



**CITY OF FLOWERY BRANCH**  
**Work Session**  
**Thursday, September 29, 2011 6:00 p.m.**  
**Special Called Meeting**



**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Mike Miller called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mayor Mike Miller, Council Members: Amanda Swafford, Chris Fetterman, Joe Anglin and Tara Richards were all present. Also in attendance were City Manager Bill Andrew, City Planner James Riker and City Attorney Dick Carothers

**ABSENT:** Council Member Kris Yardley

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** City Manager Bill Andrew led the pledge of allegiance

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None

**DRAFT MINUTES:** City Clerk Burney presented the draft minutes from the September 15, 2011 Council Meeting. Council Member Swafford indicated that she had not had a chance to read the minutes, and asked that they be tabled to the next meeting. Mayor Miller advised that someone would need to table those minutes in the voting session.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- ❖ Resolution 11-014 – Application to apply for funding through the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant jointly with the cities of Buford, Oakwood and Braselton

City Manager Andrew provided to the Council some questions from Council Member Anglin regarding the grant along with some answers from City Manager Andrew and Mr. Guy Herring of McFarland, Dyer and Associates. Mr. Herring was recommended for this project by the City of Braselton due to his experience in planning. This handout is attached to the minutes as Exhibit A. The first question concerned any tangible benefits the City will receive. The grant would help to eliminate duplication of services, eliminate waste due to miscommunication, and help to plan for future development.

The next question addressed if there were any other examples of other grants being applied for jointly. Mr. Herring stated that the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) has previously received grants to provide comprehensive planning services for the Atlanta area and the ARC is also applying for this grant.

The final question was in regards to potential future grants being used for actual costs of improvement. If projects are identified with the current application and grant funds, future grant funds could pay for actual projects as recommendations would already be in place for projects that would benefit the area.

City Manager Andrew stated that although an invitation was extended to the cities to make application for the grant, which is a good sign, the chances of actually being awarded the

grant are slim. The application being put forth by the cities of Buford, Oakwood, Braselton and Flowery Branch would be unique as it is a coalition between different cities. Even if the grant were to not be awarded to the cities, there has already been a benefit as the cities are working together to improve the area. Approving the resolution tonight would not be a commitment for spending the money for the match this budget year; it would not need to be paid until the next budget year. Even if the grant were to be approved, the City would still be able to withdraw if the money were not available to be spent by the City.

Council Member Anglin stated that committing to this grant now is not guaranteeing that the City will have to spend the money in the future. If the grant were to be awarded, the City could review the financial situation at that time before deciding if it wanted to participate. This would also open the door for future grants.

Council Member Fetterman verified with City Manager Andrew that Mr. Guy Herring was recommended by Braselton as he put together their Community Improvement District. Mr. Herring was also formerly the planner for Jackson County and is currently the planner for the City of Arcade.

Council Member Fetterman stated that he was concerned that Hall County was not involved in applying for this grant. City Manager Andrew stated that the County has requested a 3 year extension for their community agenda, so they are not looking at future planning right now. The City of Gainesville has submitted a letter in support of this grant application. Council Member Fetterman was also concerned as some of the work will be done in Jackson and Gwinnett Counties and they are not included in the application either.

Council Member Fetterman questioned how the funds would be divided up and where would all of the work be done. Would it be concentrated on one City or area? Council Member Swafford asked if currently there is an allocation of the \$400,000 grant by area. City Manager Andrew stated that the cities would be treated as a whole for use of the grant funds. There is a possibility that the study may identify projects that are in specific areas. However, the areas are being viewed as corridors and since the City of Flowery Branch lies in the middle of the cities that are applying for the grant, the City would receive a benefit even if projects were identified in other areas. If projects were mainly identified in one area, Mr. Andrew stated that he was confident that the cities would work together to break down the costs in a fair and proportionate manner.

#### **ADJOURNMENT WORK SESSION**

Mayor Miller closed the Work Session and opened the voting session at 6:20 p.m.



**CITY OF FLOWERY BRANCH  
Voting Session  
Immediately following Work Session  
Thursday, September 29, 2011  
Special Called Meeting**



**OPEN VOTING SESSION:**

Mayor Mike Miller opened the Voting Session at 6:20 p.m.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Consider – Draft Council meeting minutes from September 15, 2011

**Council Member Swafford made a motion to table approval of the minutes to the October 6 Council Meeting**

**Second: Chris Fetterman**

Discussion: None

**Unanimous**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Consider – Resolution 11-014 – Application to apply for funding through the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant jointly with the cities of Buford, Oakwood and Braselton; to rescind conflicting resolutions; and for other lawful purposes.

**Motion to approve: Joe Anglin**

**Second: Tara Richards**

Discussion: Council Member Fetterman wanted to know if the Comprehensive Plan of Flowerly Branch would be considered a conflicting resolution. City Attorney Carothers stated that to be conflicting it would need to be another resolution that was perhaps asking for funding in conjunction with different communities. The Comprehensive Plan is not affected by a resolution, it is adopted by ordinance.

**City Clerk Burney did a roll call vote at the request of Mayor Miller**

**Council Member Swafford – No**

**Council Member Fetterman – No**

**Council Member Anglin – Yes**

**Council Member Richards – Yes**

**As there was a tie, Mayor Miller voted to break the tie.**

**Mayor Miller: Yes**

**Motion passes with a vote of 3-2.**

City Manager Andrew stated that the City has a quit claim deed on 5202 Railroad Avenue. As the City is now the owner of the property, the property taxes need to be paid. The County property taxes are due on October 1<sup>st</sup> in the full amount of \$446.95. City Attorney Carothers stated that the resolution should authorize acceptance of quit claim deed and authorize the City Manager to pay the amount of \$446.95 in County property taxes and also to pay the City taxes, although the amount is not known at this time.

**Motion: Tara Richards**  
**Second: Amanda Swafford**  
Discussion: None  
**Unanimous**

There was a motion made by Council Member Richards to exit the voting session at 6:25 p.m.

**Motion: Tara Richards**  
**Second: Joe Anglin**  
Discussion: None  
**Unanimous**

**Adjournment:**

  
James "Mike" Miller - Mayor

10-6-11  
Dated

  
Marja Burney - City Clerk

Hey Bill,

I just want to give you the heads up on a few questions I intend to ask tonight at the meeting.

1) What are some tangible future outcomes that can benefit the city of Flowery Branch through the planning provided by this grant?

*[Bill Andrew] Part of the benefit of the planning provided by this grant may be oddly enough what you DON'T see. This effort would assist the Cities in avoiding the duplication of services like what we see on Winder Highway with a Hall County Sewer Line running north and an Oakwood/Braselton Sewer Line running south.*

*Likewise, you may recall about 6 years ago when the intersection at Hog Mtn. Road and Spout Springs was improved by the County. This work took quite a while and got a lot of negative press due to the on-going traffic delays. Unfortunately, this re-design did not account for the Stonebridge development and so it was ripped up about 6-9 months after it was finished. It will be ripped up again when the four-lane work is done for the widening of Spout Springs.*

*The planning provided by this grant will help to NOT see these mistakes happen because it is meant to anticipate development patterns at what will be high-volume intersections and densely developable, large-tract areas.*

*Of course, the grant will also fund an effort to positively plan for the right kind of development to happen at the right times and at the right place. The Cities will be able to work across boundaries to see where we can create synergy for road/intersection development happening in one area and what demands/opportunities that will create in another part of the study area. For example, what we do on our end of Spout Springs obviously changes traffic and development patterns in Braselton. This effort will allow us to work together to maximize opportunities.*

*We will be looking at the logical locations of Workforce Housing, Greenway/Pedestrian/Bike Path opportunities, Parks, Employment Centers (a.k.a. industrial/business parks), School Locations, Infrastructure Size and Placement = Water/Sewer/Fiber Optic Cable, Roads, Light Rail, Industrial Rail, etc... and how all these issues need to be handled to best support the four cities and their chance to make the most of South Hall.*

[Guy Herring] The grant will provide funding for comprehensive planning in a sub-region of the counties that contain the four municipalities. The area will touch three counties with the majority within south hall. The funding from the grant will support economic development planning, transportation planning, workplace development and land use planning. Through this process we will be able to study the micro-region that contains the four municipalities and collectively plan for future infrastructure development, housing needs and recreational needs. The planning process will be developed through a consortium of members made up of stakeholders from around the sub-region. These members will include businesses, non-profits, and local governments. We have a list of stakeholders that joined the grant last year and we are approaching them to be a partner in the consortium in this year's application as well. The consortium will bring the communities together in an orderly planning process that will benefit the stakeholders and citizens by limiting duplication of resources thus reducing overall cost of

supplying infrastructure and other services, leveraging of funds to provide maximum benefit of dollars spent and the creation of ownership of the decisions made in the sub-region.

2) Are there any examples locally or within the state of cities that have entered into similar joint grants? If so, was the planning provided by these grants instrumental in gathering and/or directing completed or current projects?

[Guy Herring] Planning grants of similar nature are provided to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in the state and throughout the Country. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC, the MPO for the Metro ATL area) has received multiple grants to provide comprehensive planning services to the Atlanta metro area. Barrow County received a transportation planning grant from ARC backed by federal dollars to create a multi-modal transportation plan that tied into the land use planning and transportation planning of the Atlanta Metropolitan 20-County Model for transportation and land use. This plan funded through the grant created a list of prioritized capital projects that would benefit the local region as well as provide benefit to the Atlanta Metropolitan 20-County Model. The list created by the planning process is now being used for the SPLOST and T-SPLOST projects. Due to the proximity of the municipalities and the infrastructure that they provide comprehensive planning on a micro-region scale, similar to a county plan, would provide great benefit.

3) You mentioned that this grant, if awarded, could lead to future grants. Would these grants be for actual cost of improvements/growth?

*[Bill Andrew] Yes, as I understand it, this plan could be used as a template to apply for federal funds for the various improvements we identify. Because we would have studied these opportunities as a team and would be carefully rationalizing why the improvements made sense, we would be more likely to receive federal funds.*

[Guy Herring] The Sustainable Communities Grant has two categories. Category 1, which is the one for which we are applying, is for a comprehensive planning process and the creation of a consortium of members/stakeholders that develop a plan for the micro-region. Category 2 provides funding for capital items developed through the planning process. It provides funding for infrastructure development, public/private partnerships for economic development and for transportation projects. Category 1 must be completed first obviously. The plan has to be developed and then we can apply for the Category 2 grant to actually receive federal dollars to offset the costs of the capital items that will be needed to provide the services that will be needed in the micro-region. We want to get to Category 2 so that we can leverage federal dollars to save the tax dollars of stakeholders and citizens within the communities.

Thanks,  
Joe

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