

**MINUTES**

Middle Georgia Regional Commission  
Council Meeting  
Thursday, September 10, 2015, 6:00 p.m.  
175 Emery Highway, Suite C, Macon, Georgia

MEMBERS PRESENT:

BALDWIN COUNTY

John Westmoreland  
Richard Mullins, Jr.  
Matt Poyner  
Denese Shinholster

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Charlie Westberry  
Paul Chapman  
Becky Smith

HOUSTON COUNTY

John Harley  
George Slappey

JONES COUNTY

Stephen Tingen  
Francis Adams  
Frank Duke

MACON-BIBB COUNTY

Robert Reichert  
Bert Bivins  
Lonnie Miley

MONROE COUNTY

Michael Bilderback  
Edd Norris  
Dick Bazemore

PEACH COUNTY

Melvin Walker  
James Khoury  
James Richardson

PULASKI COUNTY

Butch Hall  
Henry Cravey  
Lee Slade  
Nicky Cabero

PUTNAM COUNTY

Billy Webster  
John Reid  
Terry Schwindler

TWIGGS COUNTY

Shannon Hart  
Johnny Branan

WILKINSON COUNTY

Jonathan Jackson  
Mark Dupree  
Charles Brack  
Marty Dominy

MIDDLE GEORGIA

None present

GUESTS PRESENT:

John Ambrose – Monroe County Commissioner, District 3

STAFF PRESENT:

Ralph Nix – Executive Director  
Laura Mathis – Deputy Director  
Brent Lanford – Deputy Director  
Matt Garvin - Finance Officer  
Daniel Cummings – Sr. Government Services Specialist  
Sheknita Davis – Workforce Development Director  
Kevin Brown – Attorney  
Kim Stanton – Executive Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Council Chairman Charlie Westberry called the September 10, 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 23 voting and 10 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 September 10, 2015 Council meeting.

c. Introduction of Guests and Staff

Chairman Westberry acknowledged the following guest at the Regional Commission Council Meeting:

John Ambrose, Monroe County Commissioner, District 3

STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS

- a. Approval of Minutes of August 13, 2015 Council meeting

There were no corrections to the minutes of the August 13, 2015 Council meeting and they were unanimously approved on a motion by John Harley and second by George Slappey.

- b. New Business

- i. Appointment to the Georgia Small Business Lender, Inc.

Laura Mathis presented the following nomination for membership to the Georgia Small Business Lender, Inc.

Crawford County - Arnita Harris

Paul Chapman made a motion to approve the nomination to the Georgia Small Business Lender. The motion was seconded by Lee Slade and unanimously approved.

- ii. Local Assistance Requests

MGRC staff member Daniel Cummings presented the following local assistance requests that have been received since the August Council meeting:

**Community:**                    **City of Byron**  
Project Title:                    Grant Assistance  
Project Description: Assistance in applying for a Roadside Enhancement and Beautification Grant.

**Community:**                    **City of Centerville**  
Project Title:                    Comprehensive Plan  
Project Description: Assistance with its comprehensive plan and service delivery strategy update.

**Community:**                    **City of Irwinton**  
Project Title:                    Grant Assistance  
Project Description: Assistance with the preparation, submission, and administration of an Immediate Threat and Danger Grant.

**Community:**                    **City of Jeffersonville**  
Project Title:                    Grant Assistance  
Project Description: Preparation with completing an Assistance to Firefighters Grant.

**Community:**           **City of Jeffersonville**  
Project Title:           Grant Assistance  
Project Description:   Preparation with completing SAFER Grants.

**Community:**           **Peach County**  
Project Title:           Grant Assistance  
Project Description:   Assistance with preparing a grant application under the Transportation Infrastructure Improvement Funding program through State Road & Tollway Authority to extend Russell Parkway.

**Community:**           **City of Perry**  
Project Title:           Comprehensive Plan  
Project Description:   Assistance with its comprehensive plan and service delivery strategy update.

**Community:**           **Twiggs County**  
Project Title:           Grant Assistance  
Project Description:   Preparation with completing an Assistance to Firefighters Grant.

Mr. Cummings also reported on several projects which were previously approved and have been completed. These projects included:

- Four CDBG applications written by MGRC staff were funded: Cities of Ivey and Irwinton along with Crawford County received grants for water improvements. Jones County received an award for sewer improvements. As an aside, this is a competitive grant program and the needs demonstrated by this project were very significant.
- Monroe County received an award for CDBG redevelopment funds to rehabilitate the Hubbard Dormitory; an application that has been ongoing for several years.
- Technology Services launched three websites since the last meeting. Those being for Crawford County, the City of Gordon, and the statewide GIO office.
- In the Aging Services department, three staff members received their Options Counseling Certification.
- In our Workforce Development Department, a recent performance report found the program to be considered “exceeding standards” in six of nine categories and “meeting standards” in the other three; meaning that the program is exceeding standards overall.
- The Regional Commission was also awarded three NADO awards, NADO being the Commission’s national association. The three projects that were awarded were:
  - Historic Dannenburg Building Revitalization: The MGRC was particularly involved in acquiring the funding for the redevelopment effort and serving as the grant writer and administrator for \$1.5 million dollars in CDBG Disaster Recovery monies from the Mother’s Day Tornadoes. Today, the Dannenberg has been a catalyst for further redevelopment in Macon’s Downtown.

- The Digital Economy Project: In 2014 and 2015, RC staff undertook a Digital Economy Planning project that involved not only writing the plan for Middle Georgia, but coordinating the plans statewide. Also included in this effort was the successful Digital Economy Summit and the makerspace SparkMacon.
- Regional Website Service Program: Technology Services staff have heavily ramped up the volume and quality of websites. From January 2014 to date, staff have developed 24 websites with four more currently under development.

The local assistance requests were unanimously approved on a motion by Mark Dupree and seconded by Richard Bazemore.

iii. Resolution to Transmit Regional Assessment & Stakeholder Involvement Program

Daniel Cummings reported that the Regional Commission is responsible for the development and implementation of a 20-year regional plan, which the previous plan was finalized in 2011. The plan consists of three parts: the regional assessment, which is the assessment for current conditions in the region; the stakeholder involvement, which outlines a plan to involve the communities, and the regional agenda, which would set work programs, not only for the regional commissions, but for the regional as a whole.

**WHEREAS**, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs requires every Regional Commission in the state to periodically update their Regional Plan in accordance with the state's Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning and Schedule for Regional Planning; and

**WHEREAS**, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission has initiated update of the Middle Georgia Regional Plan in accordance with the rules and procedures provided by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for Regional Planning; and

**WHEREAS**, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission has prepared a Regional Assessment and Stakeholder Involvement Program as required components of the Regional Plan update; and

**WHEREAS**, a meeting was held at the Middle Georgia Regional Commission on September 3, 2015, to discuss the Regional Planning process, present findings of the Regional Assessment, and introduce the planned Stakeholder Involvement Program.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of September 2015, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission Council, meeting in regular session, hereby transmits the draft Regional Assessment and Stakeholder Involvement Program to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review, comment, and notification of interested parties.

The resolution accepting the Regional Assessment & Stakeholder Involvement Program was unanimously approved on a motion by Melvin Walker and seconded by Mark Dupree.

Mr. Cummings reported that the first stakeholder meeting last week had great attendance from every county in the region. The stakeholder meetings will continue for the next six months.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

a. Quarterly Financial Report

Matt Garvin reported on the Quarterly Report for the year ending June 30, 2015. The field work for the annual Regional Commission audit was completed and the draft report is anticipated in October. The report and a budget amendment will be presented to the Council at the November meeting.

b. Appointments of Nominating Committee

Chairman Westberry reported that the following appointments to the 2015 Nominating Committee for the slate of officers is as follows:

Chuck O'Neal  
Shannon Hart  
Preston Hawkins  
George Slappey  
James Richardson

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. MGRC Annual Meeting Thursday, October 8, 2015 at Lake Tobosofkee
- b. MGRC Budget, Audit and Personnel Committee: October 29, 2015 at 8:00 a.m.
- c. GARC Annual Conference: King and Prince Hotel, St. Simons Island, Georgia, November 4 – 6, 2015

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the September Council meeting was adjourned until October 8, 2015.