RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
Valley Regional Commission, Columbus Office
June 24, 2020
10:30 A.M.
Minutes

Members Attending in Columbus Office (Representing 14 Counties)
Randy Howard, Sumter, RVRC Chairman
Chip Jones, Stewart
Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Muscogee, RVRC Vice Chairman
Joe Lee Williams, Stewart
Knox Blackmar, Talbotton
Melvin Crimes, Webster
Tameka Harris, Taylor

Members Attending via Video Call
A.J. Rivers, Crisp County
Bruce Hill, Oglethorpe, RVRC Secretary
Harry Lange, Harris
Jayson Grimes, Macon
Jimmy Bradley, Randolph
Kevin Brown, Buena Vista
Maggie McGruther, Sumter
Mickey George, Macon
Pam Jordan, Talbot
Richard McCorkle, Marion
Terrell Hudson, Dooly
Wally Summers, Sumter

Members Not Attending
Barry Whitley, Butler
Carvel Lewis, Quitman
Clay Jones, Sumter
Damon Hoyte, Chattahoochee
Dr. Carole Rutland, Muscogee
Dr. Edward Lee, Chattahoochee
Eddie Daniels, Vienna
Freeman Montgomery, Talbot
Greg Barineau, Schley
Greg Dominy, Ellaville
James Morton, Chattahoochee
James R. “Bump” Welch, Marion
James Davenport, Clay
Jeanie Bartee, Cordele
Jimmy Babb, Lumpkin
Julie Brown, Hamilton
Matt Gannels, Marion
Nelson Brown, Americus
Sam Farrow, Jr., Crisp
Skip Henderson, Muscogee
Steve Whatley, Cutbert
Tom Queen, Taylor
Tony Kennedy, Webster

Others Attending via Video Call
Kathy Burns, Rep. for Sen. Perdue
Laura Gower, Rep. for Sen. Loeffler
Kenneth Cutts, Rep. for Cong. Bishop
Casey Beane, Dept. of Comm. Affairs
Bill Twomey, Americus
Mac Moye, Stewart County
Clara Hall, AAA Advisory Committee
Janet Joiner, Vienna
Janice Jarvis, Sumter County
Paul Farr, South GA. Tech

Staff Members
Jim Livingston, Executive Director
Sarah Wall, Assist. Executive Director
Emily Chambers, Finance Officer
Tammy Collins, Finance Officer
Tenisha Tookes, WIOA Specialist
Gerald Mixon, Planning Director

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, RVRC Chairman, brought the meeting of the River Valley Regional Council to order at 10:30 a.m. He thanked everyone for joining the meeting either in person or by teleconference. Jim Livingston, Executive Director, explained that those joining by teleconference could ask questions by e-chat or by messaging him on his telephone.

Jerry “Pops” Barnes, RVRC Vice-Chair, then gave the invocation and Randy Howard, Chairman, led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES*
Council reviewed the minutes of the February 26, 2020 council meeting which were either mailed or emailed to Council members the previous week for their review. The minutes were included in the council packet for review.

There being no changes or additions Randy Howard, RVRC Chairman, requested a motion to approve the February 26, 2020 council minutes.

Harry Lange, Harris County, made a motion to approve the minutes of February 26, 2020. Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION*
Council reviewed results of the on-line vote by council members to give the Executive Committee the authority to make decisions for the council during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Results of the survey were: 31 members responded “Yes”, 3 voted “Yes” verbally, and 10 members did not vote.

Randy Howard, RVRC Chairman, requested a motion to authorize the Executive Committee to approve any contracts, resolutions or other business that would usually need full council approval until it was determined to be safe to hold an RVRC council meeting again.

Harry Lange, Harris County, made the above requested motion. Knox Blackmar, Talbotton, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF DECISIONS MADE BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE COUNCIL DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC*
Randy Howard, RVRC Chairman, stated that the decisions that were made by the Executive Committee were included in the council packet. Jim Livingston, Executive Director, then read the decisions that were made by the Executive Committee from March 25, 2020 through May 27, 2020. He stated that no other actions were taken by the Executive Committee during that period. The decisions are listed below.

March 25, 2020
*Approved Pandemic Plan amendment to the Emergency Preparedness Plan
*Approved Telework Policy amendment to the Emergency Preparedness Plan
*Approve existing contract extension for Audit Services

May 6, 2020
*Recognize Grace Grant for 42 years of service upon her retirement

May 27, 2020
*Approved Budget Amendment #2
*Approved EDA Partnership Planning Grant application
*Approved EDA Revolving Loan Fund application
*Approved AAA CARES Act Contract

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

Equal Opportunity Employer
Randy Howard, RVRC Chairman, then requested approval of Executive Committee decisions that were made during the period of March 25, 2020 through May 27, 2020.

Harry Lange, Harris County, made a motion to approve Executive Committee decisions listed above. Knox Blackmar, Talbotton, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

**REVIEW/APPROVAL OF THE EDA/RLF COVID-19 PLAN**

Staff submitted an EDA COVID-19 Revolving Loan Fund application in the amount of $1,001,000. The existing RLF Plan has been reviewed in order to include the existing EDA RLF fund to follow the same guidelines, temporarily, for the two-year period of the EDA COVID-19 RLF. The temporary amendment to the existing RLF Plan includes 3 amendments concerning waiving the minimum interest rate requirement for 2 years, waiving the requirement concerning the leverage of additional funds for 2 years, and waiving the requirement of evidence demonstrating credit is not otherwise available for 2 years. Each waiver will state “the RVRC and its Oversight Loan Committee has full discretion over how to apply this flexibility to its existing RLF loan portfolio and to any new RLF loans made during this period.”

Randy Howard, RVRC Chairman, requested a motion to approve the EDA/RLF COVID-19 Plan.

Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County, made the above requested motion. Knox Blackmar, Talbotton, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

**Budget Proposal**

Emily Chambers, Finance Director, presented the FY21 Budget Proposal which was emailed to council members and included in the council packet available at the meeting. The FY21 Budget Proposal is a balanced budget in the Governmental Funds, and shows an increase in net position of $22,340 in the Enterprise Funds. Due to State of Georgia decreases in funding and the uncertainty about all funding and the economy in general, the RVRC did not incorporate employee salary increases in this budget. The Special Revenue Funds budget included about $1.15 million in Federal Cares Act awards that will be used to increase Aging and DOT 5311 services for the region.

Randy Howard, RVRC Chairman, requested a motion to approve the FY21 Proposed Budget as presented.

Harry Lange, Harris County, made the above requested motion. Tameka Harris, Taylor County, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

**Staff Reports**

Jim Livingston, Executive Director, announced that he would present the staff report for each department. He explained not having department heads present would be in the best interest of social distancing.

**Planning Department**

Jim announced that new zoning contracts have been distributed and reminded everyone that the regional commission provides Zoning and Technical Assistance to our local governments. He noted that Allison Slocum, Historic Preservation Officer/Senior Planner is the immediate past president of the Georgia Association of Zoning Administrators.

Randolph, Crisp, Dooly, Marion, Talbot and Webster are in varying stages of Pre-disaster Mitigation Plans. Randolph County’s Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan is under GEMA review. Clay County’s plan was approved by GEMA and adopted by the Clay County BOC and it’s cities in May 2020.

Jim said a census map had been prepared to show current response rates for the region and was distributed to local communities and Complete Count Committees. He explained that US Census Bureau enumerators would be coming door-to-door soon to households that have not submitted their information to the Census Bureau.

The Patula Creek Watershed EPD project has been closed and the US EPA project is ongoing. A project inventory list is being developed for brownfield projects in Dooly, Crisp, Sumter and Macon Counties.
River Valley RC received two NADO (National Association of Development Organizations) awards for Excellence in Regional Transportation. The awards were for the Reynolds Bike-Ped Plan and a Sumter County Transit Plan.

Staff continues to work with communities on a June 30 compliance deadline for recently submitted Community Development Block Grant applications. Staff is currently administering 15 active CDBG projects.

WIOA
Jim reported that 158 individuals were currently being served by the WIOA program. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment claims are record breaking at this time. In the region the unemployment count was 61,396 through May 30. The joint Middle Flint and Lower Chattahoochee WIOA Areas Regional Plan is due October 2020.

Area Agency on Aging
CARES Act funding to support AAA functions will be substantial. These funds will increase the ability to assist the region, especially through the Meals on Wheels program. RVRC staff and contractors are adapting to COVID-19. Senior Centers remain closed at this time, but staff is working to help get programming online and help seniors remain connected. Jim announced that the Senior Farmer’s Market is adjusting and will be fully available in 2020. This will be accomplished by staff, senior center site managers and Family Connections coordinators working together to help make this happen for our seniors. The Aging and Disability Resource Connection hotline has not missed a beat. The staff and counselors are attentive, knowledgeable and listen to clients who call in. They are ready to help any way possible.

Administration
The FY 2021 Budget Proposal is a balanced budget in the Governmental Funds, and shows an increase in net position of $22,340 in the Enterprise Funds. Due to state decreases in funding and the uncertainty about all funding and the economy in general, the RVRC did not incorporate employee salary increases in this budget. The Special Revenue Funds budgets include about $1.15 million dollars in Federal Cares Act awards that will be used to increase Aging and DOT 5311 services for the region. Finance staff has been managing contract amendments with new federal funding and State cuts. Maintaining a balanced budget for 2020 and proposing a balanced budget for 2021. Highlight their good work under very difficult circumstances.

All staff has been doing a great job working from home, but we are transitioning back into the office in staggered shifts starting July 6. The office will remain closed to walk-ins.

ADJOURN
Randy Howard, RVRC Chairman, requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Melvin Crimes, Webster County, made the above request motion. Tameka Harris, Taylor County, seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Date Aug 26, 2020

Randy Howard
RVRC Chairman

Bruce Hill, Secretary