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1181 Coastal Drive, SW | Darien, GA | 31305

the
Pelican Brief

April—June 2016



A Publication of the Coastal Regional Commission

US Representative Buddy Carter Visits Coastal Assistive Technology Lab

By: Peggy Luukkonen, ADRC Manager

The Georgia Division of Aging Services sponsored a training at Coastal Assistive Technology Lab on May 4-5 for six other Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) who received assistive technology toolkits to assist them in starting their own assistive technology programs. Representatives from Georgia Tech Tools for Life program were present remotely through the Lab Robot.

The Coastal AAA also was host to a visit from US Representative Buddy Carter on May 5th, who toured the Assistive Technology Lab and saw the many technologies available to people with disabilities.



US Representative Buddy Carter, AAA staff and participants of the training sponsored by Georgia Division of Aging Services

The AAA lab has partnered with Georgia Tech's Tools for Life Lab and provides a multitude of technology for people with mobility issues, dementia, vision and hearing loss, and communication problems. The AAA lab is teaming with devices and inventive tools to assist disabled people to live more independently. There is even a robot that will roll around and carry out interactive conversation.

Representative Carter talked about H.R. 6, the 21st Century Cures Act, which will help encourage research, speed up the approval process of disease treatments, assist in ensuring the great work of the Tools for Life Lab and encourage research to help save lives. *(continued on page 6)*

Coastal AAA Receives 2016 AIRS Distinguished Service Award

By: Peggy Luukkonen, ADRC Manager

The Coastal AAA was selected to receive the Distinguished Service Award for work with the Assistive Technology Lab at the CRC. Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Counselors Nikki Dukes and Marge Parrish accepted the award at the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) Annual Conference held in St. Louis on May 25th. AIRS is the professional membership association for community Information and Referral (I&R) and Information and Referral/Assistance (I&R/A) providers. With over 5000+ national and international members, it is very exciting to be recognized nationally for work with assistive technology and persons with disabilities.



Highlights from Past Coastal Regional Commission Council Meetings

By Colletta S. Harper, Administrative Services Director

April 13, 2016

- Approval of Minutes from March 9, 2016 meeting;

Ms. Connie Patrick, Director, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), provided a



PowerPoint overview of their agency whose mission is to train those who protect our homeland. Ms. Patrick became Director of FLETC in 2002 and they currently provide consolidated training for 96 federal law enforcement agencies. They have 2,000 beds on center and have

contracts with nine hotels in Brunswick and regular use of additional hotels from Darien to Kingsland. More than 8,000 students will be housed in hotels this year. IRS students (criminal investigators) are at the facility for six months. They provide students transportation to local shopping, entertainment, events and recreational activities. The new conference center is scheduled to be completed in May and features a 600-seat auditorium and three conference rooms. Fourteen events are already on the books for this year. A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Ms. Abby Cox, Division of Aging Services Director, stated that the Older Americans Act is up for reauthorization and has been passed by the House and Senate and is awaiting approval by the President. Fourteen days into her new position, Ms. Cox stated that she viewed this



meeting as an opportunity to get to know everyone and vice versa. Georgia has 12 Area Agency on Aging's (AAA's) and Coastal AAA is one of the strongest; Dionne Lovett, Coastal AAA's Aging Service Director, works with continuous budget cuts but is still open to new ideas, and as a result, has the only technology lab in Georgia and she hopes to see this replicated by other AAAs. Technology is a great way to serve more clients with less dollars and counselors can now screen to see if this technology can provide assistance to those who are on waiting lists. The Division has a partnership with Georgia Tech where students look at technology that will assist the aging. Her goal this year is to visit each AAA and listen and learn, i.e., follow a whole process on elder abuse and see what we can do

better. They are also working to close down unlicensed Personal Care Homes, but they have to find a place for the displaced clients once they are closed. A new data system, HARMONY, is being rolled out so there will be some growing pains learning a new system. A big change is that the CCSP has been moved to the Department of Community Health; the thought is that they have a bigger budget and hopefully more clients can be served—time will tell.

May 11, 2016

- Approval of Minutes from April 13, 2016 meeting; and
- Approval of DHS Authorizing Resolution.

Georgia Department of Revenue (DOR) -



Commissioner Lynne Riley provided a PowerPoint overview of the DOR. The DOR has 11 regional offices and has the responsibilities of tax administration, alcohol & tobacco, and motor vehicle tag & title. The budget for FY17 is \$43.7 billion.

The department is pushing for a paperless system which will be more cost effective. The GA Tax Center is a secure website that allows taxpayers to file returns and pay taxes electronically; they can also register to be notified when their tax return has been received to defend against fraud filings or identity theft. Any unclaimed property is turned over to the state after seven years and the state holds it until it is claimed; visit the unclaimed property program section on their website. The DOR has formed three advisory groups in 2016 and Commissioner Walter Gibson serves on the Local Government Advisory Group. The advisory groups serve to maintain an open dialogue between all taxpayers and the department - they want to know how they can better serve the tax payers. Their priority projects are Fraud and DRIVES (Driver Record and Integrated Vehicle Enterprise System) Project: modernizing MVD and DDS technology where systems will interface with county tag offices. A brief Q & A followed the presentation.

(continued on page 3)

Highlights from Past Coastal Regional Commission Council Meetings

(continued from page 2)

Great Promise Partnership – Mr. Mike Beatty, President & CEO, explained that the Partnership provides students who are at risk of dropping out of high school extra support as they work to earn their diploma. Over 1,000 students are engaged in this program and 200 are graduating this year. This year the Partnership has a 92% success rate, working with 100 companies. One third of the students goes into the military, 1/3 goes to college, and another 1/3 will start work full time. The challenge is that they need a bigger presence as there are a lot of kids that drop out of school. School systems identify students who would benefit from this partnership and then partner companies interview them for jobs. A short video the “April faces of Manufacturing – Bealieu” was shown which highlighted the benefits of the partnership for the students and company. Mr. Beatty encouraged anyone interested in this partnership to please give him a call.



June 8, 2016

- Approval of Minutes from May 11, 2016 meeting;
- Approval of FY17 Work Program and Budget;
- Approval of Risk Assessment;
- Approval of authorization for Chairman and Executive Director to work on lease/sale proposals for Brunswick Facility and portion of Darien facility;
- Approval of GDOT 5304 Authorizing Resolution; and
- Approval of discontinuing transportation service in Chatham County effective June 30th.

Hydric Soils/Wetlands – Mr. Ralph Forbes, Mr. Sam McCachern and Mr. Alton Brown of Thomas & Hutton, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the changes to the identification of wetlands. In 1987 the Corps Manual had 12 indicators that identified hydrology, hydric soils, and wetland vegetation; the 2010 Regional Supplement has 29 indicators. Any property that consists of flat land and has pine trees equals hydrology. 398 plant species have been changed from upland to wetland. There is a significant increase in wetlands now and a lot of land that was purchased before the market went bad (before it could be developed) is now undevelopable.

Regional Logistics Opportunities: Mr. Donald Masisak, Transportation Director, explained the mission of the Transportation Committee is to work with state and local governments to facilitate the planning, improvement and funding of all transportation efforts. They have identified a project that fits their mission and introduced Mr. John Henry, CEO, Effingham County Industrial Development Authority, who provided a PowerPoint overview of some of the projects in Effingham County. Mr. Henry stated that any time a new development happens “all the stars have lined up” with all of the regulations that must be overcome. In March, a public/private partnership with OmniTRAX was announced for the development of a 2,600 acre tract (formerly known as Research Forest) that will be called the Savannah Gateway Industrial Hub. It is located 12 miles from Savannah’s port and is served by the CSX and Norfolk Southern railroads, and is expected to attract manufacturers, processors, warehouse distributors and others. The development authority is providing the land and OmniTRAX will provide the capital for infrastructure. Comprehensive planning, connectivity and funding will be required on an ongoing basis to accommodate our region’s freight movement.

CRC Acquires Bus

By: Don Masisak, Transportation Director

In a move to be more responsive to the transit needs of the region, the CRC recently purchased a bus from Telfair County. The bus is a 2009 Ford shuttle van that will provide the CRC the ability and capacity to enhance and expand services.



The 13-passenger vehicle is not equipped with a lift which enables the CRC to better serve the Purchase of Service (POS) customer needs as well as (continued on page5)

Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs) in the Coastal Region

By: William D. Compton, AICP, Senior Planner/Grants Specialist

DRI applications have been increasing in 2016. The CRC has **facilitated** four applications in the past six weeks; compared to six applications for all of 2015.



Emphasis is placed on the word **facilitate**, because with the newish DRI Rule (effective since March 2014); the role of the Regional Commissions is to **facilitate** the conversation around the DRI application. Regional Commissions no longer issue findings on DRIs, nor do we perform in depth analysis unless specifically requested to do so by the local government where the DRI is located.

To make the process run smoothly, we request, and the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) strongly encourages, applicants to contact their Regional Commission prior to submitting the DRI forms to DCA. The Regional Commissions and DCA have noticed that many local jurisdictions, as well as engineering and consulting firms, are still unfamiliar with the new rules.

During that initial conversation we will:

- Determine if the proposed project meets the DRI threshold;
- Request that you provide the CRC with an accurate location map; and
- If the project is a rezoning request, we will ask what the current and future zoning classifications are and how the proposed development will affect density, traffic, infrastructure, and municipal service demands.

This information goes into an Information Packet that is provided to affected parties, typically adjacent jurisdictions, DNR and other environmental agencies, GDOT, and any airports, ports, or military installations that may be affected. The affected parties have two weeks to provide their comments to CRC.

Upon conclusion of the comment period, CRC compiles a report including basic information about the development, maps, and all comments that have been received. The report is then conveyed to DCA and the applicant jurisdiction. At that point the DRI process is complete and the applicant jurisdiction is free to make its determination to approve or deny the application for development.

Please contact me at 912-437-0891 or bcompton@crc.ga.gov with any questions about DRIs in the coastal region.

GRANTS – Past, Present, and Future

by William D. Compton, AICP, Senior Planner/Grants Specialist

We are in the process of closing out an Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant for a \$2 million road widening project in Bulloch County to increase access to local industrial sites and a distribution center. We are poised to begin work on a public works project in Liberty County to provide water to a local industry; retaining 500 jobs and creating 100 jobs. CRC prepared the \$1.25 million EDA grant that leverages United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development and Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) grant and loan funds for this \$5.1 million project.



We have applications pending for Federal Department of Transportation TIGER grants in Bulloch County for I-16/ Highway 301 interchange improvements and access roads for an industrial park; and in the City of St. Marys for the Tabby Trail Multi-modal Path (bicycle/pedestrian) to provide much needed transportation options in that community. We anticipate preparing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grants next spring for Public Infrastructure in Glynn County and Public Facilities in Liberty County. *(continued on page 7)*

Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Gateway Services News

By: Peggy Luukkonen, ADRC Program Manager

The ADRC staff had a busy month with events and presentations throughout the community.

ADRC Counselor Nikki Dukes attended the 2nd annual Liberty County Mental Health Forum sponsored by Hinesville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority on May 3rd providing information on programs and services.

ADRC Counselors Audrey Massey and Marge Parrish assisted with the planning and coordination of the annual Consumer College hosted by the Chatham County Seniors and Law Enforcement Together (S.A.L.T) Council. The event was held in Savannah on May 5th with over 300 participants. They also provided information on programs and services at the event.



ADRC Counselor Marge Parrish attended a community health fair held at Christ Church in Savannah on May 7th, providing information about the ADRC programs and services.



ADRC Counselors Marge Parrish and Tammy Williams participated in the Chatham County Older Americans Luncheon on May 19th with over 500 seniors attending, providing information on programs and services.

The Assistive Technology Lab sponsored a group tour for 13 Vocational Rehab Specialists across our region on May 26th. Participants received a presentation on ADRC services, as well as a tour of the lab.

Coastal AAA Community Partnerships and Collaborations

By: Dionne Lovett, Aging Services Director

The Coastal AAA hosted a Community Care Services Program (CCSP) and Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Advisory Council Networking meeting on May 24th in Richmond Hill. The meeting was attended by 60+ service providers, advocates and case managers from the coastal region. Guest speakers included Dr. Mark Johnson from



The Coastal Georgia Caregivers Network

Gateway Behavioral Health Services and Kim Dulek from Anchor Advocacy.

The Coastal AAA also hosted a CARE-Net meeting on May 24th. The Coastal CARE-Net is comprised of community leaders, agency representatives, and professional and family caregivers who seek to improve the quality of caregiving services in the nine-county coastal region.

Through the GeorgiaCares Program, the Coastal AAA hosted three Elder Rights conferences during May 2016 in Camden, Glynn and Bulloch counties. The programs provided attendees information on Home Safety, Avoiding Scams and Financial Exploitation, and Legislative Updates/Advocacy. All activities were coordinated by Evelyn Gay, GeorgiaCares Coordinator and Elder Rights Project Director for Georgia Legal Services. Ms. Gay is planning to make the conferences an annual event reaching even more counties in FY17.

CRC Acquires Bus (continued from page 3)

the special events sponsored by the various community based entities served by the CRC.

Without the restrictions of the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) oversight, the CRC will have the versatility and latitude to utilize the bus as needed. With the various POS runs the additional seating capacity will help optimize the use of each bus and better respond to the transit needs of our community partners.

CAREER OPPORUNITY

The Coastal Area Agency on Aging seeks a qualified candidate to fulfill the duties of an **Information and Assistance Counselor**. For more information about this career opportunity visit <http://www.crc.ga.gov/departments/admin/careers.html>

Recognition of Transit Program

By: Don Masisak, Transportation Director

The partnerships the CRC has established with the various organizations within the region has proven to be successful. This success was recently recognized by the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) at their Annual Transportation Conference in Chattanooga on June 13, 2016 as an “Excellence in Regional Transportation” award winner for their contract with the Coastal Center for Developmental Services (CCDS) located in Savannah.

As the CCDS tried to place their clients with employment opportunities the one concern of each potential employer was if the individual they hired could get to work on time each day. The CCDS’s mission was to prepare these individuals for employment and create an opportunity of independence, self-sufficiency and the ability to earn a sustaining wage. To address the overriding transportation concern, the CRC partnered with the CCDS, Transitions and the Department of Human Services to develop a solution and design a shuttle/subscription type contract to transport these individuals to places of employment in the Chatham County area.

Mr. Willie Baker who can’t hear or speak, was hired by the Port Wentworth Police Department to clean offices; an article was featured about him in the Savannah News.



Mr. Willie Baker Arrives to Work

To capitalize on this recognition, the CRC submitted an application to the Federal Transit Administration to advocate the program’s responsiveness to the region’s transit needs. This application also highlighted the shuttle/subscription approach in addressing particular needs with the CRC Department of Aging Services and

their clients’ needs for health and medical purposes; the Jekyll Island Westin to transport their HB-1 employees; the Matthew Reardon Autistic Center; and several rural health clinics. These recognition awards will validate the CRC’s commitment to provide a cost efficient and cost effective transit program within the ten-county region.

US Representative Buddy Carter Visits Coastal Assistive Technology Lab

(continued from page 1)

Representative Carter noted that currently there are 10,000 diseases and there are only 500 cures. The bi-partisan bill, if passed, would “infuse more money in the National Institutes of Health and the FDA to help them encourage research and development of more cures, new drugs and procedures. We also would be doing more than just throwing money at it. It would be trying to break down some of the barriers so that some of the innovative research being done now could get to the patient. We are adding incentives to pharmacies and other companies to come up with new cures for these diseases. It’s really a good legislation.”

Presently, he said, the bill is stuck in the Senate and work is being done to dislodge it so that the bill can get into conference, where the Senate and House can work on it together. “In the long run,” Rep. Carter said, “it will save us money. Initially, it’s going to cost some money, though. We are talking about cures for Alzheimer’s, heart disease, and cancers.”



Peggy Luukkonen, ADRC Program Manager, demonstrates lab robot to U.S. Representative Buddy Carter

GRANTS—Past, Present, and Future *(continued from page 4)*

Listed below is a synopsis of some of the varied grant programs CRC has assisted local communities with. Many of these programs require engineering and environmental studies, detailed budgeting, and detailed surveys of demographic data in order to prepare a successful grant application. Grant programs have become more and more competitive. Perfect applications for inspiring programs often don't get funded the first time around. Projects often require more than one funding source. It's never too early to begin working with CRC to assemble your funding requests.

State Community Development Block (CDBG) Programs

Georgia is changing its CDBG program for FY2017. Briefly, these changes include increasing the maximum grant award for single activity projects from \$500,000 to \$750,000, increasing the maximum grant award for multi-activity projects from \$750,000 to \$1 million, and adjusting the limits on administration and matching requirements. Applications will be due April 1, 2017.

CDBG funds may be used for Public Infrastructure and Public Facilities. CDBG requires that funds benefit low and moderate-income persons. A minimum of 70% of the persons benefitting from a CDBG project must meet this income test.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

Georgia's RTP provides funding for trail construction, trail maintenance and trail education. Although housed within the state Division of Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites, the RTP awards grants to city governments, county governments, federal agencies, authorized commissions, as well as state agencies.

Funding amounts range from a minimum of \$25,000 to a maximum of \$100,000 and require a 20% local match. Application due dates vary from year to year, but are typically in late November to early December.

Economic Development Administration (EDA)

EDA's grant program is a useful tool to help facilitate economic development by off-setting infrastructure costs. Coastal Georgia communities have used EDA funds in the past to widen roads or provide water sources for expanding industry. Grant awards can be in excess of \$1 million and require a 1:1 match of

non-federal funds for each dollar in federal funds from EDA. Loan funds from agencies like USDA Rural Development and GEFA can be considered as eligible match. Whereas CDBG eligibility is tied to benefitting low- and moderate-income persons, EDA funds are tied to the creation of new jobs and the retention of existing jobs.

Site Visit by Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)

By: Don Masisak, Transportation Director

On June 1, 2016, Michele Nystrom, Rural Transit Group Leader for the GDOT, and Troy Green, Public Transportation Specialist for Region 5, conducted a site visit to the CRC.

Ms. Nystrom, as Administrator of the Rural Transit Program, wanted to observe the operation of the Call Center and examine the investments of the two previous ARRA grants, one which provided the funds for the renovation of the Call Center and discuss the recent ruling by the Federal Transit Administration on the Urban Zone Area (UZA) designations. The recent designation of the "Urban Zones" will impact ridership in Chatham County (Savannah/Pooler) and Glynn County (Brunswick). Based on the new designation as a result of population growth, several of the CRC's riders will no longer be eligible to ride the buses because of their urban addresses and if their destination is an urban address as well.

CRC staff was concerned by the notification process in giving those affected persons ample time to find alternative modes, especially for health and medical purposes, and secondly, these areas would not impact the service of the DHS and POS contracts with customers in those areas. Ms. Nystrom advised the staff the concern is being examined and will have a defined approach shortly.

Overall, both GDOT representatives were satisfied with the transit operations.





UPCOMING MEETINGS

CRC Council Meetings

No meeting in July

August 10, 2016

September 14, 2016

10:00 a.m.

Richmond Hill City Center



Aging Services Advisory

Council Meeting

July 26, 2016

10:00 a.m.

Richmond Hill City Center



CCSP/ADRC Council Meeting

August 23, 2016

10:00 a.m.

Richmond Hill City Center

*Serving the Cities and Counties of Coastal Georgia
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