

**LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

February 26, 2009

6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

BEAUFORT COUNTY:

Donnie Beer
Brian Flewelling
Herbert Glaze
William McBride
James Outlaw
John Safay
Lisa Sulka
George Williams

Gerald Dawson (Proxy to B. McBride)
Mary Beth Heyward (Proxy to B. McBride)
Joseph McDomick
Jerry Stewart (Proxy to B. McBride)

COLLETON COUNTY:

Esther Black
Joseph Flowers
Burley Lyons
Evon Robinson

Vic Nettles (Proxy to J. Flowers)
Gene Whetsell (Proxy to J. Flowers)
George White
Bill Young

HAMPTON COUNTY:

Jimmy Bilka
Lloyd Griffith
Pete Hagood
Buddy Phillips

Frankie Bennett
J. L. Goodwin
Nat Shaffer

JASPER COUNTY:

Gary Hodges
Henry Lawton
Roy Powell
Gwen Smith

George Hood (Proxy to B. McBride)

GUESTS:

Hardeeville Fire Chief Dan Morgan attending for Roy Powell

STAFF:

Chris Bickley, Sandy Fowler, Michelle Knight, Ginnie Kozak, Sherry Smith and Carol Stonebraker

Secretary Buddy Phillips served as presiding officer in the absence of Chairman Heyward and Vice-Chairman Hood. Secretary Phillips called the February 26, 2009 Lowcountry Council of Governments regular board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Pete Hagood gave the invocation. Introduction of guests and staff followed. Minutes of the January 22, 2009 meeting were unanimously approved on motion by Jimmy Bilka with a second from Joe Flowers. Proxies presented by the Executive Director included Gerald Dawson, Mary Beth Heyward, Jerry Stewart and George Hood to Bill McBride and Vic Nettles and Gene Whetsell to Joe Flowers. All were general proxies. The meeting proceeded after determining a quorum was present.

Secretary Phillips recognized Sandy Fowler to present a Regional Workforce update. Copies of U.S. and South Carolina unemployment maps were in meeting packets. Chris Bickley announced that Sandy Fowler was leaving the COG to become Hampton County's Economic Development Director, and everyone wished

her well. Sandy gave a brief background of the Workforce Development program and spoke about current activity. WIA staff at the One Stops had increased due to rising unemployment driving the need for more career counselors and on-the-job training specialists. Sandy reviewed services offered by WIA. She reported that the Workforce Development program was engaged in completing a strategic plan and that additional funds were expected for a new summer youth program. Secretary Phillips thanked Sandy for the update and her service to the COG.

Michelle Knight was recognized to present three HOME Consortium projects for consideration. Summaries were mailed to board members prior to the meeting and included in meeting packets. Affordable Housing Manager Barbara Johnson was unable to attend the meeting. Michelle reviewed the projects, which included: 1.) \$120,000 to Jasper County Neighbors United for housing rehab of 6 owner-occupied houses in Jasper County; 2.) \$125,000 to Town of Estill for housing rehab of 5 owner-occupied houses in Hampton County; and, 3.) \$100,000 to Lowcountry Habitat for Humanity for construction of 4 new housing units in Beaufort County. Michelle also reviewed funding allocations by county. She reported that 2009 is a renewal year for the consortium, and letters would soon be going out to all local governments. Following discussion, Jim Outlaw moved to approve the three requests as presented. Bill McBride seconded the motion and it carried with all in favor.

Secretary Phillips asked Michelle Knight to continue with the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Report. A review memo was mailed to board members prior to the meeting and included in meeting packets. Michelle reported that the COG had received written clearance to resume RLF lending activities. She reviewed progress on the corrective action plan that was approved by the Board in January. Michelle asked the Board to identify technical candidates to fill Loan Review Committee vacancies and that current Board committee members decide if they wanted to stay on the committee. No action was taken but committee membership would be addressed at the next meeting. Discussion followed with several comments about the corrective action plan's proposed changes to financing policies, after which Bill McBride moved to relook at the program during the next meeting. Evon Robinson seconded the motion and it carried with all in favor.

Sherry Smith was recognized to present recommended LCOG Budget Revisions. Summaries were mailed to board members prior to the meeting and included in meeting packets. Sherry reported the budget had increased from the one approved by the Board in July primarily because the Aging Department received additional pass-through monies for two new senior citizen centers in the region, and the WIA Department received increased funding for additional client services. One Planning Department contract amount was reduced in the current budget due to a start delay, but unspent funds would carry over to next fiscal year. The contingency line item decreased due to budget cuts in the State appropriation and because of a new grant that required increased match. Following discussion, Joe Flowers moved to approve the agency budget revisions as presented, and with a second from Henry Lawton, the motion carried with all in favor.

Secretary Phillips recognized Chris Bickley to present an overview of the American Reinvestment & Recovery Act (ARRA). A memo and summary were in meeting packets. Chris said that some funding would come down by formula and some would be competitive. He reviewed a National Association of Development Organization (NADO) summary that listed objectives of the ARRA and websites where more information could be found. Handouts included the currently eligible SCDOT state-wide local projects list, and Chris commented on LCOG projects noting that only shovel-ready projects would be considered. He stressed that new information was being released almost daily and reviewed what the COG could expect at this point. Handouts also included an 82-page summary of how the ARRA would affect South Carolina. Discussion followed and the Board accepted the documents as information.

Sherry Smith was recognized for the January Finance Report. Copies were in meeting packets. Sherry reviewed the report noting that it was based on the revised budget, and following discussion, the report was accepted as information.

Michelle Knight was recognized for the Community & Economic Development Report. Copies were in meeting packets. Michelle submitted the report as written and reminded everyone March 20th was the deadline for submitting applications for the spring-round of water/sewer/drainage projects. She said it was her understanding that CDBG stimulus dollars would follow the existing grant process and that the State's program description and action plan would be revised to address stimulus funds. It will have a public comment period. The COG will share information as it becomes available. The report was accepted as information.

Chris Bickley was recognized for the Director's Report. Copies were in meeting packets, and Chris reviewed selected items. Chris asked Transportation Committee Chairman George Williams to present SCDOT's request to amend the COG's Transportation Project Decision-Making Matrix. Mr. Williams said the changes would further break down criteria and were required by SCDOT. He moved that the Board add Financial Viability and Pavement Quality to its Decision-Making Matrix. Following a second by Jim Outlaw, the motion carried with all in favor. Chris Bickley presented a resolution for consideration, after which Joe Flowers moved to adopt the Resolution to apply for public transportation funding. Evon Robinson seconded the motion and it carried with all in favor. George Williams moved to approve appointing Ginnie Kozak as LCOG liaison to the LRTA/Palmetto Breeze Board and authorize adding an LRTA representative to the LCOG Transportation Committee as a non-voting member. John Safay seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Chris Bickley reported the COG received \$250K from the State Military Base Task Force as seed money to establish a transfer of development rights program (TDR) to mitigate encroachments around the Marine Corps Air Station in Beaufort.

There were no comments during Council Time, and with no additional business to address, and on motion duly made, seconded and approved, Secretary Phillips adjourned the meeting at 8:10 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

Horsdoveures