RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
Buena Vista, GA
September 24, 2025
10:30 A.M.
Meeting Minutes

Council Members (Counties Represented: 14)

Linda Barfield, Macon County
Timothy Biddle, Chattahoochee County
Kevin Brown, City of Buena Vista
Jack Clark, Schley County
Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee County
Melvin Crimes, Webster County
James Davenport, Clay County
Joshua Deriso, Cordele
J. R. Dowdy III, Crisp County, Vice-Chair
Rob Grant, Harris County
Shane Grier, Marion County
Jayson Griffin, Macon County
Darrell Holbrook, Webster County
Randy Howard, Sumter County
Terrell Hudson, Dooly County
Bobby Jenkins, Cuthbert
Albert King, Vienna
Tony Lamar, Talbotton
Rob Marion, Chattahoochee County
Richard McCorkle, Marion County
Maggie McGruther, Sumter County
Tom Queen, Taylor County
Dennis Thomas, Lumpkin
Toyia Tucker, Columbus
Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County

Members Not Attending

Eugene Cason, Dooly County
Ken Chapman, Talbot County
Jimmy Daniels, Oglethorpe
Doug Ethridge, Harris County
Tameka Harris, Taylor County, Secretary
Skip Henderson, Columbus
Lee Kinnamon, Americus
David Kinsey, Georgetown-Quitman County
Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County, Chair
Jeffrey McCarter, Randolph County
Xavier McCaskey, Columbus
Jim Reid, Sumter County
Kenneth Sumpter, Ft. Gaines
Shane Tondee, Ellaville
Patrick Whearley, Hamilton
Barry Whitley, Butler

Others Present

Allyson Drinnon, Congressman Bishop's Office
Amy Bryan, Direct Services
Carolyn Parker, Talbot Co. Chamber
Chirsty Bozeman, GA DEcD
Chris Kelley, Congressman Bishop's Office
Mandy White, Randolph Co. Dev. Authority
Mark Lewis, TCSG Rep.
Mike Dempsey, Ft. Benning
Micky Dunnavant, Crisp County Manager
Natalie Bradley, Flint EMC
Norm Graves, Middle Flint Councilor Aging
Nicole Acree, Taylor Dev. Authority
Rebecca White, DCA

RVRC Staff

Jim Livingston, Executive Director
Katie Howard, Director of Area Agency on Aging
Tracie Hadaway, Director of Planning and Govt. Services
Addis Bugg, Administration
Camille Bielby, Regional Planner
Destinee Williams, Regional Planner
Mariyana Kostov, GIS Specialist
Janice West, Director of WIOA

Welcome and Recognition of Visitors

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

APPROVAL OF AUGUST MINUTES*

The council reviewed the August 27, 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, Dick Dowdy, Crisp County, asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was made by Toyia Tucker, City of Columbus, and seconded by Darrell Holbrook, Webster County. The motion passed with no opposition.

Tunnel 2 Tower (T2T) Overview

Jim Livingston, RVRC Executive Director, introduced Casie Dring, Tunnel 2 Towers (T2T), Volunteer Event Director. Casie, spoke about the 5K event to be held Saturday November 15th from 10AM-1PM, Location, Centerpoint Schoolhouse 3420 CO RD 124, Preston GA. She also spoke about the education and counseling services that T2T offer, how the program supports and benefits those who serve in the U.S.

Overview of Agencies and Services for Senior

Jim Livingston, RVRC Executive Director, introduced Amy Bryan from Direct Services. Amy spoke about programs they offer, including Homemaker-Aide, the Meals on Wheels program and other resources available to seniors and caregivers. Norman Graves addressed the role of Middle Flint Council on Aging, highlighting their services such as delivered meals, senior centers, community care and services, and the nutrition education program. Norman also mentioned the annual senior picnic held in May.

Report of Broadband Update

Jim Livingston, RVRC Executive Director, introduced Camille Bielby, RVRC Regional Planner. Camille explained where BEAD program currently stands in the process. She also discussed the projects that were awarded in each community: SpaceX, Windstream, and MediaOne, and provided data to the council. Overall, the region has seen $248,875,688 in broadband investment through multiple different Federal and State funding sources.

STAFF REPORTS

Tammy Collins, Financial Officer, reported that the finance team is preparing for the upcoming audit for FY2025. The July 2025 financial report was presented. The operating fund had an increase in fund balance of $ 78,871 for the month of July. Cash on hand was $ 805,684. The fringe rate for July 2025 was 64.4% and the indirect rate was 56.1%. The enterprise funds had an increase in net position of $ 6,457. We have $1.47 million available for lending.

Tracie Hadaway, Director of Planning and Government Services, introduced the new staff report format. Along with the usual information, there are some new features to help council members find information more easily. These include an overall Table of Contents, and tables showing important timeframes and updates for Community Comprehensive Plans, Service Delivery Strategies, and Hazard Mitigation Plans.

Katie Howard, AAA Director, shared that almost 4,000 people will be served in the region for the Senior Farmers' Market. Also, the Wellness Team will have completed 21 Matter of Balance classes between July 1 and September 30. She asked that members review the Wait List included in the staff report and make referrals to the ADRC.

Janice West, WIOA Director, reported that a total of 63 individuals were served for the enrollment period from July 1, 2024, through September 23, 2025. Unemployment Rate for Georgia for July 2025 was 3.4%. The regional Unemployment Rate was 4.8%. Youth In-School (ISY) services outreach and recruitment is ongoing in several county high schools. Youth Out of School (OSY) outreach and recruitment is also on going in the region. Fall semester enrollments for Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) with area colleges and universities have been completed. WIOA Providers will soon begin outreach and recruitment for ITA customers for the Spring 2026 semester. Youth Work Experience and On-The-Job Training (OJT) is actively conducting employer worksite recruitment for those services.

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.

September 24, 2025.

Carvel Lewis, Chairman

Tameka Harris, Secretary