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RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Marion County Commission Office

100 East Burkhalter Avenue

Buena Vista, Georgia

Summary

August 23, 2017

Members Attending/Representing

(Representing 16 Counties)

A.J. Rivers, Crisp County
Bruce Hill, City of Oglethorpe
Carlton Wilson, City of Ellaville
Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County
Cecil "Butch" McMickle, Marion County
Chip Jones, Stewart County
Clinton Perry, Jr. Taylor County, RVRC Chair
Debbie Stone, Stewart County
Doug Etheridge, Harris County
Dr. Carole Rutland, Muscogee County
Dr. Edward Lee, Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
Fred Gordon, Muscogee County
Freeman Montgomery, Talbot County
Harry Lange, Harris County
Hobby Stripling, City of Vienna
James Morton, Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
James R. "Bump" Welch, Marion County
Jason Hoch, Schley County
Jeanie Barteel, City of Cordele
Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Muscogee County
Jim Lawrence, Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
Jimmy Bradley, Randolph County
Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County
Knox Blackmar, City of Talbotton
Lee Hubbard, Clay County
Melvin Crimes, Webster County
Mickey George, Macon County
Pam Jordan, Talbot County
Patricia Goodman, Randolph County
Ralph Brown, City of Buena Vista
Randy Howard, Sumter County
Richard McCorkle, Marion County
Shirley Ann Christian, City of Fort Gaines
Terrell Hudson, Dooly County, ACCG
Tommy McKenzie, Macon County

Tony Kennedy, Webster County

Wally Summers, Sumter County

Members Not Present

Barry Whitley, City of Butler
Danny Blackman, Georgetown-Quitman County
Evelyn Turner Pugh, Muscogee County
Greg Barineau, Schley County
Jayson Griffin, Macon County
Maggie McGruther, Sumter County
Nelson Brown, City of Americus
Rebecca Chambers, City of Hamilton
Sam Farrow, Jr., Crisp County
Steve Whatley, City of Cuthbert
Tameka Harris, Taylor County
Tom Queen, Taylor County

Others Present

Sarah Lee Crumbs, Georgetown-Quitman County Family
Connections Coordinator
Elaine Gillispie, Congressman Bishop's Representative
Susan Gallagher, New Horizons
Scotty Mashburn, Dooly EDC
Edwina Turner, Stewart County Family Connections
Casey Beane, DCA Representative, Region 8
Candy Head, GA Department of Labor, Region 8
Paul Farr, South Georgia Technical College
Laura Gower, Representative for Senator Johnny Isakson
Todd Carlisle, Business Consultant, UGA
Michelle Griffin, Consultant, SBDC
Patti Cullen, Executive Director
Sarah Walls, Assistant Executive Director
Katie Howard, AAA Director
Gerald Mixon, Planning Director
Allison Slocum, Senior Planner
Jim Livingston, Community & Economic Development Dir.
Becky Holmes, Office Manager

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Welcome and Recognition of Visitors

Chair Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair, brought the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. He welcomed everyone and requested Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Secretary, to lead the council in prayer. Randy Howard, Vice Chair, led the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review and Approval of Minutes*

Council reviewed the minutes of the June 28, 2017 council meeting, which were mailed or emailed to council members the previous week for their review.

Harry Lange, Harris County, made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Melvin Crimes, Webster County, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Kick-Off for the 2018-2028 Regional Plan

Allison Slocum, Senior Planner, explained that it is time to update the Regional Plan which is required every five (5) years. She presented the schedule for the update and explained that the completion date is June 27, 2018. Allison requested one volunteer from each county to serve on the Steering Committee and requested council members email a list of stakeholders to her. She noted that the first meeting for the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis, for the western counties, will be held on Thursday, September 21st at the Columbus River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) office. The SWOT for the southern counties will be held on October 12th. The location will be announced at a later date.

“What is Your Why?”

Patti Cullen, Executive Director, introduced Todd Carlisle, Business Consultant for the University of Georgia’s Small Business Development Center. He said the consultants meet with business owners of industries and businesses to help them understand how to begin or expand their business. He explained that the Small Business Development Center has seventeen (17) offices and sixty (60) consultants across the State of Georgia.

Susan Gallagher, New Horizons, reminded the council that New Horizons located in Columbus and serves residents of Chattahoochee, Clay, Harris, Muscogee, Randolph, Stewart, Talbot, and Quitman counties. Ms. Gallagher explained that their program is geared to adults seeking outpatient mental health and substance abuse services. She invited everyone to attend the Run4Recovery Street Party to be held Saturday, September 9th, 2017 at the Woodruff Riverfront Park in Columbus in order to show support to those individuals who are recovering from mental illness and addiction.

Appointment of Private Sector Council Members*

Sarah Walls, Assistant Executive Director, explained that it was time to appoint the Private Industry Council Members for the 2017-2018 year. Recommendations were Bump Welch, Marion County; Chip Jones, Stewart County; Doug Etheridge, Harris County; Fred Gordon, Muscogee County; Clinton Perry, Taylor County; Edward Lee, Chattahoochee County; Tom Queen, Taylor County; Tommy McKenzie, Macon County; Wally Summers, Sumter County; Patricia Goodman, Randolph County; Jayson Griffin, Macon County; Jason Hoch, Schley

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County; and Pam Jordan, Talbot County. She explained that the above members had been contacted and agreed to continue to serve on the council, if appointed.

Terrell Hudson, Dooly County, made a motion to appoint the recommended people to serve as Private Sector Council Members; Harry Lange, Harris County, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Tools For Life

Katie Howard, Area Agency on Aging Director, explained that a “Tools for Life” lab would be setup in the Columbus and Americus office. This lab will be used to expose people to assistive technology. Katie explained that assistive technology is any item that helps a person to remain independent and makes day-to-day living easier. She gave examples such as a tool to help put socks on and a tool to help button buttons. There was also a table set up in the back of the room with many samples to view. She invited everyone to stop by the table and look at the samples. Staff was available to demonstrate the use of the items.

Patti Cullen, Executive Director, explained that staff reports would not be given at this meeting because we want people to visit the assistive technology table.

She also announced that the Georgia Association of Regional Commission’s (GARC) Conference will be held November 8th -10th at St. Simons Island. She urged all that could attend to start making plans. Patti said the CEDS document will be presented for review and adoption at the September council meeting.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the council, Harry Lange, Harris County, made a motion to adjourn; Dr. Fred Gordon, seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.