

**SOUTHERN GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 23, 2024**

MINUTES

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission Council met on Thursday, April 23, 2024 at 11:00am at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission in Valdosta, Georgia.

Atkinson County

- Liles, Parker
- Robert Johnson
- Stone, Robbie

Brantley County

- Harris, Skipper
- Lee, Marty
- Vacant

Coffee County

- Kitchens, Jimmy
- Paulk, Tony
- Smith, Adam

Lanier County

- Fender, Dennis
- Darsey, Bill
- Barnes, James

Turner County

- Denham, Nick
- Lumpkin, Sandra
- Giddens, Brandi

Speaker's Office

- Seale, Matt

Staff Present

- Arazayus, Alexandra
- Hendricks, Tonia
- Martin, Amy
- Strom, Rachel

Bacon County

- Taylor, Shane
- Larry Taylor
- Ellis, Kevin

Brooks County

- Folsom, Patrick
- Morgan, Don
- Deshazior, Zurich

Cook County

- Parrish, Lindsay
- Duke, Buddy
- Key, Nyisha

Lowndes County

- Evans, Joyce
- Miller-Cody, Vivian
- Payton, Anthony

Ware County

- Thrift, Elmer
- James, Michael-Angelo
- King, Barbara

- Courson, Scott
- Hobbs, Kimberly
- New, Jennifer
- Vining, Kim

Ben Hill County

- Taylor, Steve
- Holt, Jason
- Dunn, Jason

Charlton County

- Everett, James
- Gowen, Lee
- Vacant

Echols County

- Corbett, Stanley
- Garner, Cheryl

Pierce County

- Bennett, Neal
- Brooks, Keith
- Paul, Stephen

Governor's Office

- Vacant
- Vacant
- Vacant

- Daniels, Kelsey
- Horton, James
- Ryan, Jacob

Berrien County

- Gaskins, Ronnie
- Brown, Travis
- Smart, Lisa

Clinch County

- Moylan, Henry
- Kennedy, Thomas
- Hardee, Willie

Irwin County

- Carver, Scott
- Harper, Melvin
- MacKenzie, Mona

Tift County

- McBrayer, Tony
- Smith, Julie
- Vacant

Lt. Governor's Office

- Stone, Keith

- Fowler, Megan
- Lovett, Roberta
- Schultz, Kelly

Guests Present

Lane, Kelly

Westberry, Diane

White, Charles

Williams, Jamon

Review and Approval of the March 28, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Chair Gowen reminded those present that a copy of the March minutes had been emailed to members and included in their council packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Chair Gowen asked if there were any questions or corrections to the minutes. With no questions or corrections, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Joyce Evans made a motion to approve with a second from Michael-Angelo James. The motion carried unanimously.

Review and Acceptance of the March 2024 Preliminary Review and Expenditure Report

Chair Gowen called on SGRC Assistant Finance Director Jennifer New to review the March 2024 Preliminary Revenue and Expenditure Report. Jennifer referred those present to the Revenue and Expenditure Report (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). At the completion of her report, Jennifer asked if there were any questions. With no questions, Chair Gowen called for a motion to approve the Revenue and Expenditure Report. Michael-Angelo James made a motion to accept with a second from Vivian Miller-Cody. The motion carried unanimously.

WorkSource and Wagner Peyser

SGRC Deputy Executive Director Roberta Lovett introduced Jamon Williams, Director of the Business Services Unit for the Office of Workforce Development & Employment Services with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), and welcomed him to the SGRC council meeting. Jamon shared that his focus was to create and cultivate partnerships with businesses and the economic development in our communities that lead to long-term success for Georgia's workforce. He works with State, regional and local economic development authorities and commissions to recruit new business and industry to Georgia and to assist in the retention of those companies currently doing business in Georgia.

Jamon discussed some changes to the GA Department of Labor's (DOL) job search service. Jamon explained that legislators moved Wagner-Peyser activities from the DOL the Technical College System of Georgia in 2022 also known as WorkSource Georgia, a program led by TCSG's Office of Workforce Development. WorkSource Georgia replaced Employ Georgia as the official online tool for enrolling in employment services, a requirement for those requesting unemployment benefits. He stated that since the transition, TCSG's Office of Workforce Development had expanding, nearly doubling in size. Jamon answered questions from the audience and went into more detail about the programs offered through WorkSource GA and its impact statewide.

Review and Consideration of Current Year Budget Amendment

SGRC Assistant Finance Director Jennifer New referred those present to the pages in their packets that detailed the proposed budget amendment (copy attached and made part of these minutes). Jennifer reminded the council that the SGRC prepares a budget

before the fiscal year, but changes occur throughout the year. She stated that examples of this might be a grant award for a different amount than what was anticipated, the timing of contracts and contracts that have multiple years associated with them. Other factors influencing the budget amendment include staff changes and turnover. She explained that an annual budget amendment reconciles the expected revenues and expenses from the start of the fiscal year with the reality of what happened throughout the year. Jennifer stated that the budget amendment presented to the council reflects a net increase of \$15,589 revenues over expenditures.

Jennifer shared with the council that the Executive Committee reviewed the budget amendment in detail during their meeting and recommended approval of the budget amendment. She then answered questions from those present. After a short discussion, Chair Gowen asked for a motion. Michael-Angelo James made a motion to adopt the current year's budget amendment. Neal Bennett seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, with no other discussion.

Review and Consideration of Dues Schedule for FY2025

Chair Gowen called on SGRC Executive Director Kimberly Hobbs to explain the Dues Schedule for FY2025. Kimberly directed those present to a copy of the dues schedule for FY2025 located in their packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). She explained that the Department of Community Affairs requires RCs to use the latest population figures from the Census Bureau for the computation of dues, and this schedule reflects those latest figures. She explained that per-capita dues would remain at \$1.25 for FY2025. The population for the region increased by 3,726 from the previous year based on the 2023 estimated population numbers, which resulted in increased dues to the SGRC of \$4,654. Don Morgan made a motion to approve the Dues Schedule for FY2025. Neal Bennett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Review and Adoption of Resolution for Re-Certification as an Organization of Ethics

Chair Gowen called on SGRC Executive Director Kimberly Hobbs. Kimberly referred council members to a copy of the resolution to re-certify as an Organization of Ethics in their meeting packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). She explained the SGRC has been a part of GMA's Organization of Ethics for many years. The SGRC is required to re-adopt the five ethics principles every four years. This resolution will re-certify the SGRC as an Organization of Ethics until 2024. Michael-Angelo James made a motion to approve the motion. Travis Brown seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Program Activities and Updates

1. Community & Economic Development (CED)

SGRC Community and Economic Development Director Tonia Hendricks directed council members to the project status list in their packets (copy attached and made part of these minutes). She reminded those present that the 2024 CDBG Summit

would be held in Athens, GA October 7-10, 2024. She stated that if there were any questions regarding new or existing projects to reach out to the CED staff.

2. Planning

SGRC Planning Director James Horton referred those present to a handout listing the various plans that local governments are required to submit, as well as the deadlines for submission (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). James encouraged council members to review the upcoming deadlines for their communities and contact SGRC Planning staff with any questions.

3. Transportation Planning/Valdosta-Lowndes Metropolitan Planning Organization (VLMPO)

SGRC Deputy Executive Director Roberta Lovett asked council members to review the TSPLOST overview handout included in their meeting packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes) and reminded those present that the TSPLOST referendum would be on the May 21, 2024 ballot and that early voting will begin on April 29, 2024.

4. Division Reports

SGRC Executive Director Kimberly Hobbs referred those present to the division reports in their packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Kimberly stated that the reports provide an overview of the activities of each department within the SGRC.

Questions, Comments and Announcements

1. Recognition of Guests

Chair Gowen recognized Kelly Lane, DCA Region 11 Representative, and Charles White representing Congressman Austin Scott's and thanked them for attending the SGRC council meeting.

2. Recognition of Representation

Chair Gowen recognized Bacon, Charlton, Lanier, Lowndes and Ware counties for having 100% representation at the council meeting.

3. ACCG Update

James Everett shared that 2024 ACCG Annual Conference would be held April 25 – 28, 2024, in Savannah, GA.

4. GMA Update

Vivian Miller-Cody reminded those present to register for and make plans to attend the GMA Annual Convention, which would be held June 21 – 25, 2024 in Savannah, GA.

5. DCA Update

Kelly Lane directed those present to the Compliance Workshop flyer in their meeting packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). She shared that the

Department of Community Affairs would be hosting a compliance workshop on keeping your city, county and development authority in compliance. The workshop would be held on June 4, 2024 at 10 AM at the SGRC office in Valdosta, GA.

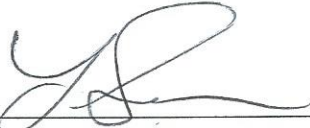
6. Upcoming SGRC Council Meeting

Chair Gowen announced that the next SGRC Council meeting would be held on Thursday, May 23, 2024, at the SGRC office in Waycross.

Adjourn

Chair Gowen asked if there were any other questions or announcements. With no further business to conduct, Chair Gowen asked Willie Hardee to bless the meal, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lee Gowen
Chairman, SGRC Council



Keith Stone
Secretary, SGRC Council