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## RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Buena Vista, GA

June 28, 2023

10:30 A.M.

Meeting Minutes

### **Council Members (Counties Represented: 16)**

Albert King, Vienna	Joe Lee Williams, Stewart
Barbara Cullefer, Lumpkin	Kevin Brown, Buena Vista
Barry Whitley, Butler	Lee Kinnamon, Americus
Bill McClellan, Schley	Maggie McGruther, Sumter
Bobby Jenkins, Cuthbert	Melvin Crimes, Webster
Bruce Hill, Oglethorpe	Randy Howard, Sumter
Carl Oliver, Macon	Ransom Farley, Hamilton
Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman, RVRC Secretary	Rebecca White, Randolph
Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee	Rob Grant, Harris
Chip Jones, Stewart	Shane Grier, Marion
Darrell Holbrook, Webster	Tameka Harris, Taylor, RVRC Vice-Chair
Doug Ethridge, Dooly	Terrell Hudson, Dooly
J.R. Dowdy, Crisp	Timothy Biddle, Chattahoochee
James Davenport, Clay	Tom Queen, Taylor
Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Muscogee, RVRC Chair	Tony Lamar, Talbotton
Jessie Smith, Sumter	Xavier McCaskey, Columbus

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### **Members Not Attending**

Danny Blackmon, Georgetown-Quitman	Jeff McCarter, Randolph
Eugene Cason, Dooly	Kenneth Sumpter, Fort Gaines
Greg Dominey, Schley	Larry Sparks, Talbot County
Jayson Griffin, Macon	Richard McCorkle, Marion
Joshua Deriso, Cordele	Skip Henderson, Columbus

### **Others Present**

Natalie Bradley, Flint Energies	Chloe Landreth, New Horizons Behavior Health
Brenda Williams, Senator Warnock's Office	Kenny Riner, Chattahoochee County
Kelvin Lewis, Macon	Tom Horn, Columbus Water Works
Rayetta Volley, Sumter	Hunter Singleton, Clay County
Vicki Wainwright, Butler	Diadra Powell, Americus City Manager
Laura Gower, Congressman Ferguson's Office	Bill Twomey, County Consulting Services Director
Toyia Tucker, Columbus City Council	Martha Ann Todd, Columbus Technical College
Anita Morena, Flint Energies	Cathy Williams, NeighborWorks & GDOT
Connie Harris, Marion County	Lisa Fort, Friends of Providence Canyon
Clark Harrell, Crisp County	Cindy Trojak, Friends of Providence Canyon
Nicole Acree, Taylor County Development Authority	

### **RVRC Staff Attending**

Jim Livingston, Executive Director  
Katie Howard, AAA Director  
Rick Morris, Director of Planning and Govt. Services  
John Morgan, Regional Planner  
Merri Spence, Executive Secretary  
Tammy Collins, Finance Officer  
Allison Slocum, Assistant Director of Planning

Blaine Hoskins, Planning  
Emily Chambers, Finance Officer  
Laura Schneider, Planning  
Tracie Hadaway, Planning  
Camille Bielby, Planning  
John Morgan, Planning

### **WELCOME AND RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

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

### **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 Darrell Holbrook, Webster County and seconded by Albert King, Vienna.

### **APPROVAL OF MAY MINUTES\***

The council reviewed the May 24, 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 Bruce Hill, Oglethorpe and seconded by Melvin Crimes, Webster County.

### **REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE\***

Chair Barnes gave a report of the Nominating Committee that met on June 15 and was comprised of Terrell Hudson, Dooly County; Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Muscogee County; Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County; Tameka Harris, Taylor County; and Dick Dowdy, Crisp County. The officers that were selected by the nominating committee are Carvel Lewis, Chairman; Dick Dowdy, Vice-Chair and Tameka Harris, Secretary. Also selected were members of the Executive Committee: Elected were Terrell Hudson, Dooly County; Randy Howard, Sumter County; Toyia Tucker, Columbus; Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee County; Carvel Lewis, Dick Dowdy and Tameka Harris.

Chair Barnes asked for a motion to approve the report of the Nominating Committee for a slate of officers for RVRC to include Carvel Lewis, Dick Dowdy and Tameka Harris. The motion was made by Chip Jones, Stewart County and seconded by Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Barnes asked for a motion to approve the report of the Nominating Committee for the Executive Committee selected Officials to include Terrell Hudson, Randy Howard, Toyia Tucker, Charles Coffey, Carvel Lewis, Dick Dowdy and Tameka Harris. The motion was made by Tony Lamar, Talbotton and seconded by Ransom Farley, Hamilton. The motion passed with no opposition.

### **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF FISCAL YEAR 2024 CALENDAR\***

Jim Livingston, RVRC Executive Director, presented the River Valley Regional Council Calendar for FY 24. Jim said the meetings will continue to be in Buena Vista at 10:30 a.m. on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month with the exception of July and November. The November and December meeting will be combined and held on December 6<sup>th</sup> and May is the Legislative Luncheon. Chair Barnes asked for a motion to approve the FY 24 Calendar. The motion was made by Terrell Hudson, Dooly County and seconded by Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee County. The motion passed with no opposition.

July 2023 - No meeting will be held in July.  
August 23, 2023  
September 27, 2023  
October 25, 2023  
December 6, 2023  
January 24, 2024

February 28, 2024  
March 27, 2024  
April 24, 2024  
May 22, 2024 - Legislative Lunch  
June 26, 2024

#### **APPROVAL UPDATE OF REVOLVING LOAN FUND PLAN\***

Jim Livingston explained that the Revolving Loan Fund Plan is an existing document and plan that we've had since we started the Revolving Loan Fund. Our Revolving Loan Fund comes from two sources. One is the USDA and the other is the Economic Development Administration. The review was requested by EDA to make sure we are up to date with current regulations. This review also gave us the opportunity to evaluate our plan and to think through how we get our prospects. Jim shared that the update in the council packet has a few minor changes based on new federal regulations. The Revolving Loan Fund Committee is made up of our Executive Committee as well as our bankers, Jason Griffin and Doug Ethridge. Chair Barnes asked for a motion to approve the Revolving Loan Fund plan update. Darrell Holbrook, Webster County made the motion to accept the update to the Revolving Loan Fund Plan and Melvin Crimes, Webster County seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

#### **UPDATE ON EPA BROWNFIELD PROJECT**

Jim Livingston introduced Jason Cooper with Terracon to talk about EPA Brownfield project. Jim explained the Brownfield and the number of projects we've been working on in the region for the past few years. Jim explained that it took a while to secure funding from the EPA to do a Brownfield assessment of a coalition of four counties in the eastern part of our region. The four counties are Sumter, Macon, Dooly and Crisp Counties. The Economic Development professionals have been a part of the River Valley Brownfield Alliance to help guide this project.

Jason Cooper presented a slideshow that explained Brownfields and reviewed the projects the RVRC and Terracon have been working on. This slideshow will be emailed to the Council.

#### **UPDATE ON RIVER VALLEY TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE FOR BIPARTISAN INFRA-STRUCTURE LAW**

Jim Livingston presented an update on the River Valley Transportation Alliance and efforts to use our local TIA funds to attract Bipartisan Infrastructure funding from Washington. RVRC has contracted with WSP, a national planning and engineering firm with connections to GDOT and Federal Highway Administration. WSP will help identify suitable grants for the region and help structure the partnerships necessary to apply for and administer federal funding. We still anticipate using local TIA funds for any required grant match and will promote the success of the TIA-2 process to identify suitable projects. GDOT may now administer funds if awarded.

#### **APPROVE FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET\***

The FY 24 Budget Version One is presented with the Executive Committee's recommendation for approval by the full council. The budget projects a \$44,046 increase in fund balance in the General Fund, as well as a \$13,772 increase in net position in the Enterprise Funds, for a total increase of about \$58,000 in the coming fiscal year. The budget accounts for a three percent cost of living increase for all employees and includes all contract revenues that are known and certain to materialize. Chair Barnes asked for a motion to approve the FY 24 Budget. The motion was made by Darrell Holbrook, Webster County and seconded by Albert King, Vienna. The motion passed with no opposition.

#### **STAFF REPORTS**

**Emily Chambers, Finance Officer** reported through April of this fiscal year, the RVRC has had an increase in fund balance in the governmental funds of approximately \$113,000, giving us unassigned fund balance in the General Fund of \$1,126,000. Cash on hand on April 30 in governmental funds was \$560,000. The loan funds had a decrease in net

[Chattahoochee](#) | [Clay](#) | [Crisp](#) | [Dooly](#) | [Harris](#) | [Macon](#) | [Marion](#) | [Muscogee](#)  
[Quitman](#) | [Randolph](#) | [Schley](#) | [Stewart](#) | [Sumter](#) | [Talbot](#) | [Taylor](#) | [Webster](#)

position of \$38,000 and total net position of \$2,000,000. Total operating expenses for FY 23 appear to be within or under budget.

**Katie Howard AAA Director** reported The Area Agency on Aging is beginning Senior Farmers Market season next week. We will be holding markets in every county. Anyone who knows an eligible senior is asked to contact their local senior center to get an application. The AAA recently closed out a contract with the West Central GA Health Department to purchase and equip a mobile unit to provide vaccinations in the region. The Dementia Care Specialist has completed several trainings and certifications and is working with the Health Department to provide Virtual Dementia Tours for all their staff. Evidence Based Programs were also discussed as well as the benefits of these programs.

**Rick Morris, Director of Planning and Govt.** reported the Carl Vincent Institute of Government completed the River Valley Compatible Community Development Plan and it's now under review by The Department of Defense. Talbot County's DRI Comment Period deadline is July 7, 2023. In Environmental Planning, the BMP (Best Management Practices) installations are scheduled to take place in July and August for the Pataula Creek Watershed, and for Stewart, Quitman, Randolph and Clay counties. Michael Murray in Transportation secured rides for over 300 Senior Citizens from the region to attend the annual Senior Picnic at Middle Flint Council on Aging. And lastly, planning and government services staff are working on 23 grant projects.

#### **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.

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August 23, 2023

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Carvel Lewis, Chair

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Tameka Harris, Secretary