

# GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION *COUNCIL MEETING*

August 29, 2024

## MINUTES

The GMRC Council held its regular monthly meeting on Thursday, August 29, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Hall County Government Center located at 2875 Browns Bridge Rd. Gainesville, GA 30504. The meeting was sponsored by Hall County.

### CALL TO ORDER

GMRC Chairman Ken Schubring called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

### WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

On behalf of the Hall County Board of Commissioners, Hall County Administrator Zach Propes thanked the GMRC for all it does for the region and welcomed all attendees to Hall County. Mr. Propes introduced Hall County Commissioner Billy Powell and recognized the Mayor of Gainesville, Sam Couvillon. Mr. Propes thanked all in attendance for their service to local governments and for working together for the betterment of the region.

### INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

Vice-Chairman Courtney Umbehant recognized special guests Mike Fisher, WGI; Kathy Papa, Georgia Department of Community Affairs; Margaret Ryder, UGA Small Business Development Center; Hope Iglehart, Office of U.S. Senator Jon Ossoff; and Lee Hawkins, Georgia State Representative.

### INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/DINNER

GMRC Council Chaplain Deborah Mack gave the devotion, invocation, and followed with the Pledge of Allegiance. Dinner was catered by Farm to Fork.

### CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES AND ATTENDANCE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

GMRC Secretary Bruce Palmer asked for any comments or a motion regarding the minutes and attendance report for the July 29, 2024 Council meeting. Doug Wayne made a motion to approve the minutes as written and Deborah Mack seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## REPORT

### Chairman's Report

Chairman Ken Schubring announced that The Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC) is hosting their annual professional development conference November 6-8<sup>th</sup> in St. Simons. The chairman along with Vice-Chairman Umbehant, Secretary Bruce Palmer, and members of the GMRC staff will be attending. If you are interested in attending, please contact GMRC Executive Director Heather Feldman.

### Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Feldman announced that GMRC has once again received three National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Impact Awards for the following projects:

- One-Stop Youth GED Program
- Brighter Futures Welding Program
- Georgia Mountain Food Bank Expansion Project

Mrs. Feldman congratulated the WorkSource and Economic Development staff who worked on these projects and submitted them for consideration for the NADO Impact Award. Mrs. Feldman also reported that in the last 10 years, GMRC has received 33 NADO Awards.

Executive Director Feldman congratulated the City of Cornelia who recently received notice of approval of a \$1 million grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission for the construction of an amphitheater. Mrs. Feldman thanked the City of Cornelia for allowing GMRC to write the grant application and recognized Senior Project Manager Laurin Yoder for working on the project.

The Georgia Academy for Economic Development will have an Advanced Topic of Artificial Intelligence 101 for Local Officials on October 29<sup>th</sup> beginning at 8:00 a.m. and ending at 4:30 p.m. at Lanier Technical College – Ramsey Conference Center.

The quarterly Region 2 meeting of the city and county managers was held on August 15<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Feldman thanked the City of Gainesville for serving as the host and ACCG, GMA, DCA, and GCCMA for attending and providing important program updates.

Executive Director Feldman reported that Rushton began work on the annual financial audit and only had to spend one day in the office doing field work. Mrs. Feldman thanked the Finance Team for their work and helping the auditors in collecting samples and documents.

### Information Services Update

GMRC Information Services Director Faith Bryan provided the Council with a department update.

A copy of the presentation can be found at <https://www.gmrc.ga.gov/gmrccouncil>.

#### PROGRAM

Natalie Crawford, Executive Director at Georgia First presented a program on the Economic Impacts of Medicaid Expansion in Georgia.

A copy of the presentation can be found at <https://www.gmrc.ga.gov/gmrccouncil>.

#### OLD BUSINESS

None

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### Naloxone Administration Policy

GMRC Executive Director Heather Feldman reported that SB 395, also known as Wesley's Law was passed by the Georgia General Assembly and signed into law on April 23, 2024 and became effective on July 1, 2024. The law states that all qualified government buildings and government entities maintain a supply of at least three-unit doses of opioid antagonists and ensure that such supply is available and accessible during regular business hours and outside of business hours for all government entity events.

It also requires entities to have training in the administration of Naloxone (Narcan) for all employees.

The law provides immunity from civil liability or professional discipline to all employees, officers, agents, and contractors of government entities, and all other individuals who receive training for any good faith act or omission to act related to the emergency administration of an opioid antagonist, although good faith will not include willful misconduct, gross negligence, or recklessness.

To provide an official mechanism and procedure for this new law, a policy was created and sent out to all Council members prior to the meeting for review. All GMRC employees have been trained and provided a copy of the policy to acknowledge their understanding.

Chairman Schubring asked for a motion to approve the Naloxone Administration Policy. Courtney Umbehant made the motion and Nan Bowen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## 401(k) Plan Amendments

Mrs. Feldman explained that Pension Financial Services (PFS) is the Third-Party Administrator for the GMRC's 401(k) plan. PFS notified GMRC of two new regulatory amendments that need to be approved for the plan.

The first of the two amendments is the CARES Act of 2020 which has stipulations for:

- Distributions and waiver of the premature distribution penalty tax
- Increased plan loan limits and extension of loan payment terms
- Delayed defined benefit plan funding obligations

The second of the two amendments is the Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act (SECURE Act) which contains numerous provisions to incentivize retirement planning, diversify savings options, and increase access to tax-advantaged savings programs. The SECURE 2.0 Act of 2022 includes required minimum distributions (RMDs), Roth catch-up contributions, and hardship self-certification. While many of the opportunities are optional, the required legislative amendments are due by 12/31/2025.

To comply, GMRC needs to amend the plan to implement the SECURE Act and related law changes. The material modification regarding the GMRC's 401(k) plan is specific to Required Minimum Distributions. The law requires that plans distribute funds at least as specified in the required minimum distribution (RMD) rules. The SECURE Act raises the RMD age from 70.5 to 72.

The amendments were provided to the Council prior to the meeting for review. Chairman Schubring asked for a motion to approve the amendments for both the CARES Act and the SECURE Act for the GMRC's 401(k) plan, to adopt the resolutions implementing these amendments, and to authorize Executive Director Feldman to execute all documents related to these amendments and resolutions. Denise McKay made the motion and Doug Wayne seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## Activation of the Nominating Committee

The GMRC Nominating Committee will need to be activated to select a GMRC Secretary to fill the vacancy beginning on January 1, 2025 through June 2025. In accordance with GMRC Bylaws, the Nominating Committee is appointed and approved by the Council. Chairman Schubring recommended the following members to serve on the Nominating Committee:

- Lamar Paris, Chair
- Andrea Gibby, Vice-Chair
- Doug Wayne
- Chris Ausburn
- Ray McAllister

To allow the Council to make any further nominations Chairman Ken Schubring asked for a motion to open the floor. Mitch Griggs made the motion to open the floor and Doug Wayne seconded. After hearing no additional appointee nominations, Mitch Griggs motioned to close the floor and approve the Nominating Committee members as presented. Courtney Umbehant seconded. The motions passed unanimously.

### Annual Meeting

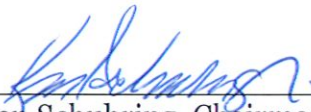
Annual Meeting Committee Chairwoman Deborah Mack announced that the GMRC Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner is scheduled for Friday, December 6, 2024 at The Boathouse at Lake Lanier Olympic Park beginning with a reception at 4:30 p.m. followed by dinner, awards, and door prizes beginning at 6:00 p.m. Sponsorship information was sent out to the Council prior to the meeting, and Ms. Mack encouraged the Council to get as many sponsors as possible, as the sponsorships contribute to the success of the event. She also reminded the Council that the meeting is a ticketed event for all attendees. Tickets are available for purchase through the GMRC website for \$60 per individual or a table of eight can be purchased for \$550.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

The September meeting will be in White County.

### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

  
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Ken Schubring, Chairman

  
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Bruce Palmer, Secretary

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GMRC COUNCIL  
ATTENDANCE SHEET  
2024-2025

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COUNTY	COUNCIL MEMBER	July 24	Aug 24	Sept 24	Oct 24	Nov 24	Dec 25	Jan 25	Feb 25	March 25	April 25	May 25	June 25
RABUN	Kent Woerner	A	(R)										
	Stacy Fountain	A	P										
	Douglas Wayne	P	P										
STEPHENS	Tara Simmons	P	A										
	Ron Matheson	P	P										
	James Addison	P	P										
TOWNS	Cliff Bradshaw	A	(P)										
	Andrea Gibby	(R)	(R)										
	Denise McKay	P	P										
UNION	Lamar Paris	P	P										
	Jim Conley	P	(P)										
	Mitch Griggs	P	P										
WHITE	Craig Bryant	N-P	P										
	Nan Bowen	P	P										
	Lauren Williams	N-P	P										
GOV APPT.	Kim Waters	(P)	P										
	Angela Whidby	P	P										
	VACANT	V	V										
LT. GOV APPT.	David Lee	P	P										
SPEAKER APPT.	VACANT	V	V										

P = PRESENT      A = ABSENT

(R) = REPRESENTED

(P) PROXY VOTE

V = VACANCY

E = EXCUSED

N = NEW MEMBER

X = NO MEETING

\* Chairman

\*\* Vice Chairman

\*\*\* Secretary