

SOUTHERN GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION
COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
THE VENUE • 319 ALBANY AVE, WEST • PEARSON, GA
MARCH 24, 2022
11:00 A.M.

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME: Chair Joyce Evans called the meeting to order and welcomed members and guests.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Chair Evans called upon Jason Holt 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"/> Futch, Lace	<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"/> McKinnon, Janice	<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"/> Blich, Brooks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paulk, Tony
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> O'Quinn, Dana	<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"/> Brannen, Andy
<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
 Lovett, Roberta
 Strom, Chris
 Vining, Kim

Guests Present

Carver, Richard
 Gore, James
 Lucas, Timothy
 Redding, Jody
 Stone, Robbie
 Westberry, Diane

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 24, 2022 MEETING MINUTES: Chair Evans reminded those present that the February minutes had been emailed to members and included in their council packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Vivian Miller-Cody made a motion to approve the February 24, 2022 meeting minutes. Barbara King seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW AND ACCEPTANCE OF FEBRUARY 2022 REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE REPORT: Chair Evans reminded those present that a copy of the February 2022 Revenue and Expenditure Report had been emailed to council members and included in their council packets (copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Barbara King made a motion to accept the February 2022 financial report. Barbara Maefield seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

CRYPTOCURRENCY PRESENTATION: Chair Evans invited SGRC councilmember and Mayor of Adel Buddy Duke to introduce the Cryptocurrency presenters. Mr. Duke presented Tiffany Wang and Charles Hong, CEO and CFO of Whiterock Solutions Inc., to the council and shared that he met Tiffany and Charles on a project their company brought to the city of Adel. Tiffany Wang began the presentation by explaining that bitcoin is the best-known cryptocurrency and that her company Whiterock Solutions, is a bitcoin mining company. Ms. Wang shared that in 2018 she approached the city of Adel and Mayor Buddy Duke and started discussing the possibility of locating a bitcoin mining site in Adel. In 2021, Ms. Wang's company started a 20MW bitcoin mining site in Adel. Ms. Wang explained that bitcoin mining is the process of verifying transactions and creating new bitcoin by using large, specialized computing systems to solve mathematically complex puzzles. This process uses massive amounts of electricity which is one of the reasons her company chose Adel as a site for one of their mining centers. She shared that another site is under construction in Savannah, GA, an 80MW center that will be operational by the end of 2022. Ms. Wang then thanked the council for allowing her to speak and asked Charles Hong to share his presentation.

Charles Hong stated that he would share how blockchain systems work. Mr. Hong said that bitcoin is the future of money. He explained that bitcoin is a decentralized digital currency that can be sent from user to user on the peer-to-peer bitcoin network without a middle man, such as banks. These peer-to-peer transactions are verified by network nodes called a blockchain. A

blockchain is a digital ledger of transactions that is duplicated and distributed across an entire network of computer systems. Groups of approved transactions form a block that join together to create a chain. Bitcoin mining is the process of adding a block to the chain. Mr. Hong stated that blockchains allow cryptocurrencies to operate without a central authority, reducing risk and eliminating many processing and transaction fees. Mr. Hong thanked the council for the opportunity to speak on cryptocurrency, and then he and Ms. Wang answered questions from the audience.

AGING SERVICES UPDATE: Chair Evans called upon SGRC Aging Communications/Outreach Specialist Kimberly Rodgers to give the Aging Services Update. Ms. Rodgers shared that there would be a Community Needs Assessment with the Division of Aging Services on April 5th and encouraged those present to consider participating. She explained a new program is available through the RC's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) called Veterans Directed Care. Through a partnership with the Veterans Administration and the AAA, Veterans Directed care will allow veterans the opportunity to pay a relative or neighbor to provide them with personal care. Veterans can contact the AAA to find out how to qualify for the program or apply.

Ms. Rodgers then shared that the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program would be starting a month early this year, running from May to September. This year's program vouchers have increased from \$24 to \$30 each. The distribution sites will be active senior centers in the SGRC region. The Senior Farmers' Market dates will be advertised on the AAA's Facebook page and through flyers placed in the communities. Ms. Rodgers encouraged those present to contact the AAA or one of the region's senior centers if they or someone they know would like to volunteer at a senior center or any of their events. Another program Ms. Rodgers shared was dementia and Alzheimer's education and information. She stated that based on a 2020 figure, there were 150,000 people in GA living with dementia and Alzheimers. It is estimated that by 2025 there will be 190,000 people living with dementia and Alzheimers in GA. She shared that the AAA will be having informational sessions in the communities and speaking with high school and college classes to help increase understanding of dementia and Alzheimer's. Ms. Rodgers encouraged those interested in more information on any of the programs and services offered through the SGRC AAA to call their toll-free number at 1-888-73-AGING or visit their website www.sgrc.us/aaa.html. She then asked if there were any questions. There being none, she thanked the council for the opportunity to give an update on Aging Services.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES/UPDATES:

Grants: SGRC Executive Director Lisa Cribb directed council members to the project status list in their packets (copy attached and made part of these minutes). Ms. Cribb stated that the list includes the status of current projects the Community & Economic Development department has in progress listed by county. She encouraged those present to review the project list to see the scope of projects in progress throughout our region. She then advised those present to contact SGRC Community & Economic Development staff regarding any project listed or potential projects they may be interested in for their communities.

Planning: SGRC Planning Director Elizabeth Backe referred those present to a 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). Ms. Backe shared that the planning staff has been working on Comprehensive Plans for Bacon, Brooks and Pierce counties; and Hazard Mitigation Plans for Bacon, Charlton, Pierce and Ware counties. She encouraged council members

to review the 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.

MEETING LOCATION DISCUSSION: Chair Evans asked the council to share their thoughts and recommendations on the SGRC council meeting location. She asked the council for an informal vote by show of hands to see which location, Pearson or Waycross, would be more favorable. Both locations received an equal amount of votes. Chair Evans stated that the remaining council meetings for 2022 would alternate between Pearson and Waycross. She asked SGRC Executive Director Lisa Cribb to prepare a schedule for the remaining meetings with the location, alternating between The Venue in Pearson and the SGRC office in Waycross. Chair Evans then announced that the next council meeting would be held on Thursday, April 28th at the SGRC office in Waycross.

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 1.) **Recognition of Guest:** Chair Evans recognized Jody Redding, Director of Field Operations for the Office of Governor Brian Kemp and thanked him for attending the SGRC council meeting.
- 2.) **Recognition of Representation:** Chair Evans recognized Brantley, Charlton and Cook counties for having 100% representation at the council meeting.
- 3.) **ACCG Update:** James Everett stated that the 2022 ACCG Annual Conference would be held April 28th – May 1st in Savannah, GA.
- 4.) **GMA Update:** Barbara Maefield announced that the Spring 22 Robert E. Knox, Jr. Municipal Leadership Institute would be held April 12th – 15th at Callaway Lodge and Spa in Pine Mountain, GA. She also encouraged those present to attend the upcoming GMA Spring Listening Session in Hahira, GA, on April 14th.

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