has 16 grandchildren with another grandson on the way. In her spare time, Gloria works in the garden, plays the piano and guitar, while entertaining her family with her gift of voice. Gloria is a devoted employee to the Workforce Development Department and an asset to the Regional Commission.

WD Success Story



"Before I decided to go back to school for Diagnostic Medical Sonographer at Athens Technical College, I was working at a minimum wage job. Once I got into the training program there, my instructor mentioned the WIA program. Even then I didn't think I would qualify for it. My other classmates encouraged me to investigate further and see if I would qualify for WIA assistance. Thankfully I was able to qualify."

The Diagnostic Medical Sonographer training program was top notch! It trained me thoroughly in ultrasound and prepared me for the real world.

WIA was so helpful during the training. I lived an hour away from my school so they helped with gas money as well as support in all my academic and clinical classes. I really appreciated how they helped me buy my books and paid for my tuition. I graduated debt free.

Now that I am finished with my training program, I am a full-time Sonographer at a private practice in Lawrenceville. It is worth every bit of effort that is needed to apply. WIA staff is so friendly and helpful! I never felt like a burden to them and they went above and beyond all my expectations during my program."

Katherine

Economic Development

- ◆ The **City of Cornelia** received \$146,376 in funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program for equipment and facility modifications.
- ◆ The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) will be accepting Pre-Applications until close of business on **August 15, 2014**. ARC can provide matching funds for infrastructure, asset-based development, education, and training projects in the Georgia Mountains Region. Projects with direct and committed economic benefit (job creation, job retention, private investment, etc.) will be given top priority and all projects must, at a minimum meet one of the ARC Goals. Please contact Heather Feldman at 770-538-2610 if your community is interested in applying.
- ◆ **Local Foods, Local Places** is a new initiative supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Transportation, the Delta Regional Authority, and the Appalachian Regional Commission and aims to boost economic opportunities for local farmers and businesses and foster entrepreneurship. **Local Foods, Local Places** will provide direct technical assistance to help communities develop and implement action plans promoting local food and downtown revitalization. Communities are invited to submit a *Letter of Interest* no later than **July 15, 2014**. Please contact us by July 1st if you are interested in applying.
- ◆ The **City of Toccoa** and **Stephens County** was awarded \$1,420,000 in Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant funding for water and sewer improvements.

Mobile Training Units

- ◆ The Mobile Training Units (MTU) are here to assist individuals throughout our region with job search assistance, building a resume, going back to school, and brushing up on interview skills. The MTUs partner with libraries and civic organizations throughout the Georgia Mountains Region to bring these job assistant tools straight to individuals. For more information on having one of our MTUs in your community contact Micah Thomas or Keith Krauth at 770-538-2727 .
- ◆ Below are the current number of responses our MTUs have had for the month of June.

Total Job Searches	76
Total Job App	78
Total Resumes	32
Total Interviews	0
Total Interest Survey	13
Total Training Sessions	4
Total Testing	1
Total Typing Assessments	0
Total GMRC Info	69
Total Unemployment Claims	0
Computer Trainings	0
Microsoft Office Classes	0
GED Assistance	
Stephens Probation Office	
Lee Arrendale Prison	
Total Responses this month:	273
Total Responses to date:	2402

- ◆ June 12th was the first Job Fair organized by Georgia Mountains Regional Commission Workforce Development. The Job Fair was held at the **Rabun County** Convention Center and was a combined community effort involving the DOL, Development Authority of Rabun, **Rabun County** Chamber of Commerce, and our own Workforce Development team! We would like to thank Georgia Department of Economic Development's Deputy Commissioner Ben Hames for taking time to attend the event and offer words of encouragement to both employers and job seekers, thanks to Rabun County Chairman Greg James and County Administrator Jim Bleckley for attending and participating. Also, thank you to all sponsoring organizations, Wal-Mart for their donation of soft drinks and bottled water, and to the volunteers who gave their time to serve as greeters and take meal tickets. The hard work of gathering employers and advertising the event paid off. In all, approximately 80 job seekers and 28 employers attended the event. We were excited for those that came out. Several employers met qualified candidates for open position and were looking into hiring applicants who attended the event. The event was a huge success!

Planning Services

- ◆ The **City of Gainesville** has adopted their Capital Improvement Element
- ◆ The **Gainesville/ Hall County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** is beginning the update to their federally mandated Transportation Plan.
- ◆ The **GMRC 2014 Regional Work Program** has been approved by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA).
- ◆ The **City of Cornelia** has completed a major stream bank restoration project funded in part by a Section 319 grant from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division.
- ◆ On May 16th at the Preservation Awards in Cartersville, **Lavonia's** Southern Railway Depot won an award for Excellence in Rehabilitation from The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation. In the photo below is President & CEO Mark C. McDonald, GMRC Preservation Planner Joe Rothwell, Downtown Development Authority Executive Director Marie Morse, City Manager Gary Fesperman and Georgia Trust Vice Chairman William Peard. (L-R)

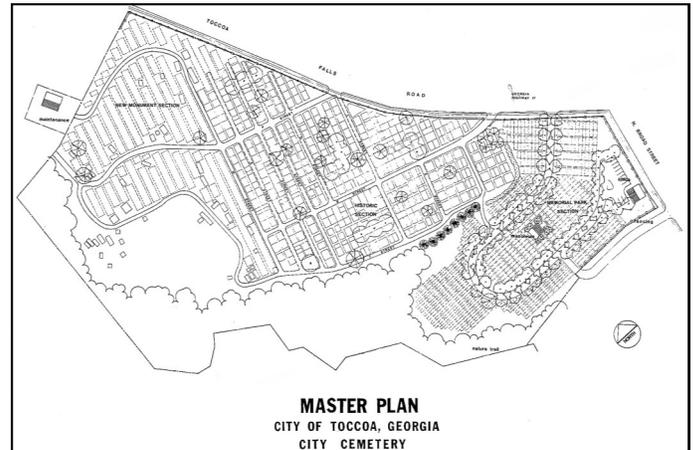


Workforce Development

- ◆ Goals and Future Planning Workshops in **Hall County** and **Stephens County** for youth in the Workforce Development Youth Program
- ◆ Workforce Development Youth Department participated in the **Hall County** Family Connection Teen Maze and met with 300 youth.
- ◆ Participated in a Career Fair with Head Start in **Towns County**
- ◆ Youth Department staff worked with High School students in **Union County** on job interviewing skills
- ◆ Youth Department staff attended Family Connections meeting in **White County**

Information Services

- ◆ The **City of Toccoa** has contracted with GMRC to conduct an extensive mapping project for the City maintained 26 acre historic cemetery. All previously kept paper records will be converted into a fully searchable digital database. Photos will be taken for each existing headstone and all information will be recorded out in the field from the headstone. Completed map and data will provide the City with state-of-the-art information regarding the burials within the cemetery. Project will begin in July.



- ◆ Recently completed were the updated Zoning Map and new Voting Ward Map for the **Town of Clermont**.
- ◆ Field work is progressing on the Mt. Hope Cemetery project for the **City of Dahlonega**.
- ◆ Faith Bryan presented the Digital Economy Plan to the **Dahlonega-Lumpkin County** Chamber of Commerce board members.
- ◆ On May 27th, the top three vendors presented their submitted proposals for the 2015 GMRC Aerial Photography/LiDAR Project. The vendors also answered questions that the participants and review committee had.
- ◆ The **City of Lavonia** has requested assistance to update their Official Zoning Map.
- ◆ The **City of Carnesville** has requested assistance with annexations and US Census Bureau Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS) Maps.

Finance

- ◆ The Financial audit is tentative for the week of August 18th
- ◆ Tyler Technologies was awarded the bid for the accounting software and the implementation dates are expected to be in September or October. The software package includes, Human Resources, Finance, and Microsoft training to name a few.
- ◆ FY 2015 GMRC Budget was approved
- ◆ 15 Active Revolving Loans are in good standing at this time

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
June 19	10am-2pm	MTU Job Assistance	Hart County Adult Learning Center
June 26	5:30pm 6:00pm	GMRC Executive Committee Meeting GMRC Council Meeting	The Waterfall Club—Lake Burton, Rabun County The Waterfall Club—Lake Rabun, Rabun County
June 27	10am-2pm	MTU Job Assistance	Rabun County Library
July 31	3:30pm 6:00pm	WD Board Meeting GMRC Council Meeting	Union County—Byron Herbert Reece Pavilion Union County—Byron Herbert Reece Pavilion

For more information on these events, contact Marissa Smith at 770-538-2626 or msmith@gmrc.ga.gov

Around the Region

The Beauty of Our Region Continues!



**City of Blairsville
Courthouse**



**City of Hartwell
City Hall**



**Stephens County
Courthouse**

