

**MINUTES OF THE
COASTAL REGIONAL COMMISSION COUNCIL
November 10, 2015
Richmond Hill City Center, Richmond Hill, GA
10:00 A.M.**

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Thomas Ratcliffe called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. Invocation was provided by Mayor Jim Thomas, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Thomas, Tom Ratcliffe, Allen Brown, Priscilla D. Thomas, Ken Lee, Margaret Evans, John Morrissey, Dan Coty, Sean Register, Craig Root, Chris Blaine, Herb Jones, Julie Martin, Pat Parker, Shaw McVeigh, Dale Provenzano, Ray Howard, Phil Phillips, Chap Bennett, Wyck Newberry, Harold Fowler, and Graylan Quarterman.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jimmy Burnsed, Charles Wilson, Walter Gibson, David Boland, Jimmy Starline, Dwight Gordon, Edna Jackson, Jason Coley, Reggie Loper, J.C. Warren, Donald Lovette, Kelly Spratt, Hugh Hodge, Jan Moore, and Gwendolyn Davis.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: Dorothy Glisson, Screven County and Ron Elliott, Fort Stewart.

GUESTS: Chris Edwards, Auditor; Eric Landon, Camden County; Nathaniel Thomas; Sandra Rayson, Woodbine; Stefanie Nagid, DNR-CRD; King Evans and John Griffin, CHA; Jennifer Fordham, DCA; and Joe Parker, Jr., Freelance Reporter.

STAFF PRESENT: Allen Burns, Executive Director; Lena Geiger, Finance Director; Don Masisak, Transportation Director; Terri Watkins, Transportation Fiscal Analyst; and Colletta Harper, Administrative Services Director.

Outgoing Council Member Plaques - Chairman Ratcliffe presented outgoing Council member certificates to Mayor Margaret Evans and Mayor James Thomas.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Ratcliffe requested approval of the minutes from the October 14th meeting.

Motion: Herb Jones
Second: Commissioner Priscilla D. Thomas
Vote: Unanimous

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Non-Public Representatives – Chairman Ratcliffe requested approval of the non-public appointments of Phil Phillips, Chatham County and Ray Howard, Long County.

Motion: Shaw McVeigh
Second: Mayor Jim Thomas
Vote: Unanimous

Approval of FY15 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report– (*See Attachment 1, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.*) Budget & Finance Committee member Dan Coty reported the committee had met and reviewed the Audit and found everything to be in order. Mr. Chris Edwards, Auditor, McNair, McLemore, Middlebrooks & Co., LLC, commended Lena for doing an excellent job in preparing the document; the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) is the highest caliber report that can be issued, and means that management understands the process. Mr. Edwards then provided a general overview of the Audit. The

Transmittal Letter, written by Allen and Lena, provides an overview of the RC, what it does, and highlights any threats or weaknesses. While written by the CRC, the dollar amounts are audited.

Emphasis of Matter in the Report of Independent Accountants reflects the CRC's adoption of GASB 68 which changes the way you report and disclose financial reporting for pensions. Pension deficit is now shown as a debt on the balance sheet and not just reflected in the notes.

The MD&A section shows comparative information and financial highlights; if someone does not have time to read the entire report, they should focus on the MD&A section.

Total assets of the CRC are a little over \$5.8 million and the total liabilities are a little over \$3.8 million. The assets of the CRC exceeded its liabilities by a little over \$2 million; approximately \$800,000 is unrestricted and can be used to meet the CRC's ongoing obligations.

The organization had a netted loss of \$50,000, which is much better than last year and is manageable. Mr. Edwards stated that he was impressed with the positive way the organization reacted to his concerns last year.

Page 140 shows a 10-year comparison in net positions; in 10 years the expenses have doubled, and have fluctuated in the other years – Edwards stated it is a lot of change to manage.

The CRC again receives an unmodified opinion which is the best you can receive in an audit. Budget & Finance Committee Member Dan Coty stated that the Audit Committee was recommending that the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report be approved and made it a motion.

Motion: Dan Coty
Second: Mayor Jim Thomas
Vote: Unanimous

Approval of Fund Balance Policy. *(See Attachment 2, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.)*

Executive Director Burns stated this policy was created as a recommendation from our auditors last year. The policy, which will be added to the Financial Policies, basically defines the different fund balances allowed under GASB 54. Ms. Geiger further explained that this allows us to do local projects as a non-major fund which makes it more transparent and not just charged to the general fund. Also projects that are carried over can be assigned to the appropriate fund balance. A motion was made to approve the Fund Balance Policy.

Motion: Shaw McVeigh
Second: Chris Blaine
Vote: Unanimous

Approval of Resolution to Amend and Restate the CRC's Retirement Plan. *(See Attachment 3, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.)* Executive Director Burns stated that our 401K Plan currently does not allow for hardship withdrawals and having this option would allow the employee to do so without suffering a penalty; the employee could only withdraw their vested portion. The IRS recently reviewed ICMA-RC's Government Profit Sharing Plan and Trust document and provided them with a favorable opinion letter. As a result, plan sponsors (the CRC) has to adopt the restated document. A motion was made to approve the Resolution.

Motion: Dan Coty
Second: Mayor Margaret Evans
Vote: Unanimous

Approval for CRC to Cover Increase in Health Insurance – Executive Director Burns stated that this year our health insurance has only increased by 7% (approximately \$39.40/employee per month). In 2012 we started pushing the yearly increases to our employees, which is now currently \$185/month per employee. We've cut out COLA, but have given merit increases, but the increase in insurance has set the employees back. Burns stated he was recommending that since the increase is minimal this year that the CRC cover the increase. Any changes in future increases would be brought back to the Budget & Finance Committee. After a brief discussion, a motion was made for the CRC to incur the cost of the increase for employees.

Motion: Dan Coty
Second: Craig Root
Vote: Approved; Dale Provenzano and Julie Martin voted no.

Approval of Authorizing Resolution to enter into Contract with DHS – (*See Attachment 4, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.*) Executive Director Burns stated this is something we have done before and in order to apply for funds from DHS through the MIPPA program the Council has to authorize us to sign the contract. A motion was made to approve the Authorizing Resolution.

Motion: Mayor John Morrissey
Second: Mayor Margaret Evans
Vote: Unanimous

Approval of Changes to CADDA's Bylaws- (*See Attachment 5, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.*) Executive Director Burns explained to new members that CADDA was an entity of the CRC and that we work with them and have to approve their board members and any changes to their bylaws. Burns referred members to the salmon handout outlining the changes being made. A motion was made to approve the changes to the bylaws.

Motion: Shaw McVeigh
Second: Chris Blaine
Vote: Approved; Craig Root (also a CADDA Board member) abstained.

Mayor John Morrissey commented on an observation he made during the Budget & Finance Committee. In the Audit Report in the statistical section he would like to see the state's average for unemployment and salaries so that comparisons could be made. There are only two substantial commercial businesses in our region and the other are governmental; he stated this is something we need to keep in front of us when made decisions for our region. Executive Director Burns replied that this is something that will be done in the future.

PRESENTATIONS

Spaceport Camden – (*See Attachment 6, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.*) Steve Howard, Camden County Administrator, provided a PowerPoint overview of Spaceport Camden which included computer renditions of a conceptual outlay of the Spaceport. The project is currently in the licensing and permitting process – which is a long process. A public scoping meeting will be held by the FAA on Monday, December 7th at the Camden County Public Services Authority Recreation Center from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. The FAA will provide an overview of the environmental process followed by a public comment period. The FAA has chosen the Leidos Corp. to produce the Environmental Impact Statement on the spaceport project.

Mr. Clay Montague, Chairman of the Environmental Subcommittee, stated the purpose of the subcommittee is to develop a list of environmental concerns and figure out how to present them effectively to the FAA during the public scoping period – now is the time for locals to voice their concerns. Other environmental groups such as Georgia Conservancy, One Hundred Miles, Satilla Riverkeeper, and St. Marys Earthkeeper, etc., serve on the Subcommittee as well.

Approval of Resolution in Support of Spaceport Camden – After a brief discussion of the positive impact this could have on the coastal region, a motion was made to approve the Resolution as presented.

Motion: Mayor John Morrissey
Second: Craig Root
Vote: Unanimous

Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Information Technology (CEIT) at Georgia Southern University (GSU) – (See Attachment 7, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.) Dr. Mohammad Davoud, Founding Dean of CEIT, provided a PowerPoint Presentation on their program. In 2011, GSU began offering three engineering programs, which led them to establish the CEIT which now consists of six departments and has 10 degree programs. Enrollment in the programs is growing rapidly and most graduates stay in Georgia. GSU's goal is to encourage economic development; when you have a manufacturer/business interested in your community, put them in touch with me and let me meet with them and tell them what we can offer. Businesses need a skilled workforce and we are working to make that happen. We offer internships and small companies can also use our labs for testing products. We are very easy to work with. Information about their programs is available on the GSU website.

OTHER BUSINESS

DRI Reports: None to report.

Project Status Reports - (See Attachments 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 attached herein and made a part of these minutes.) The AAA is holding four public hearings to assist in developing goals and objectives for the new four-year planning cycle (Savannah, Richmond Hill, Brunswick, and Statesboro); dates and places are listed on the first page of their report.

CADDA Report: No questions were raised regarding the CADDA report. (See Attachment 13, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- CRC Office will be closed on Veteran's Day – thank you to all who served.
- Walter Gibson's mother-in-law passed away and her service is today.
- We just received the State's Performance Audit on regional commissions; I will be reviewing and will bring it to the January meeting.
- Senator William Ligon co-chaired the second meeting of the Coastal Greenway Joint Study Committee on Wednesday, November 4, 2015 at our office. The committee voted that the creation of a bicycle trail from Savannah to St. Marys would enhance ecotourism in the state. Senator Ligon and Representative Ron Stephens gave the CRC a strong vote of confidence by handing the project to us.
- Attended ceremony in Kingsland for Camden's designation as "America's First Coast Guard Community" – kudos to them.

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- Last week the GARC Annual Conference was held on St. Simons with over 300 attendees; the golf tournament was on Wednesday to raise money for our home delivered meals program.
- Next week I will be taking time off to volunteer for the McGladrey golf tournament.
- The AAA is again sponsoring a food drive for seniors on our waiting list; our employees always help with this. Also, the Southern Rider's Association will be doing a poker run on December 5th with proceeds being donated to our AAA for the seniors.
- My travel expenses last month were 0.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m., with lunch following.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be on **Wednesday, January 13, 2016, at the Richmond Hill City Center at 10:00 a.m.**