

TO: PLANNING AND PROJECTS COMMITTEE

FROM: MR. CURTIS BROWN, JR., CHAIRMAN, PLANNING AND PROJECTS COMMITTEE
THREE RIVERS REGIONAL COMMISSION

SUBJECT: MINUTES OF PLANNING AND PROJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING

The Planning and Projects Committee held a meeting at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 28, 2019 at the Turin Town Hall in Turin, Georgia.

WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Committee Chair Curtis Brown, Jr., welcomed the members and called the meeting to order. Mr. Norman Allen gave the invocation and afterwards Committee Chair Brown led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Planning and Projects Committee Members in Attendance

Mr. Lee Boone, Chairman, Heard County
Ms. Kathy Knowles, Non-Public member, Heard County
Mr. Bennie Horton, Commissioner, Lamar County
Mr. Jack Hancock, Non-Public member, Pike County
Mr. Douglas Hollberg, Council member, City of Griffin
Mr. Curtis Brown, Jr., Non-Public member, Troup County
Mr. Norman Allen, Chairman, Upson County

Regional Plan Stakeholders (Executive Team) Members in Attendance

Ms. Janet Hyde, Planner, Carroll County
Mr. Dick Morrow, Business Owner, City of Griffin
Ms. Kathy Oxford, Executive Director, Barnesville-Lamar Industrial Development Authority
Ms. Leigh Threadgill, Senior Planner, City of LaGrange
Ms. Jennifer Rogers, Project Coordinator, Thomaston-Upson Community Heart and Soul

Staff Present

Mr. Kirk Fjelstul, Executive Director
Ms. Peggi Tingle, Administrative Services Director

Ms. Hope Blakely, HR Generalist
Ms. Jeannie Brantley, Planning Director
Ms. Kim Dutton, Planner
Ms. Cymone Haiju, Planner
Mr. Paul Jarrell, Planner
Ms. Stephanie Matthews, Deputy Director, Workforce

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 28, 2019 MINUTES (action item)

Committee Chair Brown asked for a motion to approve the February 28, 2019 meeting minutes. Mr. Norman Allen made the motion to approve the February 28, 2019 minutes, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Lee Boone. Committee Chair Brown asked if there was any discussion; hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion to approve the February 28, 2019 minutes carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA (action item)

Committee Chair Brown advised the members that an item, "Council Survey," needed to be added to the agenda; it would be placed on the agenda before "Other Business." He asked for a motion to approve the agenda with the amendment of "Council Survey" added. Ms. Kathy Knowles made the motion to approve the agenda with the amendment of "Council Survey" added and Mr. Douglas Hollberg seconded the motion. Committee Chair Brown asked if there was any discussion; hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion to approve the agenda with the amendment of "Council Survey" was carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE TEAM MEETING (PLANNING & PROJECTS COMMITTEE AND STAKEHOLDERS)

TRRC Regional Plan Update:

Draft TRRC Regional Work Program 2019-2023

Committee Chair Brown asked Ms. Jeannie Brantley and the Planning Staff to begin their presentations of the Regional Plan update. Ms. Brantley advised the members that Mr. Paul Jarrell and Ms. Kim Dutton would preside over today's session. Mr. Jarrell began by advising the members that they had a copy of the Draft TRRC Regional Work Program in their packets. He then began to explain how the listening sessions, meetings, etc., where regional goals, needs and opportunities, etc. were discussed. These discussions assisted in creating a priorities list; the staff is using the priorities list to produce "headliners" for the implementation program. Mr. Jarrell asked the members to review the document while he read a list of items that will be included in the Regional Work Program. The topic of the film industry and tourism prompted a long discussion about the effects of the film industry in our area, tourism dollars in our region, etc. There were questions about how to measure the film industry and tourism (financially) in the region, since the state's statistics do not seem to provide more in depth information for those numbers. More discussion followed regarding if the regional commission is actively promoting tourist attractions in the region. Mr. Jarrell noted several attractions that TRRC has assisted with promotion. There were several comments about how to measure goals since the state does not provide a breakdown of numbers that are specific to each county. It was noted that the state has formulas (for different scenarios) to utilize to estimate people attending an event; these formulas determine the numbers for people at the event and how much money is being spent at the event. Ms. Knowles summed up the

discussion by noting, “For purposes of today’s conversation, we are working on the strategic plan which is where we are putting the broad view for the strategies that we want to accomplish.” She noted that the comments being made focused more on a tactical plan. Ms. Knowles continued, “How are we going to accomplish the strategy? So for the purposes of this conversation, we need to complete our strategic plan and then at upcoming meetings, develop our tactical plan and include all the valid points that you are making.” Ms. Kathy Oxford added that she was only questioning, “if there is a way to measure success and if it was included in here (this document).”

The next topic of discussion was broadband. Mr. Hollberg noted that Spalding County’s school system has advised that they are experiencing some problems with broadband. This prompted discussion of a survey about broadband, the levels of service available in the areas, etc. Mr. Jarrell added that Ms. Knowles has experience with a broadband survey since she initiated a survey process for Heard County. Ms. Knowles shared that a survey was issued, and the responses indicated a lack of broadband service throughout Heard County. A consultant was hired to drive through the county to check service with four (4) cellular service companies (Verizon, AT&T, Sprint and T-Mobile). The results were worse than originally anticipated; twenty per cent (20%) of the individuals stated that their service was “okay.” Ms. Brantley and Ms. Knowles shared that the consultant found nineteen (19) towers throughout the county and several of them were not being used. Ms. Knowles will share information about the broadband survey with the members.

Mr. Jarrell spoke of the remaining action items for the remaining categories listed on the Regional Work Program document. Ms. Brantley encouraged the members to submit any items or changes to the Planning staff.

The timeline for the Regional Plan was discussed. The members were advised that the completed plan is due at the end of June; the plan must be approved (by the committee and council) and submitted to state at the end of June. A draft will be ready for the committee’s review in April.

Committee Chair Brown closed the Executive Team Meeting with the stakeholders and advised everyone that the Planning and Projects Committee had a few items left to discuss. He advised the stakeholders that they were free to leave since their portion of the meeting was completed.

COUNCIL SURVEY

Ms. Brantley presented this portion of the agenda. One of the state audit findings indicated that the council should consider changes to the meeting schedule to encourage attendance. She mentioned that at the time of the audit, TRRC was experiencing some problems with having enough council members to have a quorum for some of the meetings. Ms. Brantley advised the members that the survey will be available online and that our goal is one hundred percent (100%) participation. Mr. Hollberg commented on the council meeting being “sandwiched” between the committee meetings. Mr. Fjelstul added that the audit did not require us to change anything, but to consider a change; the gathered information will be provided to both committees for their presentation to the full council. Mr. Boone commented, “that I know we need to go through the motions, but we are not experiencing that same problem that we did. We start changing things, we may have one (problem).”

OTHER BUSINESS

Nothing was presented under this portion of the agenda.

DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING

The Planning and Projects Committee will meet on Thursday, April 25, 2019 at 11:00 a.m.; the meeting location is the Turin Town Hall in Turin, Georgia.

ADJOURNMENT

Committee Chair Brown adjourned the meeting.

Curtis Brown, Jr., Chairman
Planning and Projects Committee