RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
Buena Vista, GA April 23, 2025,
10:30 A.M.
Meeting Minutes

Council Members (Counties Represented: 13)

Albert King, Vienna
Bobby Jenkins, Cuthbert
Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County, RVRC Chair
Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee County
Darrell Holbrook, Webster County
Dennis Thomas, Lumpkin
James Davenport, Clay County
Jayson Griffin, Macon County
Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County
Ken Chapman, Talbot County
Kenneth Sumpter, Ft. Gaines
Kevin Brown, Buena Vista
Lee Kinnamon, Americus
Maggie McGruther, Sumter County
Melvin Crimes, Webster County
Randy Howard, Sumter County
Richard McCorkle, Chattahoochee County
Rob Marion, Chattahoochee County
Timothy Biddle, Chattahoochee County
Tom Queen, Taylor County
Toyia Tucker, Columbus

Members Not Attending

Barry Whitley, Butler
David Kinsley, Georgetown-Quitman County
Doug Ethridge, Harris County
Eugene Cason, Dooly County
Jack Clark, Schley County
Jeffrey McCarter, Randolph County
Jim Reid, Sumter County
Jimmy Daniels, Oglethorpe
Joshua Deriso, Cordele
J. R. Dowdy III, Crisp County, Vice-Chair
Linda Barfield, Macon County
Patrick Whearley, Hamilton
Richard McCorkle, Marion County
Rob Grant, Harris County
Shane Grier, Marion County
Shane Tondee, Ellaville
Skip Henderson, Columbus
Tameka Harris, Taylor County
Terrell Hudson, Dooly County
Tony Lamar, Talbotton
Xavier McCaskey, Columbus

Others Present

Allyson Drinnon, Congressman Bishop's Office
Andy Camp, Thomas & Hutton
Charles Auer, Fort Benning
Chirsty Bozeman, GA DEcD
Christoper Drake, Congressman Bishop Office
Connie Harris, Marion County
Grace Barret, Georgia Tech.
Grant Buckley, Crisp Co. Ind. Dev. Authority
Greg Panzer, Harris Co. Dev. Authority
Heidi Goodie, RESA
Mandy White, Randolph Co. Dev. Authority
Mary Stevens, Talbot Co. Chamber of Commerce
Mike Dempsey
Rebecca White, DCA

RVRC Staff

Jim Livingston, Executive Director
Tracie Hadaway, Director of Planning and Govt. Services
Katie Howard, Director of Area Agency on Aging
Addis Bugg, Administration
Destinee Williams, Planning
Mariyana Kostov, Planning
Janice West, WIOA
Tammy Collins, Finance

WELCOME AND RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Randy Howard, Sumter County, brought the meeting to order and welcomed visitors. Melvin Crimes, Webster County, led the council in prayer, and in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES*

The council reviewed the March 26, 2025, 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, Randy Howard, Sumter County, asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was made by Darrell Holbrook, Webster County, and seconded by Lee Kinnamon, Americus. The motion passed with no opposition.

New RESA Regional Completion School

Ricky McCorkle, Chattahoochee-Flint RESA Executive Director, and Heidi Goodie, STEM Specialist with Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) presented on the agency's wide range of programs promoting education, including Champions of Education, Georgia TAP, and Leadership Alternative. These programs are pathways into education, addressing teacher shortages, and providing ongoing professional development for educators.

Georgia Tech AIM Program

Jim Livingston, RVRC Executive Director, introduced Grace Barrett, Associate Project Manager, with Georgia Institute of Technology, and Andy Camp, with Thomas and Hutton. Grace discussed forming a steering committee and the process of developing a strategic plan, with a focus on integrating infrastructure into the pilot project. Andy presented the pilot project's use of AI to identify counties with access to transmission lines, and fiber infrastructure.

Columbus Office Building Refinancing*

Tammy Collins, RVRC Financial Officer, presented the resolution for the Columbus office building. The council reviewed the resolution, which was also included in the council packets available at the meeting. There being no additions or changes, Chairman Carvel Lewis, Georgetown, asked for a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was made by Lee Kinnamon, Americus, and seconded by Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County. The motion passed with no opposition.

STAFF REPORTS

Tracie Hadaway, Director of Planning and Government Services, reported staff have begun work on the regional bicycle-pedestrian plan update. Staff completed a DRI submittal from Crisp County on April 3rd. Staff will hold a Pre-Hazard Mitigation Plan training session for surrounding RCs on May 2nd at the RVRC Columbus office. The RVRC staff has submitted a Letter of Intent to continue LDD status in this Fiscal Year. Staff attended the kick-off meeting on April 3rd.

Katie Howard, AAA Director, reported that the Senior Wellness Fair is on May 1, 2025, at the Columbus Civic Center. There is a total of 384 on the waitlist' however, Respite Care does not have a waiting list for all counties except for Macon and Webster Counties. The FY26 Area Plan for services for seniors in the River Valley Region has been submitted to the Division of Aging. Waivers were submitted to allow the AAA to continue to provide Chronic Disease Self-Management, Diabetes Self-Management, and Matter of Balance classes. Anyone interested in hosting a Matter of Balance fall prevention class should contact Franetta Miles at the Columbus office.

Janice West, WIOA Director, reported that a total of 110 individuals were served for the enrollment period from July 1, 2024, through April 15, 2025. Unemployment Rate for Georgia for February 2025 was 4.4%. The regional unemployment Rate was 4.4%. WIOA staff are in the planning phase for the upcoming program year 2025-2026. WIOA is anticipating another funding decrease for the upcoming year.

Tammy Collins, RVRC Financial Officer, gave the council the February 2025 Financial Report. The February 2025 financial report includes an increase in fund balance in the general fund, leaving a February 28th unassigned fund balance of $1,241,000. Cash on hand in the general fund on February 28, 2025, was $917,000. The proprietary funds had an increase in net position of $2,400. The total net position in the loan funds is $2.1 million with a cash on hand of $1.4 million available for lending.

Adjourn*

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

June 25, 2025

Carvel Lewis

Tameka Harris, Secretary