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River Valley Regional Commission

October 27, 2021

Council Members

(Counties 14)

Bryon Hickey, Muscogee
Bruce Hill, Oglethorpe
Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman, RVRC
Secretary
Chip Jones, Stewart
Damon Hoyte, Chattahoochee
Danny Blackmon, Georgetown-Quitman
Darrell Holbrook, Webster
Doug Etheridge, Harris
Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Muscogee, RVRC Chair
Joe Lee Williams, Stewart
Kenneth Sumpter, Fort Gaines
Kevin Brown, Buena Vista

Maggie McGruther, Sumter
Melvin Crimes, Webster
Mickey George, Macon
Pam Jordan, Talbot
Rebecca White, Randolph
Richard McCorkle, Marion
Rob Grant, Harris
Sam Farrow, Crisp
Sher'Londa Walker, Talbot County
Tameka Harris, Taylor, RVRC Vice-Chair
Tom Queen, Taylor
Wesley Williams, Randolph

Members Not Attending

A.J. Rivers, Crisp
Albert King, Vienna
Barry Whitley, Butler
Bill McClellan, Schley
Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee
Eddie Moore, Georgetown-Quitman
Dr. Edward Lee, Chattahoochee
Eugene Cason, Dooly
Greg Dominy, Schley
James Davenport, Clay
James R. "Bump" Welch, Marion
Jayson Griffin, Macon

Jeanie Bartee, Cordele
Jimmy Babb, Lumpkin
Julie Brown, Hamilton
Mark Waddell, Sumter
Matt Gunnels, Marion
Nelson Brown, Americus
Patrick Shivers, Clay
Randy Howard, Sumter
Skip Henderson, Muscogee
Steve Whatley, Cuthbert
Terrell Hudson, Dooly
Tony Lamar, Talbotton

Others Attending

Mike Beatty, The Beatty Team

Bernard Reynolds, The Beatty Team

Staff

Jim Livingston, Executive Director

Katie Howard, AAA Director

Emily Chambers, Finance Officer

Gerald Mixon, Planning

Janice West, WIOA

Mariyana Kostov, GIS Planner

John Morgan, Bike-Ped Planner

Savannah Brown, Regional Planner

Merri Spence, Executive Secretary

WELCOME AND RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Chair, brought the River Valley Regional Commission council meeting to order at 10:30 A.M. Chair Barnes welcomed visitors Mike Beatty and Bernard Reynolds with The Beatty Team.

Mr. Barnes then gave the invocation and Tameka Harris, Vice-Chair, led the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 22, 2021 MINUTES*

Council reviewed the September 22, 2021 meeting minutes which were emailed to council members the previous week for their review. The minutes were also included in the council packets that were available at the meeting.

There being no additions or changes, Pops Barnes, Chair, requested a motion to approve the September 22, 2021 council minutes as presented.

Darrell Holbrook, Webster County, made the motion to approve the September 22, 2021 minutes as presented; Melvin Crimes, Webster County, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

TIA UPDATE

Jim Livingston, Executive Director gave the TIA Update. Mr. Livingston reported that the Executive Committee of the River Valley TIA Roundtable met and approved the draft final investment list. The list includes 46 projects and almost \$400 million of overall investments and an additional \$160 million leveraged from state and federal resources.

Three key items in the plan:

1. Everything the City of Columbus requested was included in the plan
2. Highway 280 will be completed from Cordele to Americus
3. Every county in the region has a least one project on the list

The list can be found on the RVRC website - [Transportation Investment Act \(rivervalleyrc.org\)](https://rivervalleyrc.org) Three public hearings are scheduled (open houses) the week of November 15. The first public hearing will be

in Cuthbert (November 15), the second in Montezuma (November 16) and the third in Columbus (November 18). All are scheduled for 5:30 p.m. The Full Roundtable will meet on December 15 to approve the list. The final list as approved by the Full Roundtable will be delivered to the local county elections supervisors for the May 2022 elections.

Mike Beatty – The Beatty Team

Mike Beatty spoke of his history working with different state agencies and with the Regional Commissions. Mr. Beatty spoke of a service The Beatty Team offers to help communities work together to find resources to benefit the community as a whole. Contact information for The Beatty Team is 404-862-5615.

AARP Age Friendly Region Application*

Mr. Barnes noted that the AARP presentation last month required Council action to apply for Age Friendly regional designation.

Mr. Barnes requested the motion to approve the application to become an AARP Age Friendly Region. Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County, made the motion to approve the application and the motion was seconded by Melvin Crimes, Webster County. The motion was passed with no opposition.

Authorizing Resolutions to Execute GDOT 5311 and 5304 Applications*

Savannah Brown, Regional Planner, asked for a vote to renew two authorizing resolutions. The first was the GDOT 5311 which includes the RVRC mobility management project. Ms. Brown informed the Council that there was no increase in the budget for this application. Mr. Barnes asked for a motion to approve the resolution. A motion was made by Damon Hoyt, Chattahoochee County, to approve the resolution and was seconded by Melvin Crimes, Webster County. The motion was passed with no opposition.

Ms. Brown said the second application being applied for is the GDOT 5304 which helps aid in our statewide transit planning. The transit plan being worked on right now is for Chattahoochee, Harris and Marion counties and is helping to expand the lower Chattahoochee Region Transit Authority. Mr. Barnes asked for a motion to approve on this application. A motion to approve was made by Darryl Holbrook, Webster County, and was seconded by Melvin Crimes, Webster County. The motion was passed with no opposition.

BUDGET AMENDMENT 1*

Budget Amendment 1 accounts for \$742,873 in additional revenues that have been identified or awarded since the initial budget was presented, including a \$242k Consolidated Appropriations Act contract from Division of Aging Services, all of which is designated for the Home Delivered Meals program in our region. Most of these revenues are being passed through to providers and thus had no net effect on the RC's bottom line. However, this amendment does show a projected change in fund balance for the General Fund of \$118,804, an \$81k increase from the original budget. Along with a \$4k increase in projected net position change in the enterprise funds, the overall effect of this budget amendment is \$85,000 additional dollars of government-wide net position increase. This amendment

comes with the recommendation of the Executive Committee who approved it prior to the council meeting.

Mr. Barnes asked for a motion to approve the Budget Amendment 1. A motion to approve was made by Mickey George, Macon County. Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

STAFF REPORTS

Emily Chambers, Finance Officer, reported that through August, there was an increase in fund balance of \$31,000 in the General Funds and a slight decrease in net position of \$284 in the enterprise funds. Both operating revenues and expenditures are under budget for the first two months, but those should pick up as the year progresses. At August 31, the General Fund cash on hand was \$817k and unassigned fund balance of \$941k.

Katie Howard, AAA Director, reported The River Valley Area Agency on Aging will be holding two (2) virtual Public Hearings. The first is October 29 and the second is scheduled for November 5. Both will be held at 10 a.m. A flyer with the zoom information will be sent to all Council members today. A request for community input on how we should use the new ARP money which we will receive in the Spring has been sent out. There is an on-line survey on the website (www.rivervalleyaging.org) and everyone is encouraged to fill it out as well as share this information with others who are interested in services for seniors and persons with disability in our region.

Gerald Mixon, Planning/Community Development Director, announced there is a page on the RVRC website filled with the initial release of 2020 Census data that is ready for release. The information should be easily accessible and of benefit for local redistricting. Earlier this year there was key personnel turnover (the RVRC consultant) in the environmental engineering firm assisting with the U.S. EPA-funded Brownfield project. After reviewing the six respondents to the RFQ selection process the successful bidder is already at work. The change will have a nominal impact on the project budget. Staff facilitated three Bike Events in the past month; Plains, Lumpkin and Americus. The RVRC is nearing completion of twenty-one applications to the Georgia Office of Planning and Budget for American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Applications are addressing the need for Broadband, water/sanitary sewer and economic recovery. Progress continues with pre-disaster mitigation and comprehensive plans.

Janice West, WIOA Director, reported the WIOA Department has resolved and closed PY 2020 State WIOA monitoring. As of October, WOA enrollment totaled 69 individuals in various training services. WIOA Providers are conducting outreach and recruitment efforts for new WIOA participants. Spring Semester 2022 WIOA applications are being taken for educational training with colleges, universities, and private training providers.

The regional unemployment rate for August 2021 was 4.4%. This was a decrease from the 7.3% unemployment rate in August 2020. Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims continue to be filed in the region, but those numbers have also decreased over the past few months.

South Georgia Technical College hosted a job fair on October 19th. The event was well attended by employers and job seekers. Employers from the region and outside of the region participated in the job fair event. Employers are continuing to hire employees to fill open employment positions.

ADJOURN

As there was not further business, Mr. Barnes requested a motion for the meeting to be adjourned. Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County, made the motion to adjourn and Darryl Holbrook, Webster County, seconded the motion. The motion was passed with no opposition.

November 17, 2021

Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Chair

Carvel Lewis, Secretary