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**RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING**

**Buena Vista, GA**

**October 26, 2022**

**10:30 A.M.**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Council Members**

**(Counties Represented: 15)**

Albert King, Vienna  
Bobby Jenkins, Cuthbert  
Bruce Hill, Oglethorpe  
Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman, RVRC  
Secretary  
Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee  
Chip Jones, Stewart  
Darrell Holbrook, Webster  
Greg Dominy, Schley  
James Davenport, Clay  
Jayson Griffin, Macon  
Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Muscogee, RVRC Chair

Joe Lee Williams, Stewart  
Maggie McGruther, Sumter  
Melvin Crimes, Webster  
Ransom Farley, Hamilton  
Rebecca White, Randolph  
Richard McCorkle, Marion  
Tameka Harris, Taylor, RVRC Vice-Chair  
Terrell Hudson, Dooly  
Tom Queen, Taylor  
Tony Lamar, Talbotton  
Wesley Williams, Randolph

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**Members Not Attending**

Barry Whitley, Butler  
Bill McClellan, Schley  
Byron Hickey, Columbus  
Carl Oliver, Macon  
Danny Blackmon, Georgetown-Quitman  
Doug Ethridge, Harris  
Eugene Cason, Dooly  
J.R. Dowdy, Crisp  
James R. "Bump" Welch, Marion  
Jimmy Babb, Lumpkin  
Joshua Deriso, Cordele

Kenneth Sumpter, Fort Gaines  
Kevin Brown, Buena Vista  
Lee Kinnamon, Americus  
Mark Waddell, Sumter  
Matt Gunnels, Marion  
Pam Jordan, Talbot  
Randy Howard, Sumter  
Rob Grant, Harris  
Sher'Londa Walker, Talbot  
Skip Henderson, Columbus  
Tim Biddle, Chattahoochee

**Others Present**

Saralyn Stafford, UGA Carl Vincent Inst.  
Natalie Bock, UGA Carl Vincent Inst.  
Marian McLemore, Flint Energies  
Paul Farr, SGTC

Mac Moyer, Stewart  
Toyia Tucker, Columbus  
Clark Harrell, Crisp  
Deborah Jones, Randolph

### **RVRC Staff Attending**

Jim Livingston, Executive Director  
Mariyana Kostov, GIS Manager  
Katie Howard, AAA Director  
Rick Morris, Planning Director  
Camille Bielby, Regional Planner  
Merri Spence, Executive Secretary

Gerald Mixon, Planning Director  
Blaine Hoskins, Regional Planner  
Allison Slocum, Regional Planner  
Emily Chambers, Finance Officer  
Tammy Collins, Finance Officer

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

Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Chair, brought the meeting to order, welcomed visitors and led the council in prayer. Vice-Chair Tameka Harris led the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER MINUTES\***

Council reviewed the September 28, 2022 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 requested a motion to approve minutes. Charles Coffey, Chattahoochee County, made the motion to approve the minutes as presented; Darrell Holbrook, Webster County seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

### **THE FUTURE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES IN THE RIVER VALLEY REGION**

Saralyn Stafford, Rural Development Manager with the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government introduced speakers, Natalie Bock, Research Professional with the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government and Marian McLemore, V.P. Cooperative Communications with Flint Energies.

Ms. Bock spoke about the infrastructure behind installing charging stations in communities and about the growing need for electric charging stations in our state. She explained that Georgia leads the Southeast in charging station infrastructure and has about \$135 million to use on the infrastructure through 2026. The plan is to develop alternative fuel corridors in the state and it’s a particular concern in the River Valley Region because as of now there are no corridors in our region. She shared the challenges and benefits of EVs in rural areas and stated that communities can partner with local EMCs, Georgia Power, Flint Resources and UGA to help get EV’s installed in their communities. She shared resources for funding and suggested to stay current on the GDOT and GBA websites.

Marian McLemore with Flint Energies spoke about the Go EVWhere program. She talked about rates, demands and optimal times for charging. Ms. McLemore explained the Flint EV Pilot Programs that include Drive Free for a Year and receive a \$33 per month bill credit for 12 months program. This program helps you get used to charging during off-peak hours. Another program is a \$2000 incentive to the first 10 commercial members who install an EV charging station. The third pilot program is to build an EV ready subdivision and receive \$500 per lot for 30 homes incentive.

## **FY2023 BUDGET AMENDMENT\***

Emily Chambers, Finance Officer shared that the Budget Amendment 1 has been recommended by the Executive Committee. Its purpose is to adjust FY23 contracts to actual revenue amounts and to add the Aging Amendment that has been received since July. The overall effect of this amendment is a \$13k increase in projected change in fund balance in the General Fund. The amended projected fund balance/net position change is an increase of \$37,847 in the General Fund and an increase of \$18,906 in the Proprietary Funds.

Chair Barnes requested a motion to approve Budget Amendment 1. Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman made the motion to approve the amendment as presented; Albert King, Vienna seconded the motion. Motion was passed with no opposition.

## **RESCIND RVRC457(b) DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN ADDENDUM\***

Jim Livingston, Executive Director explained that in 2009 when Middle Flint merged with River Valley, Middle Flint employees opted out of Social Security. The employees that opted out have requested to opt back in. Chair Barnes asked for a motion to approve the change to the Deferred Compensation Plan. Tom Queen made the motion to approve the change and James Davenport seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

## **BENEFIT DECLARATION DOCUMENT\***

Jim Livingston, Executive Director explained the Benefit Declaration needs to be approved annually and the only change is adding dental insurance for 2023. The staff of the RVRC will pay for this insurance so it will not impact the regional commission budget. Chair Barnes asked for a motion to approve the Declaration Document. Carvel Lewis Georgetown-Quitman made a motion to approve and Albert King, Vienna seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

**Emily Chambers, Finance Officer** reported through August, we had an increase in fund balance of \$148k in the operating funds, but \$125k of this are advanced grant revenues for which there have not been expenditures yet. Cash on hand in the General Fund on August 31 was \$863,376. Unassigned fund balance was \$1.12 million. The proprietary funds had a slight increase in net position and have cash on hand of \$1.3 million that is available for small business loans.

**Katie Howard, AAA Director** announced that the City of Columbus was in the process of adopting a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) to investigate potential elder abuse crimes. This is similar to what happens with potential child abuse crimes. If other counties/cities would like more information on creating their own MDT, please contact AAA staff. She also went over the Wait List and potential uses of ARPA funds including addressing the Wait List and adopting pilot programs such as material aid to meet non-traditional needs of clients.

**Rick Morris, Planning Director** reported on adding tiny houses to the Unified Government of Georgetown-Quitman zoning ordinance land use section. Mr. Morris added that Talbot County also has a developer interested in building a tiny house subdivision in Talbot County.

The RVRC is in the process of updating the 2018 Regional Plan. He asked everyone to please complete the survey by either using the QR Code, by going to [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) or by calling Allison Slocum at 706-256-2910.

**ADJOURN**

As there was no further business, Chair Barnes requested a motion for the meeting to be adjourned. Motion was made by Terrell Hudson, Dooly County, and seconded by Darrell Holbrook, Webster County. Meeting was adjourned.

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December 7, 2022

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Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Chair

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Carvel Lewis, Secretary