

## MINUTES

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

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

#### BALDWIN COUNTY

John Westmoreland  
William Millians  
Matt Poyner

#### CRAWFORD COUNTY

Charlie Westberry  
Paul Chapman  
Becky Smith

#### HOUSTON COUNTY

Tommy Stalnaker  
John Harley  
George Slappey

#### JONES COUNTY

Francis Adams

#### MACON-BIBB COUNTY

Robert Reichert  
Chuck O'Neal

#### MONROE COUNTY

Michael Bilderback  
Edd Norris  
Dick Bazemore

#### PEACH COUNTY

Melvin Walker  
James Khoury  
James Richardson

#### PULASKI COUNTY

Butch Hall  
Henry Cravey  
Lee Slade

#### PUTNAM COUNTY

Billy Webster  
John Reid  
Terry Schwindler

#### TWIGGS COUNTY

Shannon Hart  
Johnny Branan  
Joyce Mitchum

#### WILKINSON COUNTY

Marty Dominy

#### MIDDLE GEORGIA

Hill Bentley

### GUESTS PRESENT:

Buddy Harden, Georgia State Representative, District 148  
Tim Young, City Manager, City of Hawkinsville  
Chris Edwards – McNair, McLemore, Middlebrooks & Co.

STAFF PRESENT:

Ralph Nix – Executive Director  
Laura Mathis – Deputy Director  
Brent Lanford – Deputy Director  
Matt Garvin - Finance Officer  
Daniel Cummings – Sr. Government Services Specialist  
Greg Boike - Sr. Government Services Specialist  
Crystal Gaillard - Government Services Specialist  
Jonathan Connell - Government Services Specialist  
Sam Perren - Government Services Specialist  
Cam Yearty - Government Services Specialist  
Kimberly Lowe - Government Services Specialist  
Daniel Dobbins - Government Services Specialist  
Nick Kouloungis - Technology Services Director  
Mitchell Worthington – Finance Specialist  
Tyler Garrison – Special Projects Coordinator  
Andrea Jones - Career Development Facilitator  
Robert O’Neil – Technology Services Specialist  
Kevin Brown – Attorney  
Gwen Presley – Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Secretary Gwen Presley called the roll and indicated that a quorum was present with 22 voting and seven 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 November 12, 2015 Council meeting.

c. Introduction of Guests/New Staff

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

Buddy Harden, Georgia State Representative, District 148  
Tim Young, City Manager, City of Hawkinsville

Laura Mathis introduced new staff members, Andrea Jones, Career Development Facilitator, Tyler Garrison, Special Projects Coordinator, Kimberly Lowe, Government Services Specialist and Daniel Dobbins, Government Services Specialist, to the Regional Commission.

Robert O'Neil mentioned Regional Commission is testing a new service at tonight's meeting—streaming live on YouTube. He stated that the meeting was being streamed live and would also be available for later viewing if the technology worked appropriately.

#### STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS

**a. Approval of Minutes of October 8, 2015 Council meeting**

There were no corrections to the minutes of the October 8, 2015 Council meeting and they were unanimously approved on a motion by Paul Chapman and second by Lee Slade.

**b. Report of Budget, Audit and Personnel Committee**

i. Presentation of the 2015 Audit

Committee Chair Butch Hall reported that the Committee met October 29, 2015 to review the draft of the FY 2015 audit and to consider other matters. Mr. Hall was pleased to report that for FY 2015 the Regional Commission received an unmodified opinion with no audit findings.

Chris Edwards, McNair, McLemore, Middlebrooks & Co. began by covering the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) ending June 30, 2015. A CAFR is the fullest extent of financial reporting that a government entity can give. Council members are encouraged to read the Letter of Transmittal and the Management's Discussion and Analysis which provides a narrative and subjective overview of the entire operations of the Regional Commission. Mr. Edwards also noted that this report will be submitted to the Government Finance Officers Association for consideration of a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. This certificate is awarded based on adherence to reporting and presentation standards. Less than one percent of governments who file a CAFR receive this certificate. There are four sections that are included in the report; they include the Introductory Section, Financial Section, Statistical Section and the Single Audit Section. Some of the areas highlighted include: Independent Auditors Report, Management Discussion and Analysis, Basic Financial Statements, Government-wide Financial Statements and Fund Financial Statements. Mr. Edwards feels confident that the

Middle Georgia Regional Commission will receive another Certificate of Achievement as it has for the past 20 years because this report is in complete compliance.

Committee Chair Butch Hall made a motion to approve the audit presentation. Because this is a recommendation from the Committee, no second is required for a vote. The Council voted unanimously to accept the audit and approved it for distribution.

ii. Proposed FY 2016 Budget and Work Program Amendment #1

Committee Chair Butch Hall reported that the Budget, Audit and Personnel Committee met and approved the Proposed Budget Amendment # 1 to the FY 2016 budget. The total budget amendment is an increase of \$1,070,739 over the approved budget. On the revenue side, additional local government contracts have been executed since the original budget was adopted. Regarding state revenues, several state contracts have been finalized and adjustments are required. For federal revenues, the aging services contract has been finalized and an adjustment is required. In addition, a new contract with Workforce Development has been secured. In pass-through funds, we have received updated funding allocations for aging services, as well as coordinated transportation services.

Committee Chair Butch Hall reported that expenditures and adjustments are proposed to account for changes in staffing levels primarily associated with the new Workforce grant. In addition, adjustments are proposed to account for the changes in the funding allocations for the aging services. Adjustments are also proposed to account for additional expenditures in the Workforce program. However, there is a corresponding increase in program revenues to fund the additional expenditures for the aging services and Workforce program.

Committee Chair Butch Hall made a motion to approve the budget amendment #1. Chairman Westberry stated that because this is a recommendation from the Committee, no second is required for a vote. The Council voted unanimously to approve the budget amendment.

iii. Department of Audits Report

Committee Chair Butch Hall reported that the Committee also discussed the on-going response to the Georgia Department of Audit and Accounts audit of regional commissions. The final report has been issued and distributed. No immediate action is required by the Council.

**c. Report of Nominating Committee**

On behalf of the Nominating Committee Chair Preston Hawkins, Chuck O'Neal reported that the Nominating Committee met on November 10, 2015 to select names for consideration for the slate of Officers to the Middle Georgia Regional Commission and the Executive Committee for 2016. Mr. O'Neal wanted to thank the following committee members who attended: Preston Hawkins, James Richardson, Shannon Hart and George Slaphey.

Mr. O'Neal stated that the Nominating Committee places the following names in nomination for officers for a two-year term beginning January 14, 2016:

Butch Hall – Chair  
Robert Reichert – Vice Chair  
Dick Bazemore – Secretary  
Shannon Hart – Treasurer

The Nominating Committee places the following names in nomination for the Executive Committee for a two-year term beginning January 14, 2016:

Richard Mullins – Baldwin County  
Charlie Westberry – Crawford County  
George Slappey – Houston County  
Jimmy Roberts – Jones County  
Chuck O'Neal – Macon-Bibb County  
Erik Wilson – Monroe County  
Melvin Walker – Peach County  
Lee Slade – Pulaski County  
Billy Webster – Putnam County  
Shannon Hart – Twiggs County  
Mark Dupree – Wilkinson County  
Vacant – Regional/Ex-Officio

Chairman Westberry stated that in accordance with the bylaws, the election of officers will be held January 14, 2016 at the Council meeting.

**d. Authorization to submit an application to the Department of Defense Office of Economic Adjustment**

Laura Mathis is requesting authorization to submit an application to the Department of Defense Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA). The initial funding from OEA supported several projects, including the Regional Leadership Champions Program and three Asset Maps. Ms. Mathis reported that the Department of Defense was extremely interested in continuing the relationship.

Shannon Hart made a motion to submit an application for funding activities over a two year period. The motion was seconded by Johnny Branan and unanimously approved.

**e. Authorization to enter into an agreement with Great Promise Partnership**

Laura Mathis reported that former DCA Commissioner, Mike Beatty is heading that project for the state to establish Great Promise Partnership programs across the state. Great Promise

Partnership is for students who are not on track to graduate during their junior year and allows them to work part-time. Ms. Mathis stated that the Workforce Development Board has included this partnership in their regional workforce plan. The agreement outlines services that the in-school youth will receive through the workforce program.

Paul Chapman made a motion to enter into an agreement with Great Promise Partnership. The motion was seconded by Lee Slade and unanimously approved.

**f. Authorization to submit an Application with the Georgia Department of Transportation for a grant under Title 49 U.S.C., Section 5316 from the Federal Transit Administration for the Mobility Manager Program.**

The Middle Georgia Regional Commission is requesting authorization to submit an application to the Georgia Department of Transportation to apply for a grant to continue funding of the Regional Mobility Manager Program. This project allows the Regional Commission to undertake transit related tasks, such as short-range planning, management activities, and implementation of projects which work to improve coordination between public transportation and other transportation service providers. This work incorporates the promotion, enhancement, and facilitation of access to transportation for all residents of Middle Georgia, especially disadvantaged populations. Specific projects for the proposed grant period include:

- Update and digitize the Regional Directory of Transit Services
- Update Performance Metrics and Financial Model Database
- Update Current State of Regional Rural and Human Services Transportation Report
- Facilitate semi-annual meetings of the Middle Georgia Rural and Human Services Transportation Advisory Committee
- Update Regional Mobility Action and Coordination Plan
- Develop County-Level DHS Coordinated Transportation Service Delivery Assessment

John Harley made a motion to submit an application to the Georgia Department of Transportation. The motion was seconded by Shannon Hart and unanimously approved.

**g. Resolution to transmit revised Regional Assessment and Stakeholder Involvement Plan**

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 region as a whole. The Regional Commission Council voted to transmit the Regional Assessment and Stakeholder Involvement Plan to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) at the September meeting. After review, DCA requested modifications to the regional assessment and stakeholder plans which have been made. Mr. Cummings is

requesting authorization to transmit the revised Regional Assessment and Stakeholder Involvement Plan.

Dick Bazemore made a motion to transmit the revised Regional Assessment and Stakeholder Involvement Plan to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The motion was seconded by Edd Norris and unanimously approved.

**h. Authorization for the Executive Director to execute contracts under the Aging Sustainability Plan**

Brent Lanford reported that the older population and the demand for services are both increasing in Middle Georgia. Mr. Lanford stated that the Aging Sustainability Plan adopted by the Council at the August 13, 2015 meeting, provides several case management solutions for supplemental revenues to fund and reinvest into aging programs. For each client served under the Aging Sustainability Plan, an individual contract will be executed which outlines the specific services the client will receive. They will range in cost from \$300 to \$750, plus the cost of services. In order to expedite services, staff is recommending that the Executive Director be authorized to execute the individual solutions case management contracts.

Lee Slade made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to execute contracts/service agreements for the Solutions Case Management program, without requiring signature of the Council Chair. The motion was seconded by John Harley and unanimously approved.

**i. Authorization for the Middle Georgia Regional Commission to assist and support efforts for a Wounded Warrior Program in Georgia**

Ralph Nix reported he met with a State Representative who requested that the Regional Commission provide assistance and support services for the Georgia Wounded Warrior Project Program. The Regional Commission was asked to co-host a meeting on December 8, 2015 to discuss funding for renovations on the Richard B. Russell building that would provide services for psychological issues and administering assistance to the families that are not currently provided. The Veterans Administration at the federal level has appropriated \$6 million for this renovation.

Lee Slade made a motion to authorize staff to assist and support efforts for a Wounded Warrior Project Program in Middle Georgia. The motion was seconded by Dick Bazemore and unanimously approved.

**j. Local Assistance Requests**

Sam Perren presented the following local assistance requests that have been received since the October Council meeting:

- Community:** **Baldwin County**  
Project Title: 2016 GDOT REBC Grant Assistance  
Project Description: Assistance in preparation and submission of a 2016 GDOT REBC grant.
- Community:** **Crawford County**  
Project Title: Grant Assistance  
Project Description: Assistance in locating and applying for any recreational grants related to Lighting of recreational facilities.
- Community:** **Crawford County**  
Project Title: Development of Master Plan  
Project Description: Assistance in creating a Master Plan for the recreation department and field areas.
- Community:** **Town of Danville**  
Project Title: Preparation of Ordinance  
Project Description: Assistance with preparation of an ordinance related to timber harvesting and removal.
- Community:** **Town of Danville**  
Project Title: Grant Assistance  
Project Description: Assistance in applying for a Roadside Enhancement and Beautification Grant.
- Community:** **City of Eatonton**  
Project Title: Revision of Ordinances  
Project Description: Assistance in revising the Code or Ordinances to incorporate requirements for solar energy systems.
- Community:** **City of Forsyth**  
Project Title: Development of Policy  
Project Description: Assistance in developing a policy to cover the monitoring of all city computers.
- Community:** **City of Fort Valley**  
Project Title: Grant Assistance  
Project Description: Assistance in applying for a Roadside Enhancement and Beautification Grant.
- Community:** **City of Jeffersonville**  
Project Title: 2016 General Fund and Water Enterprise Budget  
Project Description: Assistance in preparing the 2016 General Fund and Water Enterprise budget.
- Community:** **Jones County**  
Project Title: Economic Development Assistance  
Project Description: Assistance in recommending economic development planning ideas and collaborate with the City of Gray's current plans.
- Community:** **Macon-Bibb County**  
Project Title: Grant Assistance  
Project Description: Assistance in applying for a Roadside Enhancement and Beautification Grant.



**Community:** **Macon-Bibb County**  
Project Title: Partnership Project  
Project Description: Assistance in developing information, plans and a comprehensive strategy to pursue the economic development Project Partnership.

**Community:** **Peach County**  
Project Title: Comprehensive Plan  
Project Description: Assistance with its joint comprehensive plan update between Peach County, City of Fort Valley, and the City of Byron.

**Community:** **City of Perry**  
Project Title: Application Assistance  
Project Description: Assistance in submitting an application to establish a Revitalization Area Strategy for a portion of the City of Perry.

**Community:** **City of Perry**  
Project Title: Grant Assistance  
Project Description: Assistance in preparing and submitting a grant application for Recreation Trails Funding through the Department of Natural Resources.

**Community:** **City of Perry**  
Project Title: Assistance with Website  
Project Description: Assistance in development of new website for the Perry Public Arts Commission.

**Community:** **Twiggs County**  
Project Title: OneGeorgia Equity Grant  
Project Description: Assistance in preparing OneGeorgia Equity grant application.

**Community:** **Wilkinson County**  
Project Title: Ordinance  
Project Description: Assist with development of a Nuisance Ordinance.

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

- Wilson and Company's Freight and Logistics Study of the Middle Georgia Region is now complete and will be released next week.
- Wilkinson County received a Body-Worn Camera grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the City of Roberta received a COPS grant to hire a school resource officer.
- Sandra Carson, who works in Aging, received AIRS certification, which is an intensive and difficult process signifying excellence in human services.
- The State's new Geographic Information Officer, Susan Miller, has now been on the job for two months. Her position is jointly funded by the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions and the US Economic Development Administration. There is a key meeting

in Atlanta next week with the Department of Community Affairs and state legislators to discuss future funding for the position. Susan is currently making the rounds around the state and is excited to visit us here in Middle Georgia soon.

The local assistance requests were unanimously approved on a motion by George Slappey and seconded by John Reid.

### GOOD OF THE ORDER

#### **a. Update on Status of DHS Coordinated Transportation Services**

Brent Lanford reported that rural transportation services are provided for the aging, disabled, and elderly population in service region six for Middle Georgia. The current provider's (Macon-Bibb EOC and Quality Trans) are doing a great job. There may be an opportunity in the first quarter of 2016 to secure additional funding in order to provide more trips to residents of Middle Georgia.

#### **b. Report on GARC Annual Meeting**

Brent Lanford reported that several key staff attended the annual training conference for the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions in St. Simons, Georgia. John Reid, the Middle Georgia Policy Officials attended as well. Presentations included topics of GIS, planning, transportation funding and rural health care.

#### **c. Presentation on Regional Water Planning Council**

Greg Boike reported that the Regional Commission entered into an agreement with the Department of Natural Resources to provide assistance to two regional water planning councils - Middle Ocmulgee and the Upper Oconee. The regional Water Plans are designed to ensure wise water management practices, identifying any potential issues, update resource assessments and forecasts and identify possible changes to management practices and recommendations to ensure adequate quality water for all Georgians. Mr. Boike reported that staff has been assisting the water planning councils with a variety of activities in advance of the 2016 plan updates.

#### **d. NADO Innovation Awards**

Greg Boike reported on the Annual National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Conference that was held on October 24 – 28, 2015 in New Orleans. Mr. Boike reported that it was a very useful and informative session. The MGRC was awarded several NADO Innovation Awards, such as one for the MGRC Website Service Program, the Dannenberg Building Revitalization and the Middle Georgia Digital Economy Project.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Brent Lanford reported that the first Maker Festival will be held November 14-15. This is a festival that celebrates the Makerspace movement. 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. Mr. Lanford encouraged everyone to attend.
  
- b. Chairman Westberry stated that a Regional Transportation Sales Tax Informational Session will be held December 10, 2015, 5:30 pm at the Regional Commission. He also stated that Council appointments due by December 31, 2015 and there is no meeting in December. The next meeting is January 14, 2016.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the November Council meeting was adjourned until January 14, 2016.