

COMBINED MEETING
LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS
LOWCOUNTRY REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
THURSDAY, AUGUST 24, 2017 6:30 P.M.
POINT SOUTH, SOUTH CAROLINA

MINUTES

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

BEAUFORT COUNTY:

Michael Covert
Phil Cromer
Gerald Dawson
Brian Flewelling
Herbert Glaze
York Glover
Mary Beth Heyward
Joseph McDormick
Dan Wood

Marc Grant

COLLETON COUNTY:

Esther Black
Bobby Bonds
Joseph Flowers
Crawford Moore
Evon Robinson
Gene Whetsell

Joseph Flowers
Tommy Mann
Crawford Moore
Evon Robinson

HAMPTON COUNTY:

Pete Hagood
Ronald Mixson
Pete Mixson
Buddy Phillips

JASPER COUNTY:

John Carroll
Tom Johnson
Henry Lawton
Joey Malphrus
Gwen Johnson Smith

Joey Malphrus, proxy to the Chair

GUESTS: David Baize, DHEC; Sandy Cox, Cottageville; Megan Groves, SCDOT; Celia Price, Colleton County; John Rickenbacker, Congressman Clyburn's Office; Brad Samuel, SCANA; David Spisso, Mayor Pro Tem Hardeeville; Craig Winn, SCDOT.

STAFF: Mike Butler, Sabrena Graham, Michelle Knight, Ginnie Kozak, Jordan Newman, Connie Schroyer, Sherry Smith.

1. Call to Order Chairman Dawson called the meeting to order at 6:29 pm
 - 1.1. Pledge of Allegiance
 - 1.2. Invocation
 - Led by Buddy Phillips
 - 1.3. Installation of 2017-2018 Officers & Executive Committee Members
 - Chairman Dawson read the names of the incoming Officers & Executive Committee and passed the gavel to Chairman Johnson.
 - MOVED by Pete Hagood, seconded by Mary Beth Heyward to accept the incoming officers and Executive Committee Members. Motion carried unanimously.

Officers

Chairman – Tom Johnson (J)
Vice Chair – Bobby Bonds (C)
Treasurer – Pete Hagood (H)
Secretary – Brian Flewelling (B)

Executive Committee

Gerald Dawson (B)
Evon Robinson (C)
Buddy Phillips (H)
John Carroll (J)

1.4. Presentation of Chairman's Plaque

- Chairman Johnson presented an appreciation plaque to outgoing chairman Gerald Dawson.

1.5. Introduction of Guests and Staff

- New member Tim Grimsley, Mayor of Cottageville, was welcomed to the board.

1.6. Proxies

- Joey Malphrus to the Chair.

1.7. Approval of June 22, 2017 Minutes

Action

- MOVED by Pete Hagood, seconded by Esther Black to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Presentation

2.1. Groundwater Management Plan for the Lowcountry Capacity Use Area

- David Baize, Water Resource Policy Advisor for DHEC, spoke about the Groundwater Management Plan for the Lowcountry region.
- There was an open stakeholder meeting on June 27 and a public hearing on Aug. 7 to receive local input about the plan. Both meetings were held at the LCOG.
- The plan will be presented to the DHEC Board for final approval on Sept. 7.
- A draft of the plan was included in agenda packets.

Q: Does a decrease in withdrawals improve saltwater intrusion?

A: Yes it does. Hilton Head and Savannah now have strategies in place to decrease the amount of withdrawals and intrusion has been slowed. Strategies include using treated water on golf courses, drilling deeper wells and buying water from other sources.

Q: Have the water issues with Walther's Potato Farm in Colleton County get worked out?

A: Yes. They are now using a balance of both surface and ground water. The farm also interacts more with the community via farm tours which educate guests on water use.

Q: How many gallons of water was Walther's Farm pulling out of the Edisto each day?

A: An exact amount was not available but it was noted that DHEC reports measurements by the millions. The farm is now pulling about half from surface sources and half from ground water.

Q: Do commercial wells have an impact on surface water? Every time a nearby commercial farm irrigates, the Jackson Branch in Hampton County dries up.

A: There are some cases where surficial aquifer systems at the top may be interconnected with surface water. But typically the bigger users are in deeper aquifers not connected to surface water. You can contact DHEC's Water Capacity Use Office to have these concerns evaluated.

Q: Will a lot of rain or a rainy season affect capacity?

A: Surficial aquifers refresh quickly. Deeper aquifers take years to re-charge. Drought has little effect on the deepest aquifers which take tens of thousands of years to refresh.

Q: How many and what kind of permits have been held up, pending approval of the plan?

A: One industrial, five agricultural.

Q: Is the industrial permit for Google?

A: No, it is not.

Q: Speaking of the recharge area, what is being done to protect it?

A: The areas are so large along the fall line it's difficult to protect them and there aren't any current strategies in place to do that.

Q: Is it true that the main aquifer in our area extends from Colleton County down to Orlando Florida?

A: And more. The Floridan Aquifer covers a large regional area.

2.2. SCDOT Project Progress Report – Craig Winn, SCDOT

- A progress report regarding the status of SCDOT road and bridge projects was given. Copies of the report were distributed during the meeting.
- A report of the projects funded with road user fees is currently being created. This will be presented to the COGs and MPOs in the next 3-4 months. All resurfacing projects are expected to double.

Q: How long do you expect the Hwy 17 widening project to take?

A: 2 ½ - 3 years. The resurfacing phase was completed on July 31.

Q: What will be the construction method of the Harbor River Bridge replacement in Beaufort?

A: The new bridge will be constructed next to the old one. Once built, the old one will be removed.

Q: What is the status of the proposed new exit, I-95 at mile marker 3 in Hardeeville?

A: Consultants are currently working with the Army Corps of Engineers to develop an Environmental Impact statement and Interchange Justification Report (traffic study) for review and approval. If the reports conclude the need for an additional interchange and if funding can be identified, construction would likely begin about 5 years from now. LCOG and LATS have been a part of the planning process.

Q: What is the timeline of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the bridges in the Hilton Head area?

A: The proposals will be reviewed next week with a bid award about two weeks following. While the negotiation process could take up to 4-6 months, the EA project completion date set by the contractor will also include the negotiating time. Simultaneously, Beaufort County and the LATS Technical Committee are working on a State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) application to secure funding.

Q: What is the status of the road closure on Pocotaligo Road near McPhersonville? It has been closed since Hurricane Matthew.

A: Road damage and closure is due to a dam breach. DHEC, who regulates dams, has been working with the owner to repair. The road cannot be repaired until the dam is fixed.

- Chairman Johnson asked that an update of Pocotaligo Road be included in the next SCDOT Project Progress Report.

2.3. Planning Services

- LCOG's Planning Department offers various kinds of analysis that can help local governments, communities and businesses grow. Customized maps showing labor force by commute time were distributed to each county.

3. New Business

3.1. Lowcountry Regional Development Corporation (LRDC) Special Meeting

3.1..1. Title to Real Estate and Resolution – Michelle Knight

The LRDC Board to consider a Title to Real Estate granting release to Hampton County all rights, title and interest of the real property and improvements located within the Estill Industrial Park north of Estill; and to consider a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to sign all documents necessary for the transfer of and title to the property.

- The property, originally belonging to Hampton County, was transferred to the LRDC for the construction of a spec building financed with CDBG funds. While it has been rented several times, it has not sold. The current tenant is the Hampton County Fire Department, which means the county is virtually paying rent to themselves.
- All requirements of the improvements have been met and the grant has closed.
- Copies of the legal documents were distributed in agenda packets.

- Action
- MOVED by Brian Flewelling, seconded by Mary Beth Heyward to return the property title back to Hampton County and to approve the resolution authorizing the Executive Director's signature on all necessary documents. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Reports

4.1. Finance Report for July 2017 – Sherry Smith

- The auditors will be onsite Sept. 11. The Audit Report will be presented at the October meeting.
- Revenues over expenditures were 13,833; 13% of the budget has been expended.
- Copies of the monthly financial statement were distributed during the meeting.

4.2. Community and Economic Development Report – Michelle Knight

- C&ED will be submitting 14 CDBG applications representing \$4M in projects to the SC Dept. of Commerce in September.
- Copies of the Project Report were distributed in agenda packets.

4.3. Director's Report – Sabrena Graham

- Encouraged local governments to participate in the 2020 Census Local Update of Census Addresses Operation (LUCA). Participation can help ensure an accurate count in jurisdictions.
- Attended a stakeholders meeting in Beaufort to gather input into the development of the foundation document for the Reconstruction Ear National Monument.
- The Lt. Governor's Office on Aging State Director Daryl Broome visited the LCOG on August 9.
- We are in the process of drafting a procurement policy for LCOG. Other policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated as well.
- As LCOG continues its mission to provide relevance and value to our local governments, we will be meeting in October with representatives from our counties and towns to learn more about the challenges they are facing and seek input on new services we can provide.
- Copies of the Director's Report were distributed during the meeting.

4.4. Planning Reports – 208 Report & Regional Unemployment Chart (for information)

- Copies of the reports were distributed during the meeting.

5. Council Time

- Condolences given to Dr. Joe Flowers whose wife recently passed away.

6. Adjourn The meeting adjourned at 7:32 pm

Minutes submitted by Connie Schroyer