

**LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
January 26, 2012  
6:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:**

**ABSENT:**

**BEAUFORT COUNTY:**

Gerald Dawson  
Bill Ferguson  
Brian Flewelling  
Herbert Glaze  
Mary Beth Heyward  
Bill McBride  
Joseph McDomick  
James Outlaw  
Lisa Sulka  
George Williams

Jerry Stewart (Proxy to B. McBride)

**COLLETON COUNTY:**

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

**HAMPTON COUNTY:**

Frankie Bennett  
Charles Boyles, Jr.  
Lloyd Griffith  
James (Pete) Hagood  
Buddy Phillips

J. L. Goodwin  
Nat Shaffer

**JASPER COUNTY:**

Sherry Carroll  
Henry Lawton, Sr.  
Joey Malphrus  
Gwen Johnson Smith

LeRoy Blackshear

**GUESTS:**

SCDOT Commissioner Craig Forrest; Yemassee Mayor Pro-Tem Colin Moore;  
Hardeeville City Manager Bob Nanni

**STAFF:**

Chris Bickley, Ginnie Kozak, Sherry Smith, Carol Stonebraker, Jamie Wood

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Chairman Bill Young called the January 26, 2012 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. Town of Ridgeland Mayor Joey Malphrus and Colleton County's new at-large member Tommy Mann from the Town of Edisto Beach were welcomed as new board members. Introduction of guests and staff followed. The Chairman welcomed visiting SCDOT Commissioner Craig Forrest, Hardeeville City Manager Bob Nanni and Yemassee Mayor Pro-Tem Colin Moore, who was representing J. L. Goodwin. Chairman Young called for action on the October 27, 2011 minutes. Joe Flowers made a motion to approve the minutes, and Frankie Bennett seconded the motion. The Chairman asked if there were corrections, and Brian Flewelling requested an amendment. Following discussion, at paragraph two,

page two, line nine and preceding the motion, the sentence "A preference was expressed to keep management of the RLF within the Region." was inserted. The motion unanimously passed as amended. One general proxy from Jerry Stewart to Bill McBride was noted by the Executive Director. The meeting proceeded after determining a quorum was present. Chairman Young presented the 2012 meeting schedule, which was unanimously approved on motion by Henry Lawton following a second from Joe Flowers.

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Chairman Young recognized WIA Director Jamie Wood for an update on the Lowcountry Workforce Program. Jamie reviewed WIA progress noting there are 20 LCOG Workforce Development employees assigned to the SC Works Centers in the four counties and administrative staff located at Point South. The program received \$1.6M Department of Labor (DOL) funds through the State Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) for the region last year and served 509 adults, 365 dislocated workers and 207 youth participants. It was a successful year with the program meeting five of nine DOL and State measures while exceeding in the other four.

The federal Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program, which helps at-risk youth stay in school, now operates in three local high schools. Plans are underway to expand to others. Asked how well the program is working in the region, Jamie responded that the national completion rate is 95%, and Wade Hampton H.S. in Hampton County is at 96%. Colleton County's program is relatively new and numbers are not known. The program has not expanded to Beaufort and Jasper counties.

Jamie said the South Carolina Workforce Centers are officially now called SC Works Centers with focus transitioning from unemployment to reemployment. WIA's new role managing the regional centers is a work-in-progress with ongoing administrative changes in Columbia. Staff will attend the state-wide Workforce Development Symposium February 22 in Columbia, and he will also attend the 2012 Southeastern Employment & Training Association (SETA)—a Southeastern eight-state organization for workforce professionals—Spring Conference February 26-29 on Hilton Head Island. Responding to a question, Jamie said three former DEW center managers had retired. Chairman Young thanked Jamie for the update. Chris Bickley commended WIA staff for receiving the 2011-2012 S.C. Outstanding Organization award from the S.C. Association of Adult and Community Education.

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Chairman Young reordered the agenda to allow time for the COG's auditor to arrive. He addressed Old Business and recognized Transportation Committee Chairman George Williams for an update on committee activity since the October board meeting. Mr. Williams said the committee would meet again before the February board meeting. It did not meet in January. He reported that all projects recommended by the committee and board at the October 2011 meeting were approved by the SCDOT Commission and now on the STIP list. Copies of project lists by county were in meeting packets with new projects highlighted in yellow, and Mr. Williams commented on several. He presented a request from SCDOT that the TCSP grant, which SCDOT has been approved to receive on behalf of Beaufort County for a section of the Rail Trail, be recommended for the next STIP list. Beaufort County is putting up local match and no COG funds are involved. Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the request. The motion unanimously carried following a second from Brian Flewelling. SCDOT also approved proceeding with a Regional Transportation Demand Model, and an RFP has been posted. Mr. Williams said a new Jasper County municipal representative is needed on the Transportation Committee. During discussion, and with Jasper County board members concurring, Sherry Carroll agreed to serve.

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The Chairman returned to Presentations and recognized Lesley Kelly with the COG's independent auditor, McGregor & Company, to present the Lowcountry Regional Development (LRDC) audit report for fiscal year ended September 30, 2011. Preliminary copies were mailed to board members, and originals were distributed at the meeting. LRDC is the COG's affiliate non-profit

development corporation. Ms. Kelly thanked the Board for the opportunity of serving as its independent auditor. She stated that the LRDC audit had been conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. She reviewed the report. LRDC had little activity over the past few years. No findings were noted, and it is an unqualified opinion on the financial statements. Delinquent payment on one property was collected during the year. Ms. Kelly reviewed Note 3 regarding restricted assets activity. She responded to a question about depreciation explaining that, because the Hampton spec. building is available for lease, no depreciation is taken while it is vacant. Afterwards, Pete Hagood made a motion to accept the report as information, and following a second from Esther Black, the motion carried with all in favor.

There were no items of New Business on the Agenda. Chairman Young called for Reports and recognized Sherry Smith to present the Mid-year Finance Report. Copies were in meeting packets. Sherry reported that Operations are in-line for the six-month period having caught up with required up-front program match expenditures early in the fiscal year. One old, previously written-off Title IX loan was paid off since the last board meeting. Sherry said the COG's request for proposals for its independent auditor services will soon be published and is expected to be before the board for decision in April. McGregor & Company has completed its allowable tenure as the COG's independent auditor. Chris Bickley added that unless there is some compelling reason to further extend an auditor's engagement, it is limited to two three-year periods. Chairman Young asked if there were questions, and there were none.

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Chris Bickley was recognized to present the Community and Economic Development Report for Michelle Knight, who was unable to attend. Copies were in meeting packets and submitted as written. Chris reported the two regional CDBG fall funding round applications were not approved. The next funding round is for water, sewer and drainage projects and has a mid-March deadline for letters of intent. Staff is working with communities on project submissions.

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Chairman Young asked Chris Bickley to continue with the Director's Report. Copies were in meeting packets. January 27, 2011 and October 27, 2011 memos to the board regarding the RLF program were attached. Chris reviewed selected items from the report. He began with an update on the potential transfer of RLF program management to another organization and reported on discussions with EDA, the Catawba COG and a regional municipality that had expressed interest in operating the program. The COG is waiting to hear from a local economic development organization. Interest in keeping the funds local is high. EDA is receptive to allowing Catawba to manage other COG RLF programs. If selected, Catawba would be expected to aggressively market the RLF in the Lowcountry with intent of making loans in each region based on amount of RLF funds transferred; however, EDA requires that 75% of funds must be loaned, and if regional goals cannot be met, Catawba must loan in other areas to remain in compliance. LCOG would make loan referrals, and its executive director would serve on a committee to review RLF operations annually. Chris said he believes transferring responsibility to Catawba would benefit the program. Catawba already operates other state-wide loan programs in the region. He said the matter will be on the agenda for a couple more meetings before the board makes its decision.

Chris briefed the board on major COG program current funding and expectations for next year. He urged Colleton, Hampton and Jasper counties to contribute \$5K each to support the Regional Transportation Model Project to which Beaufort County has already committed (\$20K and another \$19K for preliminary work). Chairman Young asked Ginnie Kozak how much the COG has contributed to the project. Ginnie responded \$100K (minimum local match) and additional match funds are needed for a project that size, which will be an in-depth transportation study of the four-county region. George Williams noted that the City of Beaufort and Town of Hilton Head Island have committed funding, and support is being considered by the Town of Bluffton. He spoke about the importance of the regional

project made more so with the potential of a casino being built in the City of Hardeeville and other economic development that would have high-impact on traffic in the region.

Chris drew attention to several inserts in the meeting packets. Jasper County has a vacancy on the Executive Committee and another on the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.

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

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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 7:45 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