

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

October 27, 2011

6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

BEAUFORT COUNTY:

Brian Flewelling
Herbert Glaze
Bill McBride
Joseph McDormick
James Outlaw
Jerry Stewart
George Williams

Gerald Dawson
Bill Ferguson (Proxy to Chair)
Mary Beth Heyward
Lisa Sulka

COLLETON COUNTY:

Esther S. Black
Joseph Flowers
Larry (Babe) Hutto
Evon Robinson
Gene Whetsel
Bill Young

HAMPTON COUNTY:

Frankie Bennett
Charles Boyles
J. L. Goodwin
Lloyd Griffith
Pete Hagood
Buddy Phillips
Nat Shaffer

JASPER COUNTY:

LeRoy Blackshear
Gary Hodges
Henry Lawton
Gwen Smith

Sherry Carroll

GUESTS:

Lesley H. Kelly, CPA, McGregor & Company; Celia Price, guest of Esther Black; Mike Sullivan, SCDOT Area Planning Officer

STAFF:

Chris Bickley, Ginnie Kozak, Sherry Smith, Carol Stonebraker, Marvile Thompson

Chairman Bill Young called the October 27, 2011 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 September 22, 2011 meeting were unanimously approved as written on motion by Henry Lawton with a second from Mr. Hagood. Proxies presented by the Executive Director included one general proxy from Bill Ferguson to the Chair. The meeting proceeded after determining a quorum was present.

Chairman Young recognized Lesley Kelly, CPA, with McGregor & Company, the COG's independent auditor, to present the LCOG Agency Audit for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2011. Copies were mailed to board members prior to the meeting and included in meeting packets. Ms. Kelly stated that the audit was conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the USA as well as those contained in *Government Auditing Standards*. It is an unqualified opinion. Ms. Kelly reviewed pertinent sections of the audit report. It included one repetitive finding in the Economic Adjustment Assistance Revolving Loan Fund where some very old loans did not have required documentation regarding availability of credit to the borrower. It was noted that newer loans examined during the audit that were made after LCOG's first knowledge of the deficiency had the required documentation. (The finding must be reported until resolved through EDA.) The COG remains a low risk auditee. Discussion followed, after which Bill McBride moved to accept the report as information. Following a second by Joe McDomick, the motion unanimously carried. Chris Bickley asked Ms. Kelly if her staff discovered anything during the audit process that the Board needed to know. Ms. Kelly responded that there was nothing to report other than what is contained in the audit report. Chairman Young thanked Ms. Kelly and commended COG staff for its good work.

The Chairman addressed Old Business and recognized Chris Bickley to present information about the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program Future. A summary memo was in meeting packets along with a copy of the Executive Director's January 27, 2011 memo regarding the RLF program, which was discussed at the January board meeting. Chris Bickley reviewed the information and reported that the COG has been unable to find a way to revitalize the RLF program in-house. He recommended exploring the option of transferring management of the RLF program to the Catawba COG, which has multiple loan programs operated by full-time professional loan-management staff. Final decisions would be made by the Board at a later date, and EDA must approve any change. Considerable discussion followed during which Jerry Stewart suggested transferring the program to the Lowcountry Economic Alliance. Joe Flowers made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate with the Catawba COG and other organizations regarding management of the RLF program. Henry Lawton seconded the motion. Following additional discussion, the motion carried with all in agreement.

Chairman Young recognized Transportation Committee Chairman George Williams to present Committee recommendations. The Guideshare project matrix from the previous meeting was mailed to board members before the meeting. Copies of it and a list of Committee recommendations were in meeting packets. Mr. Williams reported that SCDOT had continued work on items discussed at the September Committee meeting. The Committee again met with SCDOT October 24 to develop project recommendations. Mr. Williams presented the list noting that the Committee recommended approving submitting the projects highlighted in green to the SCDOT Commission for its approval and inclusion in the LCOG STIP list. One exception is the Walterboro I-95 Looping Project, which requires more information. Projects highlighted in yellow are not recommended for submission at this time because they too require additional information. He emphasized that the list does not prevent adding projects over the next several years. The Board discussed the projects. Joe McDomick moved to approve the Transportation Committee recommendations. Jim Outlaw seconded the motion. Chairman Young asked if there were more discussion and there was none. The motion carried with all in favor. Mr. Williams said the Committee would meet again in January before the board meeting. He spoke about the good work and progress the Committee has made over the past few years and commended SCDOT for its support.

The Chairman addressed New Business and recognized Chris Bickley to review COG Matching Funds Requirements. A summary memo was in meeting packets, and Chris Bickley reviewed local revenue sources and how those monies may be used. Program matching funds can only come from local revenue. He requested approval to seek additional funds from each county for Aging Program match requirements that have

significantly increased over the past five years. Discussion followed. Consensus of county council members was to make the request understanding that county budgets will be even tighter next year, and the request may not be approved.

Sherry Smith was recognized for the September Finance Report. Copies were in meeting packets. Sherry noted that the report represented 25% of the fiscal year. She reviewed YTD Operations, Title IX and Building Project expenditures. Sherry said that staff is discussing a request to set monthly goals instead of annual goals for Revenues over Operations and how that may best be accomplished. She reviewed Accounts Receivable and Restricted Cash. Chairman Young called for questions and there were none.

Chris Bickley was recognized to present the Community and Economic Development Report for Michelle Knight, who was in Columbia. Copies were in meeting packets and submitted as written. Chris relayed Michelle's comments that announcements regarding projects submitted during the fall funding round were expected around the 1st of December and that it is not too early for communities to begin working on project applications for the spring funding round.

Chairman Young asked Chris Bickley to continue with the Executive Director's Report. Copies were in meeting packets and submitted as written. A list of LCOG participants at the upcoming SCARC Annual Conference was attached. Chris drew attention to the unemployment chart, which showed some improvement, and the Planning Department's updated *People and the Economy of the Lowcountry: A Demographic Overview* that were in meeting packets. He asked that board members review the management discussion and analysis that starts on page 3 and economic factors of next year's budget that starts at the bottom of page 6 of the audit report.

Chairman Young called for a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss a contractual matter and a legal matter. The Board entered Executive Session on a unanimously approved motion by Henry Lawton that was seconded by Gene Whetsel. The Board returned to Open Session with no action taken.

There were no comments during Council Time, and with no additional business to address, and on motion duly made, seconded and approved, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:05 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