

MINUTES

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

MEMBERS PRESENT:

BALDWIN COUNTY

Richard Mullins, Jr.
Matt Poyner
Denese Shinholster

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Paul Chapman
Becky Smith
Charlie Westberry
Robert Ray

HOUSTON COUNTY

Tommy Stalnaker
John Harley
George Slappey

JONES COUNTY

Preston Hawkins
Stephen Tingen
Jimmy Roberts
Francis Adams
Frank Duke

MACON-BIBB COUNTY

Bert Bivins III

MONROE COUNTY

Dick Bazemore
Melvin Lawrence
Edd Norris

PEACH COUNTY

Melvin Walker
Barbara Williams
James Khoury

PULASKI COUNTY

Henry Cravey
Lee Slade
James Colson

PUTNAM COUNTY

Billy Webster
John Reid

TWIGGS COUNTY

Ken Fowler
Shannon Hart
Joyce Mitchum

WILKINSON COUNTY

Mark Dupree
Charles Brack
Marty Dominy

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GUESTS PRESENT:

Stewart Rodeheaver –Brigadier General US Army (Ret.), President of ViziTech USA

Carolyn Robbins – City of Warner Robins Council

Stacy Ladson – Economic Development Coordinator – Crawford County

STAFF PRESENT:

Ralph Nix – Executive Director

Laura Mathis – Deputy Director

Brent Landford – Deputy Director

Matt Garvin - Finance Director

Nick Kouloungis - Technology Services Director

Dan Gary - Office Manager

Daniel Cummings – Sr. Government Services Specialist

Crystal Gaillard - Government Services Specialist

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 March 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 17 voting and 16 non-voting members present.

OPENING CEREMONIES

a. Invocation

Crawford County council member Paul Chapman gave the invocation.

b. Welcome

Chairman Westberry welcomed everyone to the March meeting.

c. Introduction of New Members and Guests

Stacy Ladson was introduced as the new Economic Development Coordinator for Crawford County.

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST SPEAKER

Monroe County member Dr. Richard Bazemore introduced Stewart Rodeheaver, Brigadier General US Army (Ret.), President of ViziTech USA. Since finishing school in Forsyth, he was drafted, joined the Army as a Private and was later commissioned as an officer. He received his 2nd star before retiring. He served in the US Army for 38 years. His tours included Central America, Africa and multiple tours in the Middle East, including a three-year command tour of Task Force Lightning. While in Iraq, he commanded 50 percent of the city of Baghdad and all of Southern Iraq, including the famed Triangle of Death and the Syrian border. In addition to his military service, he worked with Georgia Power Company as a Regional Manager for Economic and Community Development. Mr. Rodeheaver is a proven combat, corporate community leader and entrepreneur. He is the owner of ViziTech USA, a break-away technology company focusing in 3-D, virtual, interactive and augmented reality-based training.

GUEST SPEAKER

Mr. Rodeheaver thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak. He noted he commanded in Iraq in 2004, 2005 and 2006. The soldiers were not trained to the level they should have been. He wrote a letter to the Joint Chiefs of Staff letting them know that soldiers needed to be trained better. They wrote back and asked him to train them better. After returning to the US, his commander asked him to find a way to train soldiers prior to combat. He mentioned over 90,000 troops a day were trained. In the process of trying to find a better way to train, his feedback was to train in 3-D; virtually and interactively.

He also noted, the millennium generation is learning from TV's, computers and cell phones. He is changing the way schools in Georgia teach their students. His system is in 300 schools in Georgia and in 27 schools in Macon-Bibb County. His system has been tested by NASA, Texas Instruments and National Science Foundation. He is being told his system is raising test scores by over 33 percent. His system can offer training faster and better. They are a growing company in Middle Georgia and are opening an office in Virginia and Texas.

Mr. Rodeheaver demonstrated the training tools and technology that his company ViziTech has developed. It has potential applications for workforce development training as well as community and economic development planning. Following the demonstration, Chair Westberry thanked Mr. Rodeheaver for the informative presentation.

STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS

a. Approval of Minutes of February 12, 2015 Council Meeting

There were no corrections to the minutes of the February 12, 2015 Council meeting and they were unanimously approved on a motion by Joyce Mitchum and seconded by Billy Webster.

b. Old Business

None to report.

c. New Business

1. Local Assistance Requests

MGRC staff member Annie Barnes presented the following local assistance requests that have been received since the February Council meeting:

Community: Baldwin County
Project Title: Assistance for (SAFER) Grant
Project Description: Preparation of an application for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant.

Community: City of Byron
Project Title: Assistance for Georgia Humanities Council Grant
Project Description: Preparation to create self-guided walking tour brochure for Historic Byron Cemetery.

Community: Crawford County
Project Title: Transfer Station Plan
Project Description: Assistance with policy to govern the operation of the transfer station.

Community: City of Irwinton
Project Title: City of Irwinton Water Department
Project Description: Assistance with updating the Wilkinson County Service Delivery Strategy.

Community: City of Roberta
Project Title: COPS Hiring Program
Project Description: Preparation of grant application for the COPS Hiring Program.

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The local assistance requests were unanimously approved on a motion by Lee Slade and seconded by Matt Poyner.

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

Daniel Cummings reported the Regional Commission receives funding from a variety of state and federal contracts; one of which is the Planning Services Contract from the Georgia

Department of Community Affairs. To receive funding, there is a requirement to submit an Annual Regional Work Program each year. At the end of this month, a draft work program will be submitted to the Department of Community Affairs. In order to transmit, a resolution from the Regional Commission is required. The Department of Community Affairs will review it, provide feedback, in order to adopt the Work Program, it will be requested at the June Regional Council meeting.

The Resolution Transmitting the Annual Regional Work Program was unanimously approved on a motion by Shannon Hart and seconded by Matt Poyner.

3. Council Member Appointments

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

MACON-BIBB COUNTY

Robert Reichert – County Member
Bert Bivins, III – Municipal Member
Chuck O’Neal – Non-Public Member
Lonnie Miley –Associate Member
Matt Rogers – Associate Member

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

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GOOD OF THE ORDER

Chairman Westberry asked the members present from Monroe County to look into submitting their outstanding Council Member appointments.

OTHER BUSINESS

None to report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Chairman Westberry asked about Hill Bentley's health; a Council Member responded that he's still recovering from surgery and is doing much better.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the March Council meeting was adjourned until April 9, 2015.