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[www.rivervalleyrc.org](http://www.rivervalleyrc.org)

## 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 Barte, 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 21<sup>st</sup> at the Columbus River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) office. The SWOT for the southern counties will be held on October 12<sup>th</sup>. 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 9<sup>th</sup>, 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 8<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> 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.