

LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

April 22, 2010

6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

	<u>PRESENT:</u>	<u>ABSENT:</u>
BEAUFORT COUNTY:	Gerald Dawson Bill Ferguson Herbert Glaze Mary Beth Heyward Bill McBride Joseph McDomick James Outlaw George Williams	Donnie Beer (Proxy to B. Flewelling) Brian Flewelling (Proxy to B. McBride) Jerry Stewart (Proxy to B. McBride) Lisa Sulka (Proxy to Chair)
COLLETON COUNTY:	Esther S. Black Evon Robinson Gene Whetsel Bill Young	Joseph Flowers (Proxy to G. Whetsel) Burley Lyons Vic Nettles (Proxy to B. Young) George White
HAMPTON COUNTY:	Jimmy Bilka J. L. Goodwin Lloyd Griffith Pete Hagood Buddy Phillips Nat Shaffer	Frankie Bennett
JASPER COUNTY:	Gary Hodges George Hood Henry Lawton	Roy Powell Gwen Smith (Proxy to Chair)
GUESTS:	Mayor Bronco Bostick, City of Hardeeville; Linda Edwards, LCOG legal council; Ted Felder, Hardeeville City Manager; Craig Forrest, LRTA Chairman; Ceila Price, guest of Esther Black; Vicki Woods, Town of Estill, representing Frankie Bennett	
STAFF:	Chris Bickley, Michelle Knight, Ginnie Kozak, Sherry Smith, Carol Stonebraker	

Chairman Hood called the April 22, 2010 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. Introduction of guests and staff followed. Minutes of the February 25, 2010 meeting were unanimously approved on motion by Henry Lawton with a second from Bill Young. Proxies presented by the Executive Director included Donnie Beer to Brian Flewelling, Brian Flewelling and Jerry Stewart to Bill McBride, Joe Flowers to Gene Whetsel, Vic Nettles to Bill Young, and Gwen Smith and Lisa Sulka to Chairman Hood. All were general proxies. Vicki Woods represented Frankie Bennett. The meeting proceeded after determining a quorum was present and began by honoring Henry Lawton on the eve of his 90th birthday. Retiring members Jimmy Bilka and Nat Shaffer were presented with plaques honoring their service on the LCOG Board.

Chairman Hood reordered the agenda to allow the Board to receive information from LCOG labor attorney Linda Edwards regarding a personnel matter. He called for a motion to enter Executive Session, which was made by Bill Ferguson and seconded by Pete Hagood. The motion carried with all in favor. Afterwards the meeting returned to Open Session with no action taken. Chairman Hood thanked Ms. Edwards for the information, and noting her need to return to Columbia that evening, said it would not be necessary for her to stay for the remainder of the meeting. He said the Executive Session would resume after reports were received.

Chairman Hood opened the Public Hearing on the Lowcountry Regional HOME Consortium (LRHC) 2010 Action Plan and recognized Michelle Knight to conduct the hearing. Affordable Housing Manager Barbara Johnson was attending another meeting. The public hearing had been properly advertised in regional newspapers, and draft summaries were mailed to board members prior to the meeting. Copies were in meeting packets. Michelle reviewed program funding that would be used for tenant based rental assistance, housing rehabilitation, new construction and down payment assistance. Six preliminary projects had been identified, although others may be added. Michelle said all proposals must be submitted to the HOME Advisory Committee for its recommendations to the LCOG Board for approval. She said special effort would be made to be sure veterans know about and participate in the program. Discussion followed. Chairman Hood called for public comments and there were none. He declared the hearing closed.

There were no items of Old Business on the Agenda. Chairman Hood addressed New Business and called for action on the Lowcountry Regional HOME Consortium 2010 Action Plan as discussed during the Public Hearing. Evon Robinson moved to approve the LRHC 2010 Action Plan as submitted, and following a second from Esther Black, the motion carried with all in favor.

Chairman Hood recognized Ginnie Kozak for comments on LCOG's Transit Planning Application. Ginnie said that SCDOT required Board authorization by resolution to apply for transit planning funds each year. Jim Outlaw moved to adopt the resolution to apply for transit planning funds, and following a second from Joe McDomick, the motion carried with all in favor.

Sherry Smith was recognized for the Finance Report. Copies were in meeting packets. Sherry said the numbers represented about 75% of the fiscal year and that budget revisions would be reviewed by the Executive Committee and presented to the Board for consideration in May. The report was accepted as information.

Michelle Knight was recognized for the Community and Economic Development Report. Michelle submitted the report as written and commented on recent activity. She said seven applications had been submitted for the spring CDBG funding round, and staff members have begun contacting communities about submitting projects during the fall round. A training session regarding SC Energy Office Grants is scheduled May 5th in Walterboro, and grant recipients have been notified by email. The report was unanimously accepted as information on motion by Henry Lawton with a second from Mary Beth Heyward.

Chris Bickley was recognized for the Director's Report. He submitted the report as written and commented on selected items. He said the Executive Committee would meet at 5:00 p.m. prior to the May 27th board meeting to review current fiscal year budget revisions and to draft the executive director's annual performance evaluation. A bill (S1323) to create the I-95 Corridor Authority has been introduced in the General Assembly. It will include regional counties. Congressman Clyburn plans to invite local officials to an I-95 summit in Santee on May 15th. An additional HOME Consortium Plan Public Hearing will be held in Walterboro May 4th to raise awareness and participation in the program. Chris also noted slight improvement in regional unemployment rates. Information about South Carolina's Palmetto Children's Health Initiative was included in meeting packets.

Chairman Hood called for a motion to re-enter Executive Session to discuss the continued employment of the Executive Director, which was made by Jim Outlaw, seconded by Mary Beth Heyward and unanimously approved. The meeting returned to Open Session, and Chairman Hood called for action regarding rehiring Chris Bickley as Executive Director at the end of his TERI period on May 31st. Bill Young moved to rehire Chris Bickley as Executive Director after being off the COG payroll for one day under his existing employment agreement, except that Item No. 4 would change to allow statewide use of an LCOG vehicle and Item No. 1 would reflect his current salary. Jim Outlaw seconded the motion. Mary Beth Heyward moved to amend the motion to include rehiring Chris Bickley at his current salary and with the same benefits he has now, allowing statewide use of a COG vehicle, continuing annual leave as if he never left LCOG employment and having no payout of accrued annual leave when he goes off the COG payroll at the end of his TERI period. Pete Hagood seconded the motion and discussion followed. There was discussion as to how the amendment would affect the original motion. Bill McBride asked if the intent of the amendment was to rehire Chris on the same terms and conditions he works under now, except there wouldn't be a written employment agreement, and Mary Beth Heyward replied that was correct. The amendment was ruled in order. Chairman Hood called for a vote on the amendment and it carried with all in favor. He then called for a vote on the original motion, as amended, which carried by majority with one opposing vote from Gary Hodges, who said he wasn't sure what he was voting on.

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 8:02 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