RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
Buena Vista, GA
October 23, 2024,
10:30 A.M.
Meeting Minutes

Council Members (Counties Represented: 13)

Albert King, Vienna
Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee County
Darell Holbrook, Webster County
Doug Ethridge, Harris County
Eugene Cason, Dooly County
J.R. Dowdy II, Crisp County, Vice Chair
James Davenport, Clay County
Jayson Griffin, Macon County
Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County
Joshua Deriso, Cordele
Kevin Brown, Buena Vista
Larry Sparks, Talbot County
Maggie McGruther, Sumter County
Melvin Crimes, Webster County
Randy Howard, Sumter County
Rob Marion, Chattahoochee County
Shane Grier, Marion County
Tameka Harris, Taylor County, RVRC Secretary
Terrell Hudson, Dooly County
Tim Biddle, Chattahoochee County
Xavier McCaskey, Columbus

Members Not Attending

Barbara Cullefer, Lumpkin
Barry Whitley, Butler
Bill McClellan, Schley County
Bobby Jenkins, Cuthbert
Carl Oliver, Macon County
Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County, Chair
Danny Blackmon, Georgetown-Quitman County
Jeff McCarter, Randolph County
Jim Reid, Sumter County
Jimmy Daniels, Oglethorpe
Kenneth Sumpter, Fort Gaines
Leah Clark, Ellaville
Lee KInnamon, Americus
Patrick Whearley, Hamilton
Richard McCorkle, Marion County
Rob Grant, Harris County
Skip Henderson, Columbus
Tom Queen, Taylor County
Tony Lamar, Talbotton
Toyia Ticker, Columbus

Others Present

Allyson Drinnon, Congressman Bishop's office
Charles Auer, Fort Moore
Chole Landreth, New Horizons
Christopher Drake, Congressman Bishop's office
Clark Harrell, Crisp County
Jason Cooper, Terracon Consultants
Kenneth Franks, TIA Office, GDOT
Laura Gower, Congressman Ferguson's Office
Paul Farr, SGTC
Rebecca White, DCA
Tom Horn, Columbus Water Works
Willam Eastin, TIA Office, GDOT

RVRC Staff

Tracie Hadaway, Director of Planning and Govt. Services
Addis Bugg, Administration
John Morgan, Planning
Laura Schneider, Planning

Kia Barrow, Aging
Allison Slocum, Planning
Destinee Williams, Planning
Mariyana Kostov, Planning
Janice West, WIOA
Tammy Collins, Finance

WELCOME AND RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

J.D. Dowdy, RVRC Vice-Chairman, brought the meeting to order and welcomed visitors. Tameka Harris, Secretary, led the council in prayer, and J.D. Dowdy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF JUNE MINUTES*

The council reviewed the September 25, 2024, 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, Vice-Chairman Dowdy asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was made by Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee County, and seconded by Darell Holbrook, Webster County. The motion passed with no opposition.

TIA UPDATE

William Eastin, with the Transportation Investment Act (TIA) Office and GDOT, provided an update on TIA in the River Valley. In 2012, voters in three Georgia regions approved a 10-year one percent sales tax to fund regional and local transportation improvements. During these 10 years, the River Valley had over $512 million, with seventy-six projects leading to construction, sixty-one completed projects, and nearly $150 million in expenditures. The project was then extended another 10 years. As of the most recent quarter, the River Valley region has $103,798,467 in collections. TIA 2 is expected to have forty-five projects with a projected total of nearly $400 million. Currently, TIA 2 has thirty projects in planning and design, three in construction, and one completed project. There are several resurfacing projects, projects in the concept, preliminary, and preconstruction phases.

REPORT ON FY19 EPA BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT COALITION GRANT

Jason Cooper, with Terracon Consultants, provided the council with an update on the FY19 EPA Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant. A brownfield site is a property whose full use is hindered by fears of environmental contamination. Brownfield examples include vacant and abandoned properties, dry cleaners, former gas stations, etc. The RVRC was awarded a $600,000 Assessment Grant in Crisp, Dooly, Macon, and Sumter Counties. Grant tasks include Brownfield site identification Phase I and II environmental site assessments (ESA), remediation and reuse planning, community outreach, and regulatory reporting. There are 31 RVRC sites within the four counties, including industrial parks, bulk petroleum facilities, former schools, gas stations, open or vacant land, and more. The brownfield assessment has resulted in the reuse of dilapidated and abandoned buildings and clarified future options for the redevelopment of properties.

STAFF REPORTS

Tracie Hadaway, Director of Planning and Government Services reported that staff hosted region-wide Zoning 101 training on October 22nd for Quitman County, and October 16 for the city of Reynolds. Staff will provide training for Cuthbert on October 30th, with fifteen people signing up. Staff plans to submit a regional EPA Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant application for FY25, due November 14th. Staff also plan to submit an EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant application for the former Ideal School site, due November 14th. Staff began working on the Talbot and Marion counties comprehensive plans.

Kia Barrow, AAA Assistant Director, reported that the AAA has nearly 415 people on the waiting list for services but expects to serve those on the list within a year. Staff continue the development of a Dementia Care coalition. Clay and Quitman counties held their second Dementia Building Our Network of Dementia Support (BONDS) Coalition. As part of the 2025 Area Plan, Area Agencies on Aging are required to update disaster plans for all centers and meet new requirements. These new requirements will help increase safety for clients.

Janice West, WIOA Director, reported that a total of 90 individuals were served during the enrollment period from July 1, 2024, through October 8, 2024, in various WIOA funded training activities. Enrollment is expected to go up during the next

enrollment period, which begins in December and ends in January. The state unemployment rate was 3.6%, lower than the regional rate of 5.2%.

Tammy Collins, Finance Officer, reported that the review of documentation for the annual audit is complete. The auditors are now working on putting the financial statements together and will present the audit at the December meeting. The finance department is working to complete financial activities for the first quarter of FY25. There was a net increase in fund balance in the operating funds leaving a July 31, 2024, unassigned fund balance of $1,087,000. Cash on hand in the general fund on July 31, 2024, was $503,000. The enterprise funds had an increase in net position of $4,600 in July. Total net position in the loan funds is $ 2,052,000 with a cash on hand of $1.3 million available for lending.

ADJOURN*

As there was no further business, Vice-Chairman Dowdy requested a motion for the meeting to be adjourned. A motion was made by Darell Holbrook, Webster County, and seconded by Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee County. The motion passed with no opposition. The meeting was adjourned.

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December 11, 2024 Carvel Lewis, Chairman

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Tameka Harris, Secretary