RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
River Valley Regional Commission, Columbus Office
January 27, 2021
10:30 A.M.
Minutes

Members Attending in Office
Randy Howard, Sumter, RVRC Chairman
Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Muscogee, RVRC Vice Chairman
Darrell Holbrook, Webster
Dr. Edward Lee, Chattahoochee
Julie Brown, Harris
Knox Blackmar, Talbotton
Melvin Crimes, Webster
Tameka Harris, Taylor
Tom Queen, Taylor
Eugene Carson, Doo ly

Members Attending via Teleconference
Bruce Hill, Oglethorpe, RVRC Secretary
Carvel Lewis, Quitman
Chip Jones, Stewart
Damon Hoyte, Chattahoochee
Danny Blackmon, Quitman
Doug Etheridge, Harris
Greg Dominy, Ellaville
Jayson Griff in, Macon
Kenneth Sumter, P. T. Gaines
Maggie McGruther, Sumter
Matt Gunnels, Marion
Mickey George, Macon
Richard McCorkle, Marion
Sam Farrow, Crisp
Sher’Londa Walker, Talbot
Terrell Hudson
Wesley Williams, Randolph
Darrell Holbrook, Webster
Gary Allen, for Skip Henderson

Members Not Attending
A.J. Rivers, Crisp
Barry Whitley, Butler
Eddie Daniels, Vienna
Gerald Douglas, Chattahoochee
James Davenport, Clay
James R. “Bump” Welch, Marion
Jeanie Bartee, Cordele
Jimmy Babb, Lumpkin
Joe Lee Williams, Stewart
Kevin Brown, Buena Vista
Nelson Brown, Americus
Pam Jordan, Talbot
Steve Whatley, Cuthbert
Rob Grant, Harris
Bill McClellan, Schley
Mark Waddell, Sumter

Others Attending via Video Call
Kristin Rowles, Speaker
Janet Joiner, Vienna
Diandra Powell, Americus
Michael Bowens, Vienna
Bill Twomey, ACCG
Susan Gallagher, New Horizons
Casey Beane, Dept. of Community Affairs
Saralyn Stafford, University of Georgia
Mac Moye, Stewart
Paul Farr, Southwest Georgia. Technical College
Janet Jarvis, Sumter
Rebecca White, Randolph
Tom Horn, Columbus Water Works
Rachel Andrews
Terrell Hudson, Dooly
Clark Harrell, Crisp

Staff Members
Jim Livingston, Executive Director
Sarah Walls, Assist. Executive Director
Katie Howard, AAA Director
Rick Morris, Planning Director
Gerald Mixon, Planning Director
Emily Chambers, Finance Officer
Janice West, WIOA Director
Allison Slocum, Senior Planner
John Morgan, Bicycle-Pedestrian Planner.
Tammy Collins, Finance Officer
Mariyana Kostov, GIS
Becky Holmes, Office Manager

Chattahoochee | Clay | Crisp | Dooly | Harris | Macon | Marion | Muscogee
Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster

Equal Opportunity Employer
WELCOME AND RECOGNITION OF VISITORS
Randy Howard, Chairman, brought the River Valley Regional Council meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. He thanked everyone for joining the meeting either in person or by teleconference. Those joining by teleconference were able to ask questions by e-chat or by messaging Jim Livingston, Executive Director, on his telephone.

Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Vice Chairman, then gave the invocation and Bruce Hill, Secretary, led the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES*
Council reviewed minutes of the November 18, 2020 council meeting which were either mailed or emailed to council members the previous week for their review. The minutes were also included in the council packets available at the meeting.

There being no additions or changes, Randy Howard, Chairman, requested a motion to approve the January 27, 2021 council minutes.

Knox Blackmar, City of Talbotton, made a motion to approve the November 18, 2020 council minutes as presented; Carvel Lewis, Quitman County, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

MIDDLE CHATTAHOOCHEE/UPPER FLINT REGIONAL WATER COUNCIL PRESENTATION
Laura Schneider, GIS Department, introduced Kristin Rowles, of the Georgia Water Policy Center. Ms. Rowles gave a presentation explaining the importance of regional water planning in the region. She said the Middle Chattahoochee and Upper Flint Regional Water Council are on a 5-year planning cycle which is in the process of being updated now and explained that process. After taking questions she said she can be reached at Knowles@h2opolicycenter.org or for more information on Georgia Water Policies go to http://cpd.georgia.gov/updated-regional-water-plans.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT*
Vice Chairman Jerry “Pops” Barnes presented the Nominating Committee Report. He said the committee met and their recommendations for the Executive Committee were as follows:

* Carvel Lewis, Unified Government of Georgetown-Quitman County
* Tameka Harris, Taylor County
* Terrell Hudson, Private Industry, Dooly County

Randy Howard, Chairman, requested a motion to approve Executive Committee member nominees as presented by the Nominating Committee.

Melvin Crimes, Webster County, made the motion to approve Executive Committee member nominees; Knox Blackmar, City of Talbotton, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

Nominees to be considered for Private Industry council members were:

* Byron Hickey, Muscogee County
* Eddie Moore, Unified Government of Georgetown-Quitman County
* Patrick Shivers, Clay County
* Rebecca White, Randolph County
* Terrell Hudson, Dooly County

Randy Howard, Chairman, requested a motion approve Private Industry nominees as presented by the Nominating Committee.

Knox Blackmar, City of Talbotton, made the motion to approve Private Industry nominees; Julie Brown, City of Hamilton, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) ANNUAL UPDATE AND RESOLUTION*
Sarah Walls, Assistant Executive Director, presented the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Annual Update and resolution. She explained that the EDA Planning Contract requires an annual update of the CEDS and that it had been reviewed and approved by the CEDS Committee.

She requested approval of the CEDS Annual Update Resolution.

Randy Howard, Chairman, requested a motion to approve the CEDS Annual Update and Resolution.

Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Muscogee County, made the motion to approve the CEDS Annual Update and Resolution, as presented; Tom Queen, Taylor County, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

DISCLOSURE OF EMPLOYEE’S BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020 (PER O.C.G.A. 50-8-63)*
Jim Livingston, Executive Director, explained that every year the RVRC is required, by law, to disclose if any employee has had any business transactions with local governments within the region. After polling staff, it was determined that no staff member has conducted business with any of RVRC’s local governments.

Chairman Howard requested permission to notify the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) that there were no business transactions between RVRC employees and local governments.

Knox Blackmar, City of Talbotton, made a motion to approve the request to notify DCA of this information; Melvin Crimes, Webster County, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

STAFF REPORTS
Finance Officer Emily Chambers reported through November revenues exceeded expenditures by $69 in the Operating Funds (General Fund and Internal Service Fund). In the proprietary funds, we had an overall increase in net position of $6,771. Cash on hand in the General Fund was $947,000 at November 30th, and the Unassigned Fund Balance was $782,203. The FY20 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is complete and under review by the auditors who will present the final report at our February Council meeting.

AAA Director Katie Howard asked council members and guests to check out the AAA website. She noted that free Tai Chi lessons are available for anyone to use. Katie said that staff had identified 5 clients to be given tablets, with special software installed, to combat social isolation, using Federal CARES funding.

Assistant Executive Director Sarah Walls announced that through the $1,000,100 Covid-19 Revolving Loan Fund a Columbus business has applied to borrow $150,000 to build a new facility. Taylor Automobile Salvage Company has applied for a USDA IRP 2002 RLF in the amount of $150,000.

Planning Director Gerald Mixon said that LMIG is now accepting applications. He noted that there is a required 10% cash match. If the Transportation Investment Act (TIA) was not in effect it would be a 30% match. Gerald discussed the status of the TIA Roundtable and noted that the project portal was now open. The voters of the region will be asked to vote on the proposed projects selected by the Roundtable in March, 2022. A vote of 50% is required to go forward.

Staff has begun work on an update of the comprehensive plan for Schley County/Ellaville. Talbot and Chattahoochee County’s comprehensive plans have been submitted for review by DCA. Marion County/Buena Vista’s comprehensive plan has been approved. Staff conducted a Zoning Training Class in Buena Vista and are working to compile data to update the city of Butler’s map booklet.

WIOA Director Janice West said that 125 individuals have been served since July 1, 2020 for various WIOA training activities. Enrollments will continue through June 30, 2021. She requested that anyone who is interested in educational or training activities to contact the RVRC/WIOA office in Americus. Janice said the unemployment rate has risen from 3.5% to 6.2% in the region; mostly due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Chattahoochee | Clay | Crisp | Dooly | Harris | Macon | Marion | Muscogee
Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster

Equal Opportunity Employer
ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the council, Randy Howard, Vice Chair, requested a motion to adjourn.

Melvin Crimes, Webster County, made the motion to adjourn the meeting; Julie Brown, Harris County, seconded the motion. The meeting then adjourned.

January 27, 2021
Date

Randy Howard, RVRC Chairman

Bruce Hill, RVRC Secretary

NEW RVRC COUNCIL MEMBERS
Gerald Douglas, Chairman, Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
Eugene Carson, Vice Chairman, Dooly County
Rob Grant, Vice Chairman, Harris County
Wesley Williams, Chairman, Randolph County
Bill McClellan, Chairman, Schley County
Mark Waddell, Chairman, Sumter County
Sher’Londa Walker, Chair, Talbot County
Darrell Holbrook, Chairman, Webster County

NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Terrell Hudson, Dooly County, Private Industry
Carvel Lewis, Chairman, Georgetown-Quitman County
Tameka Harris, Commissioner, Taylor County

NEW PRIVATE INDUSTRY MEMBERS
Rebecca White, Randolph County
Patrick Shivers, Clay County
Eddie Moore, Georgetown-Quitman County
Terrell Hudson, Dooly County
Byron Hickey, Muscogee County

RVRC COUNCIL MEMBERS LEAVING COUNCIL
James Morton, Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
Harry Lange, Harris County
Tony Kennedy, Webster County
Greg Barineau, Schley County
Jimmy Bradley, Randolph County
Clay Jones, Sumter County
Freeman Montgomery, Talbot County (passed away)