



RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
Buena Vista, GA
April 26, 2023
10:30 A.M.
Meeting Minutes

Council Members (Counties Represented: 12)

Albert King, Vienna	Joe Lee Williams, Stewart
Barbara Cullifer, Lumpkin	Kevin Brown, Buena Vista
Barry Whitley, Butler	Lee Kinnamon, Americus
Bobby Jenkins, Cuthbert	Maggie McGruther, Sumter
Bruce Hill, Oglethorpe	Melvin Crimes, Webster
Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee	Randy Howard, Sumter
Chip Jones, Stewart	Ransom Farley, Hamilton
Darrell Holbrook, Webster	Richard McCorkle, Marion
Doug Ethridge, Harris	Shane Grier, Marion
James Davenport, Clay	Tameka Harris, Taylor, RVRC Vice-Chair
Jayson Griffin, Macon	Terrell Hudson, Dooly
Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Muscogee, RVRC Chair	Timothy Biddle, Chattahoochee

Members Not Attending

Bill McClellan, Schley	Kenneth Sumpter, Fort Gaines
Carl Oliver, Macon	Larry Sparks, Talbot County
Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman, RVRC Secretary	Rebecca White, Randolph
Eugene Cason, Dooly	Rob Grant, Harris
Greg Dominey, Schley	Skip Henderson, Columbus
J.R. Dowdy, Crisp	Tom Queen, Taylor
Jessie Smith, Sumter	Tony Lamar, Talbotton
Joshua Deriso, Cordele	Xavier McCaskey, Columbus
Jeff McCarter, Randolph	

Others Present

Natalie Bradley, Flint Energies	Chloe Landreth, New Horizons Behavioral Health
Brenda Williams, Senator Warnock's Office	Tammye Pettyjohn Jones, One Sumter Americus
Tom Horn, Columbus Water Works	Laura Gower, Congressman Ferguson's Office
Kelvin Lewis, Macon	Christopher Drake, Congressman Bishop's Office
Alyse Wolfe, Senator Ossoff's Office	Max Kirby, Congressman Ferguson's Office
Rayetta Volley, Sumter	Saralyn Stafford, Carl Vinson UGA
Vicki Wainwright, Butler	Brandon Cockrell, Fort Benning
Mary Stevens, Talbot	
Susan Gallagher, New Horizons Behavioral Health	

RVRC Staff Attending

Jim Livingston, Executive Director
Mariyana Kostov, GIS Manager
Katie Howard, AAA Director
Rick Morris, Director of Planning and Govt. Services
Janice West, WIOA Director
John Morgan, Regional Planner

Merri Spence, Executive Secretary
Tammy Collins, Finance Officer
Allison Slocum, Assistant Director of Planning
Kia Barrow, Assistant AAA Director
Kristal Blue, Financial Assistant

WELCOME AND RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Muscogee, RVRC Chair, brought the meeting to order and welcomed visitors. Chair Barnes led the council in prayer and Vice-Chair Tameka Harris, Taylor County lead the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jim Livingston, Executive Director asked one of the visitors, Brandon Cockrell, Fort Benning to speak briefly about the transition from Ft. Benning to Ft. Moore. Mr. Cockrell explained who Hal and Julia Moore were and the things they did that benefited Ft. Benning. Ft. Moore will be the first facility to be named after a family. He explained there will be a ceremony to be held in two weeks to change the name to Ft. Moore.

APPROVAL OF APRIL MINUTES*

The council reviewed the April 26, 2023 meeting minutes which were emailed to 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, Chair Barnes asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was made by Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee County and seconded by Albert King, Vienna. The motion passed with no opposition.

ANNOUNCE THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Chair Barnes explained that it was time to select the Nominating Committee to elect officers for the Regional Commission and to select the Executive Committee for the Regional Commission. Mr. Barnes said Carvel Lewis, Vice-Chair will be calling individuals on the Council to ask them to serve on the Nominating Committee.

RIVER VALLEY COMMUNITY COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FT. MOORE/FT. BENNING

Saralyn Stafford, Carl Vinson Institute of Government at UGA, spoke about the River Valley Community Compatible Development Program. Ms. Stafford explained the partnership to develop plans and strategies to promote compatible land uses, natural resource protection and sustainable economic development in the region. This partnership is to help develop Economic Development plans for five counties in Georgia and one county in Alabama. The Army Compatible Use Buffer Advisory Council (ACUB) was formed in 2008 with two strategic initiatives: 1) Create a buffer around Fort Moore/Benning for both the military and the community, and 2) Initiate prescriptive burning in the buffer land. In 2019, ACUB added a third strategic initiative: 3) Identify the nexus between the ACUB initiatives and rural economic development.

Jim Livingston, RVRC Executive Director was approached by ACUB regarding the new third strategic initiative, and Saralyn Stafford with CVIOG was invited to meet with the Board to discuss possible collaborative planning efforts to meet the new objective. Ms. Stafford shared a very informative presentation that will be sent to all board members that explains the initiative.

STAFF REPORTS

Kia Barrow, Assistant AAA Director reported the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) and Options Counselors (OC) continue to facilitate outreach in the community and nursing homes. The ADRC/OC are also attending training classes. As a result, the ADRC/OC received 223 referrals in March, three clients were referred for respite, 16 clients for home delivered meals, 10 clients for homemaker and 8 clients for personal care assistance. Our annual Wellness Fair will be held on May 12th at the Columbus Convention and Trade Center from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. The first 350 people will receive free T-shirts.

Emily Chambers, Finance Officer reported through February, the RC had an increase in fund balance in the Governmental Funds of about \$102,000, leaving Unassigned Fund Balance of \$1,085,000. Cash on hand in those funds was \$525,000 at the end of February. The Enterprise Funds have an increase in net position of \$16,000 for the year and a total net position of about \$2 million, with \$1 million cash available. The Finance Department is working on the FY24 budget and will present it at the June council meeting.

Janice West, WIOA Director reported as of April 17th WIOA has 110 individuals in various training activities. In-School Youth Services is working with Marion, Taylor and Webster County high school seniors with career pathways, work readiness and work experience services. Summer semester is coming for individuals attending college and universities. WIOA enrollment will be increasing as the summer semester begins. On-The-Job Training (OJT) services are increasing as several area employers are participating in OJT. WIOA staff has completed the current year monitoring of the WIOA service providers that administer WIOA training activities. Monitoring results identified minor observations and required actions. WIOA service providers are doing a good job for the region.

Rick Morris, Director of Planning and Govt. Services reported the Georgia Department of Community Affairs is getting to the end of the review of five regional plans in the state including ours. If you would like a copy of the plan, please call Allison Slocum. Our elected officials have been busy changing laws in zoning. Transit is helping out with a big event in Americus. The Middle Flint Senior Picnic is coming up and we're accommodating 50 individuals with rides to the picnic but we need help in getting an additional 100 to the event. If you know of any church buses or vans that are willing to help please call Michael Murray in Transportation. John Morgan has a lot going on in Bike/Ped. Events coming up in Columbus are 1) Ride with the Mayor 2) Bike to Work Day 3) Ride of Silence and 4) Midtown Bike Around. The planning department is currently working on 25 different grants.

ADJOURN

As there was no further business, Chair Barnes requested a motion for the meeting to be adjourned. Motion was made by Darrell Holbrook, Webster County and seconded by Melvin Crimes, Webster County. The meeting was adjourned.

June 28, 2023

Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Chair

Carvel Lewis, Secretary