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

Council Members (Counties Represented: 12)

Timothy Biddle, Chattahoochee County
Kevin Brown, City of Buena Vista
Eugene Cason, Dooly County
Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee County
Melvin Crimes, Webster County
James Davenport, Clay County
J. R. Dowdy III, Crisp County, Vice-Chair
Doug Ethridge, Harris County
Rob Grant, Harris County
Jayson Griffin, Macon County
Randy Howard, Sumter County
Terrell Hudson, Dooly County
Bobby Jenkins, Cuthbert
Albert King, Vienna
Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County, Chair
Rob Marion, Chattahoochee County
Richard McCorkle, Marion County
Dennis Thomas, Lumpkin
Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County

Members Not Attending

Linda Barfield, Macon County
Ken Chapman, Talbot County
Jimmy Daniels, Oglethorpe
Jack Clark, Schley County
Joshua Deriso, Cordele
Shane Grier, Marion County
Tameka Harris, Taylor County
Skip Henderson, Columbus
Darrell Holbrook, Webster County
Lee Kinnamon, Americus
Jeffrey McCarter, Randolph County
Xavier McCaskey, Columbus
Maggie McGruther, Sumter County
Tom Queen, Taylor County
Jim Reid, Sumter County
Kenneth Sumpter, Ft. Gaines
Shane Tondee, Ellaville
Toyia Tucker, Columbus
Patrick Whearley, Hamilton
Barry Whitley, Butler

Others Present

Allyson Drinnon, Congressman Bishop Office
Christopher Drake, Congressman Bishop Office
Clark Harrell, Harris County Manager
Debra Stokes, GA Council on Aging
Mary Stevens, Talbot County Chamber
Micky Dunnavant, Crisp County Manager
Mike Dempsey, Ft. Benning
Natalie Bradley, Flint EMC
Nicole Acree, Taylor Dev. Authority
Rebecca White, DCA

RVRC Staff

Jim Livingston, Executive Director
Tammy Collins, Financial Officer
Tracie Hadaway, Director of Planning and Govt. Services
Katie Howard, Director of Area Agency on Aging
Janice West, Director of WIOA
Addis Bugg, Administration
Allison Slocum, Assist. Director of Planning and Govt. Services
Blaine Hoskins, Regional Planner
Destinee Williams, Regional Planner
Ian Perry, Community Development
Mariyana Kostov, GIS Specialist
Laura Schneider, Regional Planner
Scottie DeClue, RFP/Eco. Dev. Manager

Welcome and Recognition of Visitors

Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County, brought the meeting to order, welcomed visitors and, led the council in prayer and Dick Dowdy, Crisp County, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AMENDMENT OF THE AGENDA*

Chairman Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County, asked for a motion to amend the agenda for December 10, 2025, to add a discussion about RVRC audit. The motion was made by Rob Grant, Harris County, and second by Charles Coffee, Chattahoochee County. The motion passed with no opposition.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MINUTES*

The council reviewed the October 22, 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, Chairman Lewis, asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was made by Rob Grant, Harris County, and seconded by Albert King, City of Vienna. The motion passed with no opposition.

AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT AUDIT*

Chairman Lewis, informed the council that the auditors need a month to complete the RVRC audit. This was due to a change in federal policy that was not received until middle November. To avoid requesting an extension, the Executive Committee recommended that the full council authorize the Executive Committee to review and accept the completed audit prior to the January Council meeting. The finalized audit would be formally presented to the council at the January meeting. Chairman Lewis, asked for a motion to allow the Executive Committee to accept the audit and submit it to the state. The motion was made by Randy Howard, Sumter County, and seconded by Melvin Crimes, Webster County. The motion passed with no opposition.

CO-AGE & 2026 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES OVERVIEW

Katie Howard, Director of Area Agency on Aging, introduce Debra Stokes, Executive Director of the Georgia Council on Aging, who provided an informative overview of CO-AGE and the Councils 2026 Legislative priorities. Debra discussed the concept of active aging and highlighted the importance of supporting older Georgians through health, participation, and security as outlined in the World Health Organization active aging framework. She shared updated demographic trends showing the rapid growth of Georgia's aging population and emphasized the increasing need for home and community-based services, caregiver supports, and policies addressing transportation, housing, and health equity. Debra also outlined the 2026 proposed issues, including increased funding for non-Medicaid Home and Community Based Services, development of a statewide Master Plan on Aging, support of behavioral health coaches, HB 529 regarding online automatic renewal transparency. She also highlighted past CO-AGE advocacy successes and encourage ongoing engagement through membership, legislative outreach and participation in Senior Day at the Capitol.

RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT LEAD BASE PAINT ADVISOR*

Ian Perry, RVRC Community Development Specialist, provided an update on current housing projects and grant deadlines. He reported that the RVRC is administering two Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs), two Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) projects, as well as new CHIP grants awarded this year. Ian reminded members that the application deadline for the 2026 CHIP cycle is January 1st, with the next CDBG deadline scheduled for April. He also presented a resolution to approve a Lead-Based Paint Advisor for use on awarded housing projects, ensuring compliance and safety across all program activities. Chairman Lewis, asked a motion to accept the resolution. The motion was made by Albert King, City of Vienna, and seconded by Melvin Crimes, Webster County. The motion passed with no opposition.

RESOLUTION TO SUBMIT EPA BROWNFIELD ASSESSMENT COALITION GRANT FUNDING*

Tracie Hadaway, Director of Planning and Government Services, presented a resolution requesting approval to apply for EPA Brownfield Assessment Coalition Grant funding. She explained that the grant would support the development of a Brownfield site inventory and facilitate community outreach efforts aimed at advancing redevelopment and environmental planning across the region. Chairman Lewis, asked for a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was made by Randy Howard, and seconded by Albert King, City of Vienna. The motion passed with no opposition.

STAFF REPORTS

Tammy Collins, Financial Officer, Fringe rate for October 2025 was reported as 49% and the indirect rate for the same period was 44.5%. The General fund has a net increase of $66,400 and a cash on hand of $425,250 on October 31, 2025. The proprietary funds had an increase in net position of $1,000 and a cash on hand of $1.6 million available for lending.

Tracie Hadaway, Director of Planning and Government Services, mentioned that the RVRC was waiting on the signed grant agreement from FHWA to begin the Safe Streets For All Safety Action Plan. The RVRC staff will be working on two initiatives with UGA in the upcoming year. Ms. Hadaway stated that the staff was preparing three CHIP applications and six CDBG applications.

Katie Howard, AAA Director, shared information about the Area Plan process for FY27 which is underway. A Request for

Proposal has been issued for Evidence Based Programs which is due next week. A Needs Assessment Survey has been distributed which will be used to prioritize limited resources. She also reviewed the Wait List highlighting the availability of Respite for Caregivers and the Caregiver Time Out program.

Janice West, WIOA Director, reported that a total of 62 individuals were served for the enrollment period from July 1, 2024, through December 9, 2025. WIOA Staff have been working on a Rapid Response event with Big Tex Trailers in Cordele as the company will be closing the Cordele business in January 2026. It is anticipated that 100 employes will be impacted by the business closure. WIOA and other community party agencies will be assisting the laid-off employees with resources, employment and educational opportunities. WIOA State, local and regional Plans will be updated during the 2026 time period. GA WIOA State Plan will be due in spring and local/regional Plans will be due late summer or fall 2026.

ADJOURN*

As there was no further business. A motion was made by Darrell Holbrock, Webster County, and seconded by Albert King, City of Vienna to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with no opposition.

December 10, 2025.

Carvel Lewis, Chairman

Tameka Harris, Secretary