

MINUTES

Middle Georgia Regional Commission
Council Meeting
Thursday, January 14, 2016, 6:00 p.m.
175 Emery Highway, Suite C, Macon, Georgia

MEMBERS PRESENT:

BALDWIN COUNTY

Richard Mullins
Matt Poyner
Denese Shinholster

Dick Bazemore
Melvin Lawrence

PEACH COUNTY

Melvin Walker
Barbara Williams
James Richardson

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Charlie Westberry
Paul Chapman
Becky Smith

PULASKI COUNTY

Butch Hall
Henry Cravey
Lee Slade
Tim Young
James Colson

HOUSTON COUNTY

Tommy Stalnaker
John Harley
George Slappey
Clifford Holmes

PUTNAM COUNTY

Billy Webster

JONES COUNTY

Preston Hawkins
Jimmy Roberts
Francis Adams
Frank Duke

TWIGGS COUNTY

Ken Fowler
Charles Williams
Shannon Hart

MACON-BIBB COUNTY

Robert Reichert
Lonnie Miley
Matt Rogers

WILKINSON COUNTY

Mark Dupree
Charles Brack
Marty Dominy
Jonathan Jackson

MONROE COUNTY

Michael Bilderback
Eric Wilson

GUESTS PRESENT:

James Marshall – Industrial Authority – Crawford County
Stacy Ladson – Economic Development Coordinator – Crawford County
Gary Sanders – City Administrator – City of Eatonton
Robert Betzel - President & CEO – Infinity Network Solutions
Michael Rosario - Spark Macon Board Member
Andrew Eck - Spark Macon Board Member
Nadia Osmond - Spark Macon Board Member
Robert Reece - Spark Macon Board Member
Glen Stone - Spark Macon Board Member

STAFF PRESENT:

Ralph Nix – Executive Director
Laura Mathis – Deputy Director
Brent Lanford – Deputy Director
Matt Garvin - Finance Officer
Jen Doran – Office Manager
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
Robert O’Neil – Technology Services Specialist
Sheknita Davis – Workforce Development Director
Lisa Datoc – Workforce Program Assistant
Kim Stanton – Executive Secretary
Kevin Brown – Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Council Chairman Charlie Westberry called the January 14, 2016 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 26 voting and 12 non-voting members present.

OPENING CEREMONIES

a. Invocation

Macon-Bibb County Council Member Mayor Robert Reichert gave the invocation.

b. Welcome

Chairman Westberry welcomed everyone to the January 14, 2016 Council meeting.

c. Introduction of New Members/Guests/New Staff

Chairman Westberry introduced new staff member, Jen Doran, Office Manager.

SPARKMACON BOARD INTRODUCTIONS

SparkMacon is the Macon-based MakerSpace that the Middle Georgia Regional Commission was instrumental in establishing with the financial assistance of the Georgia Technology Association, local donations and an Internet-based crowdfunding campaign. Regular activities include a monthly OpenMake night, makerspace workshops and partnerships with the Bibb County Board of Education and other educational institutions for regular programming. As SparkMacon enters its second year, they are transitioning to a 501c3 organization and have hired an executive director, Nadia Osmond. Mr. Lanford introduced the Board Members of SparkMacon Inc.

Michael Rosario

Robert Betzel

Andrew Eck

Nadia Osmond

Robert Reece

Glen Stone

Sam McFee

Mr. Lanford, representing the Regional Commission, serves on the Board and is the incoming chair.

GUEST SPEAKER

Executive Director Ralph Nix introduced Jim Dove, Executive Director, Northeast Georgia Regional Commission and the current President of the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions.

Mr. Dove thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak. He noted that he grew up in Macon and began his career at the Northeast Georgia Area Planning Development Commission in 1975. Mr. Dove noted the 25th anniversary of the unification of the Athens-Clarke County government. He noted that the Executive Directors meet monthly with several standing committees, planning, economic development, workforce development, transportation, aging, and information technology. Mr. Dove noted on the success of working with EDA to bring in the Geospatial Information Officer (GIO), Susan Miller who is located at DCA. He also mentioned that he is visiting each regional commission around the state at their council meetings to share ideas on how the commission's work together. Mr. Dove recognized Ralph Nix and his staff on their hard work at the Middle Georgia Regional Commission. Mr. Dove also encouraged Council members to be active members of the state association and participate in activities like the Annual Conference held in November each year.

STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS

a. Approval of Minutes of November 12, 2015 Council meeting

There were no corrections to the minutes of the November 12, 2015 Council meeting and they were unanimously approved on a motion by Paul Chapman and second by Lee Slade.

b. Old Business

None to report

c. New Business

1. Council Member Appointments

Chairman Westberry reported that appointments to the Council have been received from all member counties. The members for 2016 are:

BALDWIN COUNTY

Mr. John H. Westmoreland (Johnny)
(Voting - County)

Mr. Richard Mullins, Jr.
(Voting - City)

Mr. William Millians (Bill)
(Voting - Non-Public)

Mr. Matt Poyner
(Associate Member)

Ms. Denese Shinholster
(Associate Member)

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Mr. Paul Chapman
(Voting – County)

Mayor Becky Smith
(Voting - City)

Mr. Charlie Westberry
(Voting - Non-Public)

Ms. Rita Marable
(Associate Member)

Mr. Robert Ray
(Associate Member)

HOUSTON COUNTY

Mr. Tommy Stalnaker
(Voting – County)

Mayor John Harley
(Voting - City)

Mr. George E. Slappey
(Voting - Non-Public)

Mr. Randy Toms
(Associate Member)

Mr. Clifford Holmes
(Associate Member)

JONES COUNTY

Mr. Preston Hawkins
(Voting - County)

Mayor Stephen Tingen
(Voting - City)

Mr. Jimmy Roberts
(Voting - Non-Public)

Francis Adams
(Associate Member)

Mr. Frank Duke
(Associate Member)

MACON-BIBB COUNTY

Mayor Robert Reichert
(Voting - County)

Bert Bivins III
(Voting - City)

Mr. Chuck O’Neal
(Voting - Non-Public)

Mr. Lonnie Miley
(Associate Member)

Mr. John Matthew Rogers (Matt)
(Associate Member)

MONROE COUNTY

Mr. Michael Bilderback
(Voting - County)

Ms. Eric Wilson
(Voting - City)

Mr. Richard Bazemore
(Voting – Nonpublic)

Mr. Melvin Lawrence
(Associate Member)

Mr. Edd Norris
(Associate Member)

PEACH COUNTY

Mr. Melvin E. Walker Jr.
(Voting - County)

Mayor Barbara Williams
(Voting - City)

Ms. Alfredia Walker
(Voting - Non-Public)

Mr. James Richardson
(Associate Member)

Mr. James Khoury
(Associate Member)

PULASKI COUNTY

Mr. M. A. Hall (Butch)
(Voting - County)

Mr. Henry E. Cravey, III
(Voting - City)

Mr. Lee Slade
(Voting - Non-Public)

Mr. Tim Young
(Associate Member)

Mr. James Colson
(Associate Member)

PUTNAM COUNTY

Mr. Billy Webster
(Voting - County)

Mayor Walter Rucker, Jr.
(Voting - City)

Ms. Terry Schwindler
(Voting – Nonpublic)

Vacancy
(Associate Member)

Vacancy
(Associate Member)

TWIGGS COUNTY

Mr. Ken Fowler
(Voting - County)

Mayor Charles Williams
(Voting - City)

Ms. Shannon Hart
(Voting - Non-Public)

Ms. Katherine Epps
(Associate Member)

Mayor Jimmy Smith
(Associate Member)

WILKINSON COUNTY

Mr. Mark Dupree
(Voting - County)

Charles Brack
(Voting - City)

Marty Dominy
(Voting - Non-Public)

Mr. C. L. Brooks
(Associate Member)

Mr. Jonathan Jackson
(Associate Member)

The Council Member Appointments were unanimously approved on a motion by George Slappey and second by Lee Slade.

Chairman Westberry reported that several members are leaving the council, he expressed his appreciation to them for their service.

John Howard – Monroe County
Charles Cook – Crawford County

Johnny Branan – Twiggs County
Joyce Mitchum – Twiggs County
Nicky Cabero – Pulaski County
John Reid – Putnam County

2. Local Assistance Requests

Daniel Dobbins presented the following local assistance requests that have been received since the November Council meeting:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Community: | City of Allentown |
| Project Title: | CDBG Grant Application |
| Project Description: | Preparation of a FY 2016 CDBG Application. |
| Community: | Baldwin County |
| Project Title: | Grant Assistance |
| Project Description: | Preparation of a FY 2016 AFG application. |
| Community: | Crawford County |
| Project Title: | PlanFirst Program |
| Project Description: | Assist the county with the development of a PlanFirst application. |
| Community: | Crawford County |
| Project Title: | Grant Assistance |
| Project Description: | Assistance in preparation and submission of a 2017 CDBG Grant. |
| Community: | Crawford County |
| Project Title: | Government Charter |
| Project Description: | Assistance in the creation of a new consolidated government charter. |
| Community: | City of Eatonton |
| Project Title: | Grant Assistance |
| Project Description: | Preparation of a FY 2016 AFG application. |
| Community: | City of Fort Valley |
| Project Title: | Grant Assistance |
| Project Description: | Assistance in applying for a DNR State Parks Recreational Trails Program Grant. |
| Community: | City of Gordon |
| Project Title: | Local Assistance Training |
| Project Description: | Assisting the city clerk with taking Council meeting minutes. |
| Community: | City of Hawkinsville |
| Project Title: | Plan Amendment |
| Project Description: | Assistance in preparing an amendment to the Hawkinsville/Pulaski County Joint Urban Redevelopment Plan. |

- Community:** **City of Jeffersonville**
Project Title: Grant Assistance
Project Description: Assistance in applying for OneGeorgia EQUITY funds for the Development Authority to expand capacity within the I-16 Industrial Park.
- Community:** **City of Jeffersonville**
Project Title: CDBG Application
Project Description: Preparation of a FY 2016 CDBG application to the Department of Community Affairs.
- Community:** **City of Jeffersonville**
Project Title: Workshop Presentation
Project Description: Assistance with a workshop presentation on Effective Business Meetings and Conflict Avoidance and Resolution for Mayor and Council.
- Community:** **City of Jeffersonville**
Project Title: Local Government Assistance
Project Description: Assistance in providing audit information regarding city expenditures on public safety in fiscal year 2013, 2014 and 2015.
- Community:** **Jones County**
Project Title: Grant Assistance
Project Description: Assistance in applying for the Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant through DNR for a special needs playground.
- Community:** **Jones County**
Project Title: Job Analysis
Project Description: Assistance in completing a job analysis to show additional responsibilities to justify an increase in pay.
- Community:** **Macon-Bibb County**
Project Title: Community Needs Assessment
Project Description: Assistance with developing a Community Needs Assessment to provide quality education and self-sufficiency services.
- Community:** **City of Milledgeville**
Project Title: Grant Assistance
Project Description: Assistance in preparing a FY 2016 AFG application.
- Community:** **Monroe County**
Project Title: Grant Assistance
Project Description: Assistance in preparing a FY 2016 AFG application.
- Community:** **Monroe County**
Project Title: Re-evaluation of Pay Scale

Project Description: Assistance with conducting a re-evaluation and update of the County Pay Scale.

Community: Peach County

Project Title: Grant Assistance

Project Description: Assistance in preparing a FY 2016 AFG application.

Community: Peach County

Project Title: CDBG Grant Application

Project Description: Preparation of a CDBG application for improvements to the Peach County Health Department facility.

Community: Pulaski County

Project Title: Grant Assistance

Project Description: Assistance in preparing a FY 2016 AFG application.

Community: Pulaski County

Project Title: Comprehensive Plan

Project Description: Assistance with updating the county's Comprehensive Plan.

Community: City of Roberta

Project Title: Job Description Development and Research

Project Description: Assistance with the development of job descriptions and research of pay scales for the positions of Police Chief and City Clerk.

Community: Town of Toombsboro

Project Title: Ordinance

Project Description: Assistance in preparing an ordinance regarding the naming of streets within the Town of Toombsboro.

Community: Twiggs County

Project Title: Revision of Ordinances

Project Description: Assistance in revising the Official Code of Twiggs County.

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

- Pre-disaster mitigation plans were completed for Houston, Jones and Pulaski counties.
- Area Agency on Aging worked with Westat Research in monitoring individuals that have completed chronic pain management programs. This project resulted in a \$9000 reimbursement to the Regional Commission, which can be utilized for other aging services.
- Websites were completed for Macon-Bibb Economic Opportunity Council, Hawkinsville/Pulaski, Jeffersonville, and the Macon-Bibb Land Bank Authority.
- An inventory was completed of all the regulatory and non-regulatory street signs in Perry.

The local assistance requests were unanimously approved on a motion by Tommy Stalnaker and second by Shannon Hart.

3. Regional Plan Vision Statement and Plan Update

Greg Boike reported that the Middle Georgia Regional Commission has continued work, since the November, 12, 2015 meeting, on required 5-year updates to the regional plan. In accordance with the Stakeholder Involvement Program, the MGRC Council is serving as the Steering Committee for the development of this plan. Among the activities completed since the last meeting is the development of a draft vision statement. This statement was initially drafted by the MGRC staff and revised with feedback from the regional stakeholder meetings held on December 16, 2015 and January 8, 2016.

Mr. Boike state that the proposed Regional Vision Statement is:

A thriving Middle Georgia, united by regional pride and mutual respect, where cooperation and collaboration expand the region's economic prosperity, provide an exceptional education for all of its residents, and ensure that every Middle Georgian has a high quality of life through the provision of effective local government services and the preservation of natural and cultural assets.

In short, a diverse region of opportunity where people want to live, learn, work, and play.

The Regional Vision Statement was unanimously approved on a motion by Mark Dupree and second by Shannon Hart.

4. Amendment to the Office Policies Manual

Laura Mathis reported in June 2015, the Council approved a new Office Policies Manual, which was reorganized and updated to reflect current business practices. The three sections that are proposed to be added are the Introductory Statement, Section 7 of the Open Records, and Section 8 of the Disclosure of Business Activities to be effective January 15, 2016. Currently, the policy manual does not contain an introductory statement that expressly states the expectation for employees to adhere to the provisions of the Office Policies Manual. Ms. Mathis stated that the Middle Georgia Regional Commission is subject to the Open Records Act. The Council previously passed a resolution designating an Open Records Officer; however a formal written procedure for how the Regional Commission will address any requests under the Open Records Act had not been developed. Lastly, Ms. Mathis reported that the performance audit conducted by the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts in 2015 identified that, although the Regional Commission complied with the disclosure requirements of OCGA 50-8-63, a formal written procedure did not exist.

The amendments to the Office Policies Manual was unanimously approved as presented on a motion by James Colson and second by Mark Dupree.

5. Mileage Reimbursement Rate

Laura Mathis reported Middle Georgia Regional Commission has utilized the federal (IRS) mileage reimbursement rate for use of personal vehicles. Historically, the IRS set rates once per year in January. When fuel prices rose quickly over the years, IRS implemented periodic reviews for the reimbursement rate. For budgeting purposes, the Regional Commission Council has authorized a once-per-year adjustment, typically in conjunction with the fiscal year. On January 1, 2016, the IRS reduced the rate from \$0.575 to \$0.54. If the Council does not reduce the rate beginning January 1, then employees will receive more than is allowed by the IRS. The \$0.035 per mile difference will have to be reported as income. To ease this administrative burden, staff recommends Council establish the rate for the period of January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2016 at \$0.54.

The Mileage Reimbursement Rate was unanimously approved at \$0.54 for the period of January 1, 2016 through June 30, 2106 on a motion by Lee Slade and second by George Slappey.

6. Election of Officers

Kevin Brown reported that in accordance with the Bylaws, the Nominating Committee presented a slate of Officers and Executive Committee Members for the upcoming two-year term January 14, 2016.

2016-2018 OFFICERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSION

Chairman	Butch Hall	Pulaski County
Vice-Chairman	Robert Reichert	Macon-Bibb County
Secretary	Dick Bazemore	Monroe County
Treasurer	Shannon Hart	Twiggs County

Mr. Brown opened the floor for nominations to the slate of officers presented by the Nominating Committee. Hearing none, nominations were closed. Upon motion by Lee Slade and second by Paul Chapman, the slate of officers for 2016-2018 as presented by the Nominating Committee were approved.

7. Election of Executive Committee

2016-2018 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Butch Hall	MGRC Chairman	Chuck O'Neal	Macon-Bibb County
Robert Reichert	MGRC Vice-Chairman	Eric Wilson	Monroe County
Dick Bazemore	MGRC Secretary	Melvin Walker	Peach County
Richard Mullins	Baldwin County	Lee Slade	Pulaski County
Charlie Westberry	Crawford County	Billy Webster	Twiggs County
George Slappey	Houston County	Shannon Hart	Twiggs County
Jimmy Roberts	Jones County	Mark Dupree	Wilkinson County

Mr. Brown opened the floor for nominations to the Executive Committee. Hearing none, nominations were closed. Upon motion by Lee Slade and second by Paul Chapman, the Executive Committee for 2016-2018 as presented by the Nominating Committee was approved.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

a. Georgia Department of Audits Performance Audit Report Status

Chairman Westberry reported to the Council that a copy of the status report on the items from the 2015 Performance Audit by the Georgia Department of Audits was included in their package and he was pleased that the items were addressed, or will be addressed in the first quarter of 2016.

b. Quarterly Financial Report

Matt Garvin presented the Quarterly Financial Report for the period ending September 30, 2015. Mr. Garvin reported that that State Revenues are at 22 percent of budgeted revenues, local revenues stand at 29 percent of the budgeted revenues, federal revenues are at 22 percent of the budgeted revenues, and Expenditures are at 23 percent of budgeted expenditures.

c. DRI # 2521 Project Sparta – Baldwin County

Crystal Gaillard reported that the Development Authority of the City of Milledgeville and Baldwin County has been in negotiations with a large, start-up manufacturing company, known as Project Sparta. The project will bring a \$27,100,000 investment, and up to 900 new jobs to Baldwin County; locating a manufacturing plant on a 94-acre site, owned and previously occupied by Rheem Manufacturing in unincorporated Baldwin County.

d. Disclosure Report per OCGA 50-8-63

Chairman Westberry reported that each year, the Regional Commission staff is required to disclose any business transactions with local governments and report to the full Council. Three employees made disclosures: Selentria Kendrick, Ralph Nix and Cam Yearty. No action is

required by the Council however the minutes will reflect these disclosures and the report will be filed with Georgia Department of Community Affairs by January 31.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next MGRC Meeting February 11, 2016.

Chairman Westberry presented Butch Hall, who was elected as Council Chair, with the gavel. Butch Hall thanked the Council for allowing him to serve.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the January Council meeting was adjourned until February 11, 2016.