

LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

June 26, 2014

6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

BEAUFORT COUNTY:

Gerald Dawson
Brian Flewelling
Mary Beth Heyward
Bill McBride
Joseph McDomick
Jim Outlaw
Jerry Stewart
Tabor Vaux
George Williams

Marc A. Grant
Billy Keyserling
Lisa Sulka (Proxy to Chair)

COLLETON COUNTY:

Jane Darby
Thomas (Tommy) Mann
Gene Whetsell

Esther S. Black (Proxy to Chair)
Bobby Bonds
Joseph Flowers (Proxy to G. Whetsell)
Evon Robinson (Proxy to Chair)

HAMPTON COUNTY:

Frankie Bennett
James (Pete) Hagood
Travis L. (Pete) Mixson
Charles (Buddy) Phillips
Nat Shaffer

JASPER COUNTY:

Henry Etheridge
Henry Lawton, Sr.
Joey Malphrus
Gwen Johnson Smith

Carolyn Kassel (Proxy to H. Etheridge)

GUESTS: Sabrina Graham, Hampton County Administrator; Karen Jarrett, Town of Bluffton; Mike Sullivan, SCDOT Area Planning Engineer

STAFF: Hank Amundson, Chris Bickley, Michelle Knight, Ginnie Kozak, Sherry Smith, Carol Stonebraker, Marvile Thompson

Chairman Gwen Johnson Smith called the June 26, 2014 Lowcountry Council of Governments regular Board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Gerald Dawson gave the invocation and spoke in remembrance of recently deceased LCOG Vice-Chairman Lloyd H. (Tootie) Griffith. Chairman Smith noted that new City of Hardeeville Board Member Carolyn Kassel was unable to attend due to a meeting conflict and will be welcomed at the next meeting. Introduction of guests and staff followed. Minutes of the April 24, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved on motion by Tommy Mann with a second from Henry Lawton. Proxies presented by the Executive Director included Joe Flowers to Gene Whetsell, Carolyn Kassel to Henry Etheridge, and Esther Black, Evon Robinson and Lisa Sulka to the Chair. All were general proxies. The meeting proceeded after determining a quorum was present. Retiring Board Member Sherry Carroll could not attend, and an award recognizing her service on the Board will be sent to her. Chairman Smith and Chris Bickley presented retiring Agency on Aging Director Marvile Thompson a service award commemorating her 34 years on the LCOG staff. Marvile thanked everyone and commented on her time at the COG.

Chairman Smith addressed an SCDOT Project Funding Recommendation. A summary and Guideshare charts were in meeting packets. The Transportation Committee met earlier that afternoon. Committee Chairman George Williams reported on discussion with SCDOT Area Planning Engineer Mike Sullivan regarding the US 17 widening project in Jasper County. Mr. Williams presented a resolution from the Transportation Committee to notify SCDOT that it is the COG's intent to withdraw funding for the US 17 project, as proposed, at a cost of \$50M, but that the COG will assist the LATs MPO with resurfacing US 17 and improving the shoulders—the COG cannot agree to a funding scenario that leaves money for no other projects until 2022. Mr. Sullivan was available to respond to questions and discussion followed. Afterwards, Buddy Phillips made a motion to approve the resolution. Brian Flewelling seconded, and the motion unanimously carried.

Chairman Smith called for Old Business and recognized Sherry Smith to review FY2013-2014 Agency Budget Revisions. Board members received advance copies. The original budget is reviewed prior to fiscal year's end and adjusted to conform to actual revenue and expenses. Sherry reviewed the line item notes. Aging and HOME revenues increased and one DHEC project adjusted downward on completion. Expenditure adjustments include increased shared building costs and replacement of obsolete computers in the SC Works Centers, purchase of a new COG vehicle, and cost of providing additional program services paid for with increased funding described in the notes to Revenues. Health and dental insurance adjusted downward. The Executive Committee and staff recommended approval. Brief discussion followed, after which Brian Flewelling moved to approve the revised budget as presented. Henry Lawton seconded the motion and it unanimously carried.

The Chairman recognized Marvile Thompson and Sherry Smith to present an interim Lowcountry Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Program Services Budget. Marvile explained the interim budget is necessary in order to provide services while waiting on the final budget from State. Service providers contracted by the COG must have completed contracts by July 1, 2014. A final budget will later come before the Board for action. Sherry Smith reviewed regional service allocations from AAA funding sources. Home and community-based funding increased in current year and expects about \$200K extra for the upcoming fiscal year. The COG contracts for some services and provides others in house. Funding increases for service coordination assessment, this now is conducted by COG staff. Sherry reviewed units of service by contractor. State changed to a point-to-point (client's home to center) transportation mileage unit reimbursement. Home and group meal rates are increasing to \$8/meal, which will now be the standard regional rate. Health promotion funds are allocated equally among the counties. Discussion followed and included comments about meal and transportation costs. State requires competitive bidding on the services. Some CoAs no longer bid on transportation due to higher costs. Chris Bickley said the COG reimburses contractor service units at 90%, and they secure 10% match. Pete Hagood moved to approve the interim budget, and following a second from Henry Etheridge, the motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Smith addressed New Business and recognized Chris Bickley to present the FY2014-2015 Agency Budget. Board members received advance copies. Chris reviewed its major points. The budget increases almost \$400K over budget revisions approved earlier in the meeting. Contingency funds increased in part to reduce cash-flow risk due to long delays in receiving State reimbursements. Aging funds are expected to increase although the amount will not be known until September. Workforce Development will receive additional funds for its on-the-job (OJT) training program. The budget funds some staff changes and includes a 1% salary increase for all employees. The Executive Committee met earlier to review the budget in detail and unanimously recommended approval. Jim Outlaw moved to approve the budget as written. Mary Beth Heyward seconded the motion and it carried with all in favor.

Nominating Committee Chairman Bill McBride was recognized to present a slate of officers for the new fiscal year. (Chairman Smith appointed a member from each county to serve on the Nominating Committee after the May Board meeting was cancelled.) Mr. McBride thanked other members, Esther Black, Buddy Phillips and Joey Malphrus and briefly reviewed their discussions. The nominees were: Chairman, Nat Shaffer, Hampton County; Vice-Chairman, Tommy Mann, Colleton County; Secretary, Gerald Dawson, Beaufort County; and Treasurer, Henry Etheridge, Jasper County. Chairman Smith asked if there were additional nominations from the floor and there were none. Joe McDomick made a motion to elect the Officers as nominated, and following a second from Brian Flewelling, the motion unanimously carried.

Chairman Smith called for Reports and recognized Brian Flewelling for the Search Committee Report. Mr. Flewelling said the Committee reviewed 72 applications and met two weeks ago to finalize scoring. He recommended contacting the top ten rated candidates for initial phone interviews. The Committee will report again at the next Board meeting.

Sherry Smith was recognized for the May Finance Report. She submitted the report based on budget revisions approved by the Board earlier in the meeting. Purchase of a new COG vehicle and local match allocations will bring revenues over expenses near budget. Delayed Accounts Receivable reimbursements from the State continue to affect cash flow. Receivables include timely, high-quality reimbursement request submissions that need faster turnaround.

Michelle Knight was recognized for the Community and Economic Development Report. Michelle submitted the report as written and commented on recent activity. Five of the eight applications submitted by the COG during the spring funding round were funded. The regional drainage projects were not funded—only one State drainage project was approved. Responding to a question, Michelle said drainage projects must first have a completed study concluding that a State grant will solve the problem.

Chris Bickley was recognized for the Directors Report, which he submitted as written. The regional unemployment chart shows improvement, and increased 208 water quality (sewer system) certifications indicate more economic development is occurring. Chris requested that board members caucus by county following the meeting to fill committee vacancies, appoint Executive Committee members, and select one member per county to attend the 2014 NADO Conference in Denver.

During Council Time, Brian Flewelling requested that Search Committee members meet briefly following the meeting to set its interview schedule.

With no additional business to address, and on motion duly made, seconded and approved, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:50 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

ADDENDUM: Board members caucused by county following the meeting and selected FY2014-2015 Executive Committee At-Large Members Brian Flewelling/Beaufort, Gene Whetsell/Colleton, Pete Hagood/Hampton, and Gwen Smith/Jasper. Mary Beth Heyward/Beaufort, Evon Robinson/Colleton, Frankie Bennett/Hampton, and Gwen Smith/Jasper were selected to attend the NADO Conference. Pete Mixson and Joey Malphrus were appointed to serve as municipal representatives on the Transportation Committee representing Hampton and Jasper County respectively.