

**SOUTHERN GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
THE VENUE • 319 ALBANY AVE., WEST • PEARSON, GA
AUGUST 25, 2022
11:00 a.m.**

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME: Vice-Chair Lee Gowen called the meeting to order and welcomed members and guests.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Vice-Chair Gowen asked Steven Paul to give the invocation, and then he led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

<u>Atkinson County</u>	<u>Bacon County</u>	<u>Ben Hill County</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Willis, Buddy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Foskey, Richard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Taylor, Steve
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Robert Johnson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Larry Taylor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Holt, Jason
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stone, Robbie	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coley, Lisa	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dunn, Jason
<u>Berrien County</u>	<u>Brantley County</u>	<u>Brooks County</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gaskins, Ronnie	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Harris, Skipper	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Folsom, Patrick
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clayton, John	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maefield, Barbara	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Morgan, Don
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smart, Lisa	Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deshazior, Zurich
<u>Charlton County</u>	<u>Clinch County</u>	<u>Coffee County</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Everett, James	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metts, Roger	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dovers, AJ
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gowen, Lee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blitch, Brooks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paulk, Tony
Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hardee, Willie	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smith, Adam
<u>Cook County</u>	<u>Echols County</u>	<u>Irwin County</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purvis, Dwight	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Walker, Bobby	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carver, Scott
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duke, Buddy		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hudgins, Horace
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bennett, Derry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Garner, Cheryl	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paulk, Mona
<u>Lanier County</u>	<u>Lowndes County</u>	<u>Pierce County</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fender, Dennis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evans, Joyce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bennett, Neal
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Darsey, Bill	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Miller-Cody, Vivian	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brooks, Keith
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fitton, John	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Payton, Anthony	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paul, Steven
<u>Tift County</u>	<u>Turner County</u>	<u>Ware County</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> McBrayer, Tony	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Whiddon, Dana	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thrift, Elmer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smith, Julie	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lumpkin, Sandra	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James, Michael-Angelo
Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Giddens, Brandi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> King, Barbara

<u>Governor's Office</u>	<u>Lt. Governor's Office</u>	<u>Speaker's Office</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lovein, Norman "Bo"	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stone, Keith	Vacant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Daughtrey, Guy		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jones, Johnathon		

Staff Present

Backe, Elizabeth
Courson, Scott
Cribb, Lisa
Highsmith, Wes
Hobbs, Kimberly
Strom, Chris
Vining, Kim
Wilcher, Lance

Guests Present

Darsey, Sheila
Gillis, Brianna
Goree, King
James, Jaclyn
Lane, Kelly
Redding, Jody
Singleton, Bryan

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 23, 2022 COUNCIL MEETING:

Chair Joyce Evans entered the meeting and presided over the remainder of the meeting. She reminded those present that the June 23, 2022 council meeting minutes were emailed to members for their review (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Barbara Maefield made a motion to accept the minutes, and Don Morgan seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW AND ACCEPTANCE OF JUNE 2022 REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE RE-

PORT: Chair Evans reminded those present that a copy of the June 2022 Revenue and Expenditure Report had been emailed to members (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Barbara Maefield made a motion to accept the June 2022 Revenue and Expenditure Report. Barbara King seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

(CEDS): Chair Evans called on SGRC Deputy Director of Governmental Services Kimberly Hobbs to present the draft CEDS. Ms. Hobbs explained that she would review the draft CEDS proposal at this meeting. At the council meeting in September, she would present a resolution for council approval of the 2022-2026 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). She stated that the CEDS is a strategic regional economic development plan developed through a locally based, strategy-driven economic development planning process. The CEDS provides a summary background of the economic development conditions in the region; analyzes the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; provides the implementation of goals and an action plan; establishes performance measures; and outlines a plan to ensure the economic resiliency of the region. She then shared a PowerPoint showing the CEDS plan highlights. Ms. Hobbs ended her presentation by taking questions from those present and reminded the council that she would present a resolution to adopt the CEDS at the September meeting.

LENDING PROGRAM ACTIVITIES: Chair Evans called SGRC Lending Program Director Lance Wilcher to present the lending program activities. Mr. Wilcher referred those present to the 2022 Loan Program Annual Report in their packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). He stated that for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2022, the loan program closed ten

loans totaling \$7,697,522; an additional seven loans were packaged and approved but not closed, totaling \$8,055,151. The total volume for FY2022 was \$15,652,673. There were 129 jobs created or retained. Mr. Wilcher also reviewed specifics such as the type & location of the businesses assisted, the types of loans, and the participating banks. Mr. Wilcher then concluded his report by reviewing the lending activities of the Southern Georgia loan program since its inception.

REAPPOINTMENT OF LOAN PROGRAM BOARD MEMBERS AND APPOINTMENT OF NEW MEMBERS:

Mr. Wilcher referred those present to a current Loan Board of Directors listing in their member packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). He then reviewed the loan board composition requirements. Mr. Wilcher stated that at their recent loan board meeting, the board recommended appointing two nominees to replace outgoing members and to reappoint the existing loan board members for FY2023. The two nominees recommended were Tiffany Holmes, Director for the Center for Rural Prosperity for the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, and Morris Johnson, Vice President of FNB Bank in Alma. Mr. Wilcher asked if there were any questions. There being none, Chair Evans asked for a motion on the appointment of two new loan board members. Vivian Miller-Cody made a motion to accept the Appointment of New Members. Barbara King seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Chair Evans asked for a motion on the Reappointment of Loan Program Board Members. Steven Paul made a motion to accept the recommendation of Reappointment of the Loan Program Board Members, and Barbara Maefield seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT SGRC PUBLIC TRANSIT TITLE VI COMPLIANCE

PLAN: Chair Evans called upon SGRC Executive Director Lisa Cribb to present the Resolution to Adopt SGRC Public Transit Title VI Compliance Plan to the council. Ms. Cribb referred council members to a copy of the resolution in their meeting packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). She informed members that the resolution presented was to adopt an update to the SGRC Public Transit Title VI Compliance Plan. She stated that the only update to the plan was to replace Corey Hull, who is no longer with the SGRC, with Roberta Lovett. Ms. Cribb asked for questions from those present. There being none, Chair Evans called for a motion. Barbara King made a motion to adopt the SGRC Transit Title VI Compliance Plan Resolution. Steven Paul seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:

SGRC Assistant Executive Director Chris Strom shared the Annual Performance Evaluation results with the executive committee. He reminded committee members that the evaluation was emailed and that all council members were asked to participate. Mr. Strom directed the committee to a copy of the results from the performance evaluation located in their packets (copy attached and made part of these minutes). The results were separated to show two sets of responses; the council members' responses and the city/county managers' responses. Mr. Strom stated that 31 council members and 11 city/county managers had completed the survey. Overall, a positive response was given for the Regional Commission and the Executive Director. Mr. Strom asked if there were any questions. There being none, Jason Holt made a motion to accept the Annual Performance Evaluation Results, and Steven Paul seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES/UPDATES:

Grants: SGRC Deputy Director of Governmental Services Kimberly Hobbs referred those present to a copy of the project status list included in their member packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Ms. Hobbs stated that the project status list shows funded projects and projects that have been applied for in our region, grouped by county. She shared that the City of Douglas had recently been awarded EDA Public Works Funding in the amount of \$2.6 million for multi-infrastructure projects, including water, sewer and gas, to benefit existing expanding and new businesses. She also announced that Ben Hill County had been awarded \$1.9 million in EDA funding for paving and drainage improvements to assist existing expanding businesses. She advised those present to contact SGRC Community and Economic Development staff regarding projects listed in their packet or any potential projects they may be interested in for their communities.

Planning: SGRC Planning & Transportation Director Elizabeth Backe began by announcing that a Model Ordinances Workshop would be held on Tuesday, August 30th from 1-3 pm at the SGRC office in Valdosta and reminded those present that registration information had been emailed. She encouraged those interested in attending the workshop to let her know after the meeting. She then referred those present to the handout listing the various plans that local governments are required to submit and the deadlines for submission (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). She encouraged council members to review the schedule for upcoming deadlines for their communities and contact SGRC Planning staff with any questions.

Division Reports: SGRC Executive Director Lisa Cribb referred those present to the division reports in their packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Ms. Cribb asked those present to review the reports to see what the RC is doing in the region each month.


QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 1.) **Recognition of Guests:** Chair Evans recognized Jody Redding, Field Staff Director for Governor Brian Kemp's office and Kelly Lane, DCA Region 11 Representative, and thanked them for attending the SGRC council meeting.
- 2.) **Recognition of Representation:** Chair Evans recognized Ben Hill, Brantley, Charlton, Lowndes and Pierce counties for having 100% representation at the council meeting.
- 3.) **ACCG Update:** James Everett stated that the 2022 Legislative Leadership Conference would be held September 28-30, 2022 at the Jekyll Island Convention Center.
- 4.) **GMA Update:** SGRC Executive Director Lisa Cribb shared with the council that GMA hosts Talk It Up Thursdays, free webinars offered on the third Thursday of each month. Upcoming topics are on September 22nd – Developing an Effective CIP; and on October 27th – The Railroad and Your City. She also shared that the GMA Fall District 11 Meeting would be held on October 20th at the Leroy Rogers Senior Center in Tifton, GA.
- 5.) **DCA Update:** Kelly Lane reminded those present that a DCA Georgia Academy - The Essentials class would be held in Moultrie, GA on September 21st at Colquitt EMC. She

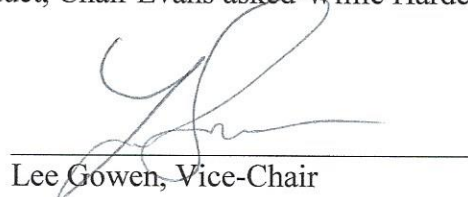
encouraged anyone interested in attending to visit the Georgia Academy website at www.georgiaacademy.org to register.

- 6.) **GARC Annual Conference:** SGRC Executive Director Lisa Cribb shared that the 2022 GARC Annual Conference would be held November 2-4, 2022 at the King and Prince Resort on St. Simons Island (flyer included in council packets). She stated that, as usual, the SGRC would cover the registration fee for any council member and the registration fee plus lodging for any executive committee member. Ms. Cribb asked anyone interested in attending the GARC Annual Conference to contact Kim Vining.

ADJOURN: As there was no further business to conduct, Chair Evans asked Willie Hardee to bless the meal, and the meeting adjourned.



Joyce Evans, Chair



Lee Gowen, Vice-Chair