

**MINUTES**

Middle Georgia Regional Commission  
Council Meeting  
Thursday, February 12, 2015, 6:00 p.m.  
175 Emery Highway, Suite C, Macon, Georgia

MEMBERS PRESENT:

BALDWIN COUNTY

John H. Westmoreland  
Richard Mullins, Jr.  
Bill Millians  
Denese Shinholster

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Paul Chapman  
Becky Smith  
Charlie Westberry  
Charles Cook  
Robert Ray

HOUSTON COUNTY

John Harley  
George Slappey  
Clifford Holmes

JONES COUNTY

Preston Hawkins  
Jimmy Roberts  
Francis Adams  
Frank Duke

MACON-BIBB COUNTY

Matt Rogers

MONROE COUNTY

Dick Bazemore  
Melvin Lawrence  
Edd Norris

PEACH COUNTY

Alfredia Walker  
James Khoury

PULASKI COUNTY

Butch Hall  
Lee Slade  
Nicky Cabero

PUTNAM COUNTY

Billy Webster  
Terry Schwindler

TWIGGS COUNTY

Shannon Hart  
Johnny Branan  
Joyce Mitchum

WILKINSON COUNTY

Charles Brack  
Marty Dominy

MIDDLE GEORGIA

Charles Sims

GUESTS PRESENT:

Brian Owens - Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Corrections

STAFF PRESENT:

Ralph Nix – Executive Director  
Laura Mathis – Deputy Director  
Brent Landford – Deputy Director  
Matt Garvin - Finance Director  
Nick Kouloungis - Technology Services Director  
Julie Hall - AAA Interim Director  
Dan Gary - Office Manager  
Annie Barnes - Government Services Specialist  
Greg Boike – Government Services Specialist  
Renee Bumpus – Business Service/Job Placement Specialist  
Jonathon Connell – Government Services Specialist  
Cam Yearty - Government Services Specialist  
Kevin Brown – Attorney  
Kim Stanton – Executive Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Council Chairman Charlie Westberry called the February 12, 2015 meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Executive Secretary Kim Stanton called the roll and indicated that a quorum was present with 20 voting and 12 non-voting members present.

OPENING CEREMONIES

a. Invocation

Crawford County member Paul Chapman gave the invocation.

b. Welcome

Chairman Westberry welcomed everyone to the February meeting.

c. Introduction of New Members and Guests

Chairman Westberry introduced two new council members from Wilkinson County to the meeting, Marty Dominy and Charles Brack.

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST SPEAKER

Monroe County member Dr. Richard Bazemore introduced Brian Owens, who most recently served as the Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Corrections. On February 2, 2015 Governor Nathan Deal announced Commissioner Owens was appointed to the State Pardons and Parole Board. Commissioner Owens has served as the commissioner of the Georgia Department of Corrections since 2009. Prior to his appointment, Owens served as the department's assistant commissioner, executive assistant and the director of the department's office of Planning and Analysis. He began his career as a parole officer in 1993 and while in that capacity, he was promoted to the post of assistant chief parole officer and chief parole officer. Owens earned his bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Georgia. He and his wife have two children and reside in Forsyth.

GUEST SPEAKER

Commissioner Owens thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak. He discussed the leadership provided by Governor Deal and the General Assembly on criminal justice reform. He noted that in the last five years the number of empty beds has increased and the number of inmates coming into the Georgia Department of Corrections has decreased. He also noted that in the United States today, one in 31 adults is under some kind of criminal supervision. The rate in Georgia is one in 13; the highest in the nation, however, the violent crime rate in Georgia is the lowest it's been since the feds kept statistics in 1968. Of interest to local governments, he discussed the availability of mobile inmate work crews to assist cities and counties in Georgia with various construction projects. Commissioner Owens also discussed the programs and initiatives for inmates to learn a GED or trade that is having an impact on Georgia's recidivism rate.

REPORT FROM BUDGET, AUDIT AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Mr. Hall reported that the Budget, Audit and Personnel Committee met on February 4, 2015 to consider several items for recommendation to the full Council. He thanked committee members Dick Bazemore, Bert Bivins, Paul Chapman, and Charlie Westberry for their hard work.

a. Budget Amendment #2 for the FY 2015 Budget

The Committee reviewed and considered the proposed second amendment to the FY 2015 budget. A copy of the proposed amendment was distributed prior to the meeting. The total budget amendment is an increase of \$129,501 over the approved budget. On the revenue side, additional local government contracts have been executed since the last budget amendment. Regarding state revenues, funds were reclassified from state to federal. For federal revenues, several aging services contracts have been finalized and adjustments are required. In addition, a new contract with Georgia Technology Authority has been secured. On Pass-through funds, the Regional Commission has received a funding allocation for aging services and a new contract with Georgia Technology Authority that will be passed through as well.

Regarding expenditures, adjustments are proposed to reclassify expenses related to the employee wellness program and computer software costs. In addition, the costs associated with Money Follows the Person have increased due to the increased number of transitions that staff are completing, however there is a corresponding increase in program revenues. Lastly, the capital outlay line item is proposed to increase to fund the necessary network hardware associated with the expansion of the Regional Commission offices which are underway.

Because this is a recommendation from the Committee, no second is required for a vote. The Council voted unanimously to approve budget amendment #2.

b. Amendment to the FY 2015 Work Program

Mr. Hall presented the Work Program Amendment #2 be amended to reflect the new project with the Georgia Technology Authority to establish operations and the pilot program with MakerSpaces in Georgia. No other changes were necessary to the Work Program. The Council voted unanimously to approve amendment #2 to the Work Program.

c. Audit Services for FY 2015-2017

Mr. Hall reported that the Budget, Audit and Personnel Committee authorized staff to solicit proposals for audit services in November. Seven proposals were received and evaluated by a staff committee based on qualifications. The top three most qualified firms were then evaluated based on cost proposals which ranged from \$49,500 to \$97,500 for the three-year period. The current audit firm, Clifton, Lipford, Hardison and Parker had the second highest cost proposal.

After careful consideration, the Budget, Audit and Personnel Committee recommends selection of McNair, McLemore and Middlebrooks as the audit firm for the completion of the FY 2015, 2016 and 2017 audits of the Middle Georgia Regional Commission.

The Council voted unanimously to approve the selection of McNair, McLemore and Middlebrooks as the audit firm for the completion of the FY 2015, 2016 and 2017 audits of the Middle Georgia Regional Commission.

d. Resolution to Change Authorized Persons on Georgia Fund 1 Account.

Mr. Hall reported that like many local governments, the Regional Commission has funds deposited with Georgia Fund 1. The current resolution includes staff who are no longer employed, therefore the authorized persons need to be updated to reflect those changes. The Committee recommends the changes to the Resolution of Authorized Persons on Georgia Fund 1 Account, the Council voted unanimously to approve.

**STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS**

a. Approval of Minutes of January 8, 2015 Council Meeting

There were no corrections to the minutes of the January 8, 2015 Council meeting and they were unanimously approved on a motion by Paul Chapman and seconded by Billy Webster.

b. Old Business

None to report.

c. New Business

1. Report on Council Appointees for 2015

Chairman Westberry reported that the following appointments to the Middle Georgia RC Council had been received since the January meeting:

**WILKINSON COUNTY**

Mark Dupree – County Member  
Charles Brack – Municipal Member  
Marty Dominy – Non-Public Member  
C. L. Brooks –Associate Member  
Jonathan Jackson – Associate Member

**TWIGGS COUNTY**

Ken Fowler - County Member  
Shannon Hart - Municipal Member

Johnny Branan - Non-Public Member  
Joyce Mitchem - Associate Member  
Jimmy Smith - Associate Member

The Council Member Appointments were unanimously approved on a motion by Paul Chapman and seconded by John Harley.

2. Local Assistance Requests

MGRC staff member Cam Yearty presented the following local assistance requests that have been received since the January meeting:

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**Community:** Baldwin County  
Project Title: Assistance to Department of Justice Grant  
Project Description: Preparation of a Grant for Office on Domestic Violence.

**Community:** City of Eatonton  
Project Title: Assistance to (SAFER) Grant  
Project Description: Preparation of an application for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant.

**Community:** Town of Ivey  
Project Title: City Ordinances  
Project Description: Technical assistance with City Ordinances.

**Community:** Town of Ivey  
Project Title: Infrastructure Map  
Project Description: Assistance in mapping existing infrastructure and development of web-based map applications.

**Community:** Macon-Bibb County  
Project Title: Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan  
Project Description: Updating the Pre-disaster Mitigation Plan

**Community:** Putnam County  
Project Title: One Georgia Grant Application  
Project Description: Assistance in applying for One Georgia Grant for economic development purposes

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The local assistance requests were unanimously approved on a motion by Joyce Mitchum and seconded by John Harley.

3. Preparation and Submittal of FTA Section 5310 Application Update

Matt Garvin reported that the Middle Georgia Regional Commission currently manages the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) Coordinated Transportation Services for Baldwin, Macon-Bibb, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Twiggs and Wilkinson counties. To assist with these transportation services, the Regional Commission each year applies for the Section 5310 Grant through the Department of Transportation though it's administered by the Federal Transit Administration. The monies from this grant are used solely for transportation services for the elderly and disabled clients within the Regional Commission service area. Contract renewal has already begun with Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS).

Following discussion, Ms. Mitchum made a motion, seconded by John Harley to approve the FTA Section 5310 Application Update. The motion was unanimously approved.

4. Authorization of Chairman to execute agreement between Middle Georgia Regional Commission and Georgia Small Business Lender

Laura Mathis asked for consideration on the Authorization of Chairman to execute agreement between Middle Georgia Regional Commission and Georgia Small Business Lender. The Regional Commission provides staff and financial support to Georgia Small Business Lender, which makes small business loans to businesses across the State of Georgia. This agreement outlines the duties and responsibilities of both organizations.

Richard Mullins made a motion to approve the agreement and authorize its execution by the Chairman. The motion was seconded by Preston Hawkins and unanimously approved.

5. Area Agency on Aging Resolution Approving Submission of FY 2015 Area Plan.

Julie Hall gave an update on the FY 2015 Area Agency on Aging Plan which must be submitted to the Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services. This is an annual update that contains the objectives and goals for each of the aging programs.

Frank Duke made a motion that the submission of the FY 2015 Area Plan be approved. The motion was seconded by Paul Chapman and unanimously approved.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

a. Quarterly Financial Report

Chairman Westberry stated that the quarterly financial report was included in the Council meeting package. He stated that Matt Garvin was available to answer any questions from the Council about the report. There were no questions.

OTHER BUSINESS

None to report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. The Association of County Commissioners of Georgia will have the 6<sup>th</sup> District Day at the Capital on February 25, 2015.
- b. Chairman Westberry asked about Hill Bentley's health; a council member responded that he is recovering from surgery.
- c. Ms. Mathis gave an update on Council member Mark Dupree, Chairman of Wilkinson County. He suffered a stroke, he is still recovering and hopefully will be back in office later this month.
- d. Ms. Mathis gave an update on the Regional Leadership Champions Program that kicked off in January. There were 41 participants from across the region that engaged in discussion about the region and critical leadership skills. The program is a partnership between the Regional Commission and the Fanning Institute. The February session was hosted in Milledgeville and focused on the discussion of assets in the region. In March the program will be at Fort Valley State University. The program is trying to secure locations for the remaining sessions. The commissioning ceremony will be the last session in August, and will be held at the Museum of Aviation.
- e. Chairman Westberry asked Brent Lanford to give a brief report on the Makerspace program. The Makerspace in Macon is called SparkMacon. He stated that it is a community resource where citizens have access to diverse set of tools for i.e., woodworking, metal working, 3-D printers, computer labs, etc. The Middle Georgia Regional Commission was a conduit of state funds to help start up SparkMacon. The maker movement is getting attention from the community and support from a broad range of community level organizations. If you want to be a member, have access to the tools and a space location, there is a monthly fee. Brent Lanford is a board member, representing the Regional Commission.
- f. Ralph Nix gave an update on the expansion into the space next to the Regional Commission. Construction is underway and should be completed in June.
- g. Councilmember Edd Norris thanked everyone for their support in the death of his grandson in Monroe County.

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ADJOURN

There being no further business, the February council meeting was adjourned until March 12, 2015.