

LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
January 22, 2009
6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

BEAUFORT COUNTY:

Gerald Dawson
Herbert Glaze
Mary Beth Heyward
William McBride
Joseph McDomick
James Outlaw
Jerry Stewart
Lisa Sulka
George Williams

Donnie Beer (Proxy to Chairman Heyward)
Brian Flewelling
John Safay (Proxy to G. Williams)

COLLETON COUNTY:

Esther Black
Joseph Flowers
Burley Lyons
Vic Nettles
Evon Robinson
Bill Young

Gene Whetsell
George White

HAMPTON COUNTY:

Frankie Bennett
Jimmy Bilka
J. L. Goodwin
Lloyd Griffith
Pete Hagood
Buddy Phillips
Nat Shaffer

JASPER COUNTY:

Gary Hodges
George Hood
Henry Lawton

Isaiah Orr
Roy Powell

GUESTS:

Ted Felder, City of Hardeeville Economic Development Director; Bill Horton, City of Hardeeville Council Member attending for Roy Powell; Lesley Kelly with McGregor & Company; Celia Price, guest of Esther Black

STAFF:

Chris Bickley, Michelle Knight, Ginnie Kozak, Sherry Smith, Carol Stonebraker

Chairman Heyward called the January 22, 2009 Lowcountry Council of Governments regular board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Evon Robinson gave the invocation. The Chairman welcomed new board members Beaufort County Council Members Brian Flewelling and Jerry Stewart, Ridgeland Mayor Gary Hodges and Bluffton Mayor Lisa Sulka. Mr. Flewelling was unable to attend. Introduction of guests and staff followed. Minutes of the October 23, 2008 meeting were unanimously approved on motion by Jimmy Bilka with a second from Joe Flowers. Proxies presented by the Executive Director included Donnie Beer to Chairman Heyward and John Safay to George Williams. Both were general proxies. The meeting proceeded after determining a quorum was present. Chris Bickley presented the 2009 Meeting Schedule for consideration. Following discussion, Jim Outlaw moved to adopt the 2009 Meeting Schedule and

to allow changes at the discretion of the Chairman. Pete Hagood seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

The Chairman recognized Lesley Kelly with McGregor & Company to present the Lowcountry Regional Development Corporation (LRDC) Audit for its fiscal year ended September 30, 2008. LRDC is the COG's 501(c)6 development corporation. Copies were distributed. Ms. Kelly stated the audit was conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the U.S. and presented the financial position of LRDC as of September 30, 2008 and 2007. She reviewed the audit report and stated that it represented McGregor & Company's unqualified opinion, and no material weaknesses or findings were found. There has been little activity in the development corporation during the past year. Chris Bickley gave a brief background on LRDC. He asked Ms. Kelly if anything was found during the course of the audit that he and the board needed to know. She said that everything was in the report, and there were no deficiencies. Joe Flowers moved to accept the report as information, and following a second from Henry Lawton, the motion passed with all in favor.

Chairman Heyward addressed Old Business and recognized Transportation Committee Chairman George Williams. Mr. Williams reported on the Transportation Committee meeting held earlier that day. Several SCDOT staff from Columbia attended. The committee reviewed regional intersection projects and ranked them according to the board-approved decision making matrix. SCDOT fully funded the US 17/SC 64 intersection in Colleton County, and right-of-way acquisition and design work was expected to begin very soon. That project would be removed from the COG's STIP list and funds reallocated to other projects. Planning Director Ginnie Kozak will develop a list of road-widening projects for assessment by SCDOT to be reviewed in March when the committee next meets. Mr. Williams updated the board on its request that SCDOT fund the Highway 17 widening project in Jasper County. He said that, after learning DOT wanted to use the COG funds for environmental studies, development plans and rights-of-way purchases, the committee recommended the project remain on the Lowcountry STIP list. Discussion followed. No board action was taken.

There were no items of New Business on the Agenda. Chairman Heyward called for Reports and recognized Sherry Smith to present the Mid-Year Finance Report. Copies were in meeting packets. Sherry reported that in November, BB&T's fraud department reported that it had been victim of counterfeit checks whereby checks bearing BB&T numbers were cashed at various locations. BB&T caused considerable trouble to quickly address the situation, which required on-line reporting to BB&T and checks as they are written. BB&T implemented a process at each check cashing location before payment. Sherry reviewed the Finance Report. The Board's Revenue remained higher than forecasted due to a number of items. The budget cycle from the State and the COG's budgeting process. Some projects are in some in the budget was adopted in July. Sherry suggested before the Board. Discussion followed and the report was presented at the meeting.

Michelle Knight recognized for the Community and Economic Development Report. Copies were in meeting packets. Michelle summarized the report written and commented on three projects. Acquisition on the Park Island in Summerville. The project in question was ready to begin. Construction of a center on the Colleton Training Center project was scheduled to be on by the end of the year. The training center project in Hampton received \$250,000 in funds for equipment and was invited to apply for an additional \$998K EDA grant for building a new facility. A land ownership issue—which is held by the State—must be resolved. Michelle said that the issue was being resolved. Discussion followed. The 2009 CDBG Plan. The spring funding round requests due in March and applications in April. Local match has been reduced from 25% to 10%. Discussion followed and the report was accepted as information.

Chris Bickley was recognized for the Director's Report. Copies were in meeting packets. Chris added one item and reported selectively on others. The Planning Department hosted a well-attended Statewide Transportation Planning Conference in early December in Beaufort. The COG compiled a list of projects proposed by local governments and submitted it to Congressman Clyburn's office for inclusion in the Federal economic stimulus and recovery initiative—copies were mailed to board members prior to the meeting and included in meeting packets. Chris requested that the board confirm his earlier action to approve hiring two new adult career counselors in Workforce Development as necessitated by the rising unemployment in the Region. With a motion by Jim Outlaw and second by Lloyd Griffith, the motion was unanimously approved. Jurisdictions were encouraged to participate in the 2010 Census boundary and annexation survey workshop in North Charleston January 29. New board member orientation was scheduled for 5:00 p.m. prior to the next board meeting on February 26.

There were no comments during Council Time. With no additional business to address and on motion duly made, seconded and approved, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m. Copies of the agenda were distributed prior to the meeting. A notice of the meeting was posted on the LCOG bulletin board at least twenty-four hours prior to the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

L. Chriswell Bickley, Jr.
Executive Director

Attachments