

**MINUTES OF THE  
COASTAL REGIONAL COMMISSION COUNCIL  
March 13, 2024  
Richmond Hill City Center, Richmond Hill, GA  
10:00 A.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Ken Lee called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m., followed by the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ken Lee, Rosa Romeo, Rebecca Boston, Dan Coty, Sammy Tostensen, Walter Gibson, Reggie Loper, Shaw McVeigh, Preston Dees, Tom Ratcliffe, Richard Hayes, Steven Asplund, Anthony Simmons, Jason Coley, Craig Root, Chris Blaine, Tanet Myers, Kate Karwacki, William Bland, Jr, Kristy Chance, Hugh Hodge, Chester Ellis, Jones Hooks, and Donald Lovette.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jonathan McCollar, Van Hunter, Carter Infinger, Lance Sabbe, Allen Amason, Mary Hamilton, Sabrina Kent, Van Johnson, Robert Parker, Tammy Goober, Lannie Bryant, and Chap Bennett.

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dorothy Glisson, Screven County and Chris Fletcher, Fort Stewart

**GUESTS:** Jennifer Fordham, DCA; Mark Massey, City of Savannah; Stephanie Johnson, Effingham County; Joey Brown, Liberty County; Shawn Boatwright, Camden County; Farran Fullilove, Camden County; and Allen Brown, Liberty County.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Allen Burns, Executive Director; Dionne Lovett, Assistant Executive Director; Lena Geiger, Finance Director; Kameron Dickerson, Assistant Finance Director; Barry James, Transportation Director; Jimmie Green, Transit Manager; Aaron Carpenter, Planning & Government Services, Director; Wincy Poon, GIS Manager; Nikki Patton, GIS Analyst; Chrishonda Grant, HR Transit Coordinator; and Colletta Harper, Administrative Services Director/HR.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** A motion was made to approve the February 14, 2024, meeting minutes.

**Motion:** Walter Gibson  
**Second:** Commissioner Reggie Loper  
**Vote:** Unanimous

**BUSINESS ITEMS**

**APPROVAL OF GEORGIA MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES BENEFIT SYSTEM DEFINED BENEFIT RETIREMENT PLAN REINSTATED ADOPTION AGREEMENT AND GENERAL ADDENDUM** (*See Attachment 1, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.*) Mr. Allen Burns, Executive Director referred members to the handout and provided a brief overview of the updates/changes submitted by the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA). The plan is updated as needed to include recent amendments and comply with changes in the federal tax law to ensure tax-qualified status and make sure we are in compliance with the IRS. A motion was made to approve the GMEBS Defined Retirement Plan Restatement and General Addendum as presented.

**Motion:** Chairman Chester Ellis  
**Second:** Commissioner Rosa Romeo  
**Vote:** Unanimous

**APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:** (*See Attachment 2, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.*) Chairman Ken Lee summarized the performance evaluation. The Evaluation Committee consisted of Commissioner Rosa Romeo, Steve Asplund, Walter Gibson, Chairman

Donald Lovett, Craig Root, Tammy Goober, Tom Ratcliffe, and myself. The overall rating was 148.88 out of a possible 155 points. Chairman Lee stated the rating is “very good” and warrants a 3% merit increase effective March 3, 2024. A motion was made to approve the evaluation and merit increase for the Executive Director.

**Motion:** Chairman Chester Ellis  
**Second:** Chris Blaine  
**Vote:** Unanimous

**APPROVAL OF CADDA BOARD APPOINTMENT:** (See Attachment 3, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.) Chairman Ken Lee referred members to the blue handout and stated CADDA is asking the Council to approve the appointment of Mr. Patrick Woock (Bulloch County) to their Board. A motion was made to appoint Mr. Woock to their Board as requested.

**Motion:** Walter Gibson  
**Second:** Commissioner Reggie Loper  
**Vote:** Unanimous

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

**Project Status Reports** - (See Attachments 4, 5, 6, and 7 attached herein and made a part of these minutes.) There were no questions or comments regarding the reports.

**CADDA Report:** (See Attachment 8, attached herein and made a part of these minutes.) There were no questions regarding the report.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

- Aging still has over 300 people on the waiting list.
- Transportation had almost 10k trips in February. The demand is there, and we hope to continue that service. We are glad to see the numbers improve.
- Gale Barr, Assistant Finance Director announced her retirement; Kameron Dickerson was promoted to fill the position.
- Difficult day due to retiring after 16 years. I could not have done this job without the staff and council members. We had a very good working relationship.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** A motion was made to go into Executive Session at 10:28 a.m. to discuss the following: pending or threatened litigation, claims, administrative proceedings, or settlements; entering into a contract to purchase, dispose of, or lease property; and discussion or deliberation on the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a government officer or employee.

**Motion:** Tom Ratcliffe, Jr.  
**Second:** Commissioner Rosa Romeo  
**Vote:** Unanimous

### **MEETING RECONVENED AT 11:45 A.M.**

(1) Executive Director Burns requested authorization for the Budget and Finance Chairman, new elect Executive Director, and Finance Director to enter into a five-year lease/purchase agreement on the portion of

the building that was a former school (approximately 16,000 sf) with the prospective client, pending credit/background check.

**Motion:** Walter Gibson  
**Second:** Dan Coty  
**Vote:** Unanimous

(2) Executive Director Burns requested authorization for the Budget and Finance Chairman, new elect Executive Director, and Finance Director to attend the public sale of the kitchen portion of the building (previously sold to God's Ocean) on the courthouse steps on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, and if necessary, make an offer of up to \$200,000, with a clean title.

**Motion:** Commissioner Reggie Loper  
**Second:** Walter Gibson  
**Vote:** Passed

Mr. Craig Root opposed making a bid at the courthouse; he prefers to deal with the bank once it's back in their possession.

(3) Executive Director Burns stated the Council previously approved Ms. Lovett to be evaluated after six months as the Executive Director. However, per the Employee handbook an employee who has been employed more than three months and is promoted will only be required to serve a three-month probationary period. A motion was made for Ms. Lovett to be evaluated three months in accordance with the Employee Handbook.

**Motion:** Shaw McVeigh  
**Second:** Commissioner Rosa Romeo  
**Vote:** Unanimous

(4) Dan Coty asked for authorization to form a committee of himself as Budget & Finance Committee Chairman, the Officers, Executive Director-Elect, and Finance Director to negotiate a contract to compensate Allen for his assistance with the three ongoing real estate transactions.

**Motion:** Commissioner Rosa Romeo  
**Second:** Steve Asplund  
**Vote:** Unanimous

**SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:**

Chairman Ken Lee, and others throughout the region presented gifts, plaques, resolutions, etc., to Allen Burns in honor of his service and retirement.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:13 p.m., with Allen's retirement celebration following.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be on April 10<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at the Richmond Hill City Center.