

**SOUTHERN GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE / NOMINATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES  
SGRC WAYCROSS OFFICE  
MAY 23, 2024  
10:00 A.M.**

**Members in Attendance:**

Bennett, Neal  
Dunn, Jason  
Evans, Joyce  
Gowen, Lee  
King, Barbara

**Staff Present:**

Hobbs, Kimberly  
Lovett, Roberta  
New, Jennifer  
Schultz, Kelly  
Strom, Chris

*\*Buddy Duke called in and joined the meeting as a guest via speakerphone.*

**Executive Committee Business**

**CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME**

Chair Gowen called the meeting to order and welcomed Executive Committee / Nomination Committee members, staff and guests.

**MEETING MINUTES – REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

*April 23, 2024 Executive Committee Meeting:* Chair Gowen reminded those present that the minutes of the April 23, 2024 Executive Committee meeting were emailed to members for their review (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Barbara King made a motion to accept the April 23, 2024 meeting minutes, and Neal Bennett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**FINANCIAL – REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

*Southern Georgia RC FY2025 Budget Process:* Chair Gowen called upon SGRC Finance Director Kelly Schultz to present the FY2024 Budget Process to the Committee. Kelly referred those present to the budget process handout in the meeting packet (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). She explained that the budget process helps broadly determine the estimated total revenues, estimated personnel expenses and estimated non-personnel expenses. Kelly asked if there were any questions about the budget process. With no questions, Chair Gowen encouraged Kelly to continue with her discussion on the FY25 Preliminary Budget.

*Executive Director Salary:* SGRC Finance Director Kelly Schultz stated that to continue with the Preliminary Budget, she would need to present the Executive Committee with the Executive Director's Salary for discussion, as it is a part of the budget's personnel expenses. SGRC Executive Director Kimberly Hobbs advised that she would step out of the room to allow the Committee to discuss the matter freely and excused herself from the room. The Committee asked other staff to remain in the meeting to assist with questions. Kelly shared with the Committee a salary report of other Regional

Commissions' Executive Directors from FY23 that showed the average salary at \$166,766. Kelly stated that Kimberly's salary is one of the lowest compared to the other regional commissions. RC staff shared that Kimberly had recently been elected to the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Board of Directors for the 2024 – 2026 term. She is the only GA member serving on the board at this time and represents the Southeastern Region on the 66-member board. Light discussion ensued among the Executive Committee with a few questions aimed at staff about Kimberly's current salary, RC pay scale, salary steps, time in service and other pertinent topics. After the Executive Committee members' questions were satisfactorily answered, members were in agreement that a vote could commence. Chair Gowen called for a motion. With all Committee members in agreement, Jason Dunn made a motion that the Executive Director receive a seven-step increase in salary. Barbara King seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

*FY2025 Southern Georgia Preliminary Budget:* SGRC Finance Director Kelly Schultz followed up with a presentation of the Preliminary FY2025 Budget, which was included in the meeting packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Kelly explained that the estimated budget reflected preliminary information from RC Program Directors of anticipated and carryover contracts/funding for the next fiscal year. In addition, she noted that the preliminary budget included projected personnel costs and the related fringe benefits associated with those salaries. Ms. Schultz also explained that operational costs were estimated based on prior experience and knowledge of costs for the coming fiscal year. In addition, she told the Committee that this summary was the starting point for creating a line-item budget for FY 2025. Ms. Schultz said she would develop these detailed line-item entries for each program area over the next month.

## **WORK PROGRAM**

*FY2025 Work Program Review:* Chair Gowen called upon SGRC Deputy Executive Director Roberta Lovett to review the FY2025 Work Program. Roberta reminded the Committee that they had received the draft work program to review by email and in their meeting packets, (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). She explained that the Work Program outlines the work each department of the RC plans to do over the next year. She stated that the Executive Committee and full Council would take action at the June 2024 meeting to approve the FY25 Work Program.

## **Nomination Committee Business**

### **MEETING MINUTES – REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

*May 25, 2023 Nomination Committee Meeting:* Chair Gowen reminded those present that the minutes of the May 25, 2023 Nomination Committee meeting were emailed to members for their review (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Keith Stone made a motion to accept the minutes, and Barbara King seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VACANCY**

*Discussion/Recommendation for Vacancy:* Chair Gowen began the discussion by stating that the RC Executive Committee had a vacancy due to Barbara Maefield's departure after not being re-elected as Mayor. Chair Gowen referred everyone to a worksheet in their packets that illustrated current members and the vacant position on the committee (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Chair Gowen asked the committee for recommendations to fill the vacant spot on the Executive Committee. Nomination Committee members discussed the possible candidates to serve on the Executive Committee. After a short deliberation, Neal Bennett recommended Larry Taylor, Mayor of Alma, to fill the committee vacancy. With no other recommendations, Chair Gowen called for a motion. Neal Bennett made a motion to recommend the nomination of Larry Taylor to serve on the Executive Committee to the full council. Jason Dunn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BIENNIAL NOMINATION/ELECTION**

*Discussion/Recommendation for Biennial Election of Executive Committee Members:* Chair Gowen started the discussion by stating it was time for a biennial election of Executive Committee members to recommend to the full council for approval. Chair Gowen referred everyone to a worksheet in their packets that illustrated current committee members, officers and a current list of council members (copy attached and made apart of these minutes) to further the conversation. After light discussion, Chair Gowen asked the committee for a motion. With all other members in agreement, Jason Dunn made a motion to recommend to the full council the re-election of current Executive Committee members for the next two-year term. Barbara King seconded the motion. No other discussion followed, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Other Business**

SGRC Executive Director Kimberly Hobbs made a request to the Executive Committee in an effort to help foster camaraderie and fellowship between staff and between the Valdosta and Waycross offices. She proposed an SGRC family cookout to be held on Friday, July 19<sup>th</sup> at General Coffee State Park. She asked the Executive Committee to consider the approval of the cookout and with an expenditure of \$2,500 for the event. The cookout would be a family event where staff could bring their spouses or children. Chair Gowen called for a motion. Barbara King made a motion to approve the SGRC Cookout at Coffee General State Park on July 19<sup>th</sup>. Jason Dunn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

*Adjourn:* With no other business to conduct, Chair Gowen called for a motion to adjourn. Keith Stone made a motion to adjourn the Executive Committee / Nomination Committee meeting. Neal Bennett seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned.

  
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Lee Gowen  
Chairman, SGRC Council

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Keith Stone  
Secretary, SGRC Council