

MINUTES

Middle Georgia Regional Commission
Council Meeting
Thursday, March 13, 2014, 6:00 p.m.
175 Emery Highway, Suite C, Macon, GA

MEMBERS PRESENT:

BALDWIN COUNTY

Richard Mullins
Denese Shinholster
Matt Poyner

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Paul Chapman
Becky Smith
Charlie Westberry

HOUSTON COUNTY

Tommy Stalnaker
John Harley
George Slappey
Grady Clemonts

JONES COUNTY

Preston Hawkins
Stephen Tingen
Jimmy Roberts
Francis Adams
Frank Duke

MACON-BIBB COUNTY

Robert Reichert
Lonnie Miley

MONROE COUNTY

Mike Bilderback
Dick Bazemore
Edd Norris

PEACH COUNTY

Melvin Walker
James Richardson

PULASKI COUNTY

Henry Cravey
Lee Slade

PUTNAM COUNTY

John Reid

TWIGGS COUNTY

Ken Fowler
Shannon Hart
Johnny Branan
Jimmy Smith

WILKINSON COUNTY

Dennis Holder
C.L. Brooks

MIDDLE GEORGIA

Hill Bentley
Charles Sims

GUESTS PRESENT

Donovan Head – Office of Congressman Austin Scott
Austin Mechan – Office on Congressman Paul Broun
Cloyce Pittman – Former Council Member and Former Mayor of Allentown
Jonathan Pitts – Jones County Commissioner, District 2
Randy Randall – Chairman, Robins Regional Chamber of Commerce
Michelle Sands – Office of Congressman Sanford Bishop

STAFF PRESENT

Denise Brookins – Government Services Specialist
Daniel Cummings – Government Services Specialist
Sheknita Davis – Workforce Director
Kristi Harpst – Regional Planner
Nick Kouloungis – Technology Services Director
Brent Lanford – Deputy Director
Chan Layson – Director of Business Development
Laura Mathis – Deputy Director
Ralph Nix – Executive Director
Carol Payton – Secretary
Robert Smith – Government Services Specialist
Geri Ward – AAA Director

CALL TO ORDER

Council Chairman Charlie Westberry called the March 2014 meeting to order at 6:25 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Executive Secretary Carol Payton called the roll and indicated that a quorum was present with 23 voting and 10 non-voting members present.

OPENING CEREMONIES

a. Invocation

Monroe County Council member Edd Norris gave the invocation.

b. Welcome

Chairman Westberry welcomed everyone to the meeting.

c. Introduction of New Members and Guests

The following guests were recognized:

Donovan Head
Office of Congressman Austin Scott

Austin Mechan
Office on Congressman Paul Broun

Jonathan Pitts
Jones County Commissioner, District 2

Randy Randall
Chairman, Robins Regional Chamber of Commerce

Michelle Sands
Office of Congressman Sanford Bishop

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Chairman Westberry presented a plaque to Cloyce Pittman, former Council member and former Mayor of Allentown, for ten years of dedication and service to the Middle Georgia Regional Commission Council.

PRESENTATION BY HEATHER BOWMAN CUTWAY, BOARD MEMBER, OCMULGEE NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE INITIATIVE

Heather Cutway gave a presentation on the initiative to bring Georgia's first and only National Park and Preserve to Middle Georgia. She provided a brief history of the region surrounding the Ocmulgee National Monument as well as the Ocmulgee River corridor south from Macon.

She discussed the following key points of this initiative: economic impact; hunting preserve; human history (archeological significance); wildlife (ecological significance); recreation; recent successes.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources describes the corridor as a high priority landscape feature in the State's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy and a priority area for land conservation efforts. Today, the Monument is the most visited attraction in Middle Georgia and adds \$5.4 million to the local economy. The river corridor provides important outdoor recreation opportunities for hunters, anglers, hikers, bird watchers, and paddlers on the growing Ocmulgee Water Trail. In view of the area's uniqueness, the National Parks Conservation Association and local conservationists propose linking the Monument with other existing public lands to establish the first National Park and Preserve east of the Mississippi. Such a re-designation would

ultimately protect many nationally significant resources and elevate Macon's status as a national and international tourist destination.

Copies of a support letter were made available for members to fill out and leave for Ms. Cutway, or she invited everyone to contact their community to provide a resolution of support for this Initiative.

Chairman Westberry noted that included with everyone's Council packet was a copy of the following MGRC Resolution No. RC-14-06 in support of this Initiative:

* * * * *

WHEREAS, the Ocmulgee Old Fields Traditional Cultural Property of the Muscogee Creek Nation surrounding the current Ocmulgee National Monument is among the nation's richest archaeological areas; and

WHEREAS, the Ocmulgee River corridor south from Macon was a crossroads of key events in our nation's early history including historic sites associated with the American Frontier period, War of 1812, and the Creek War; and

WHEREAS, the Ocmulgee National Monument is both a regional and national treasure and is one of Middle Georgia's most visited destinations for historians, educators and tourists; and

WHEREAS, the Ocmulgee River corridor provides important outdoor recreation opportunities for hunters, anglers, hikers, bird watchers and paddlers on the growing Ocmulgee Water Trail; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources describes the corridor as a high priority landscape feature in the State's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy and a priority area for land conservation efforts; and

WHEREAS, linking the Ocmulgee National Monument with other existing public lands to establish the first designated "National Park & Preserve" east of the Mississippi would be a valuable addition to the entire National Park System, ultimately protect many nationally significant resources and elevate Middle Georgia's status as a national and international tourist destination; and

WHEREAS, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission Council supports the work of the Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve Initiative organization, Middle Georgia citizens, other partner organizations and encourages their continued efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission Council understands and values the importance of working regionally to maximize the protection, educational and economic benefits of the Ocmulgee National Monument and Ocmulgee River corridor.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Middle Georgia Regional Commission Council formally supports the expansion of the Ocmulgee National Monument boundary and endorses the National Park & Preserve concept to connect and consolidate existing federal and state public lands between Macon and Hawkinsville.

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Lee Slade made a motion that preceding resolution be approved. The motion was seconded by Henry Cravey and unanimously approved.

STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS

a. Approval of Minutes of February 20, 2014 Council Meeting

There were no corrections to the minutes of the February 20, 2014 Council meeting, and they were unanimously approved on a motion by Henry Cravey and seconded by Matt Poyner.

b. Old Business

None to report.

c. New Business

i. Local Assistance Requests

MGRC staff member Denise Brookins presented the following local assistance requests that have been received since the February meeting:

* * * * *

Community: City of Allentown
Project Title: Annexation
Project Description: Annexation of areas to the south of the City.

Community: Baldwin County
Project Title: Bureau of Justice Assistance Grant Application
Project Description: Prepare JAG application for the Adult Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program.

Community: Crawford County
Project Title: Regionally Important Resources (RIR)
Project Description: Update RIR Plan to include the Save the Federal Road initiative.

Community: City of Forsyth
Project Title: Fire Ordinance Update

Project Description: Update of the City's Fire Ordinance.

Community: City of Gray

Project Title: Income Survey

Project Description: Conduct an income survey for a USDA Rural Development Loan application for improvements to the wastewater treatment Plant.

Community: City of Jeffersonville

Project Title: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application

Project Description: Prepare CDBG application for improvements to water and wastewater system.

Community: Jones County

Project Title: Request for Proposals (RFP)

Project Description: Assist with RFP in regards to the tan yard.

Community: Jones County

Project Title: PlanFirst Program

Project Description: Prepare application for PlanFirst Program through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

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Shannon Hart made a motion that the local assistance requests be approved. The motion was seconded by Robert Reichert and unanimously approved.

ii. Amendments to Technology, Internet, and Electronic Communication Policy

MGRC staff member Nick Kouloungis reported on the amendments to the Technology, Internet, and Electronic Communication Policy.

Changes were highlighted in red and are listed as follows:

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Page 1, Paragraph 3 (last sentence was amended): "MGRC may, without notice, monitor **all computer usage, including** Internet usage, email and **electronic** files, to ensure that computers are not being used for impermissible **or unauthorized** purposes."

Page 2 (new section added):

5. Personal Computers and Devices.

- a. **Use of personal computers or other devices to directly access MGRC domain/network resources is strictly prohibited. No employee shall connect a personal computer or other unauthorized device to the MGRC network and use MGRC network access credentials to**

log in on that device. Doing so may introduce critical security vulnerabilities to the MGRC systems and network that may result in system instability, data loss, or unauthorized access to sensitive information.

- b. Similarly, transfer of MGRC network resources (files, documents, records, etc.) to personal computing devices is prohibited. Instead, the MGRC has laptops and tablet devices available to meet the remote computing needs of its employees. In addition, Remote Desktop or VPN protocols are available to provide secure access to MGRC workstations from outside of the office.
- c. Certain cloud-based storage tools (i.e. Dropbox, Box, etc.) may be used to facilitate remote workflows; however, use of such tools must be authorized by the Technology Services Department and only used for transitory working files. Under no circumstances should cloud-based tools be utilized as a long-term storage solution for MGRC network resources. All MGRC files and documents located in cloud-based storage, whether transitory or otherwise, are the property of the MGRC and, upon separation, shall be returned to the MGRC network for storage.

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There were no comments concerning the amendments to the Technology, Internet, and Electronic Communication Policy, and they were unanimously approved on a motion by Dennis Holder and seconded by Tommy Stalnakar.

- iii. Resolution Transmitting the Annual Regional Work Program Update to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs

Kristi Harpst said around this time of year, the MGRC prepares an annual update to the Regional Work Program which is a requirement of the FY 2014 contract with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Part of the update includes evaluation of any changes or developments in the region to determine whether the plan is being effectively implemented and to identify if any updates/amendments are needed. The update must be submitted to DCA by March 31 for its review. The following Resolution No. RC-14-07 transmits the draft update to DCA as well as other required documents:

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WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs requires every Regional Commission in the State to conduct an annual update of its Regional Work Program; and

WHEREAS, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission has prepared this Annual Update, as well as other documents, required under the FY 2014 DCA Planning Services Contract.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED on the 13th day of March 2014, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission Council, meeting in regular session, hereby transmits the draft Annual Regional Work Program Update to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review and approval.

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The resolution was unanimously approved on a motion by John Harley and seconded by Richard Mullins. Ms. Harpst said she will have copies of the update available after the meeting if anyone would like to see it, or she can email a copy if so desired. It will also be available on the MGRC's website (www.middlegeorgiarc.org).

GOOD OF THE ORDER

a. Report from the Aging Services Committee

Deputy Director Brent Lanford reported that the newly created Aging Services Committee met prior to the Council meeting. Upon recommendation by the Council, the Committee was created given the nature and importance of the growing demographic of the elderly and disabled population that are served by the AAA.

The Committee consists of one member from each County that was appointed by the Council Chair and is charged with being actively involved with advocating leadership and guidance to the Council. The MGRC staff that will be working with the Committee are Brent Lanford, Julie Hall, and Nicole Gaither. There was not a quorum of the members in attendance, but this first meeting was for organizational purposes. The staff did accept nominations for officers, and there were two. John Harley accepted the nomination as Chair and Henry Cravey as Vice Chair. At the next meeting of the Committee where there is a quorum, these nominations should become official.

The earlier meeting was intended for the Committee to receive a brief overview of some of the services that the AAA provides. A standard meeting date and time will be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr. Lanford stated that he anticipates great things working with the Committee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Charlie Westberry announced that the Peaches to Beaches event is this weekend. This is an event that follows the Golden Isles Parkway from I-75 in Perry to Brunswick.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the March meeting of the Middle Georgia Regional Commission Council was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.