

LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS
THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2018 6:30 P.M.
POINT SOUTH, SOUTH CAROLINA

MINUTES

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

BEAUFORT COUNTY:

Gerald Dawson
Brian Flewelling
Herbert Glaze
York Glover
Mary Beth Heyward
Alice Howard
Dan Wood

Michael Covert, proxy to A. Howard
Phil Cromer, proxy to A. Howard
Marc Grant
Joseph McDomick, proxy to Y. Glover

COLLETON COUNTY:

Esther Black
Bobby Bonds
Tim Grimsley
Tommy Mann
Crawford Moore
Evon Robinson
Gene Whetsell

Joe Flowers, proxy to G. Whetsell

HAMPTON COUNTY:

Pete Hagood
Ronald Mixson
Travis Mixson

Buddy Phillips, proxy to P. Hagood
Nat Shaffer

JASPER COUNTY:

John Carroll
Tom Johnson
Joey Malphrus
Gwen Smith

Henry Lawton

GUESTS: Howard Lockwood, Cottageville Town Council; Michael Pitts, SCDOT; Celia Price, Colleton County; Craig Winn, SCDOT.

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

1. Call to Order Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

1.1. Pledge of Allegiance

1.2. Invocation

– Led by Evon Robinson

1.3. Introduction of Guests and Staff

1.4. Proxies

– Michael Covert & Phil Cromer to Alice Howard; Joe Flowers to Gene Whetsell; Joseph McDomick to York Glover; Buddy Phillips to Pete Hagood

1.5. Approval of October 26, 2017 Minutes

Action – MOVED by Pete Hagood, seconded by Mary Beth Heyward to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Presentation

2.1. SCDOT Progress Report – Craig Winn

– A progress report regarding the status of SCDOT road and bridge projects was given. Copies of the report were distributed during the meeting.

- Q: On the Hwy 278 widening project in Hampton County, who is moving the water/sewer line near the industrial parks?
- A: The Lowcountry Regional Water System and Hampton County are currently negotiating the funding.
- Q: Has all of the pavement improvements in Colleton County been completed?
- A: Yes. All of the improvements in the 2017 program have been completed.
- Q: The Harbor River Bridge project in Beaufort County shows the contract costs at \$54.7M. An earlier report projected the costs at \$63M. If it is closer to the lower estimate, could an expanded sidewalk or bike lane be considered? It is not a part of the current plan.
- A: The bid price appears to be lower than the engineer's original estimate. Mr. Winn will take a look at the sidewalk/bike lane request.
- Q: What is the status of the Back River Bridge in Jasper County at the state line?
- A: The bridge will be funded 90% by SC, 10% by GA. Work needed in addition to the bridge will be paid by each state respectively. A disagreement in the financing is currently being negotiated.
- 2.1.1. Update on Pocotaligo Road Closure, Yemassee
- SCDOT owns the easement over the dam in the area but it is the responsibility of DHEC's Dam Safety and Stormwater Permitting Division and/or the property owner to fix the dam before the road can be repaired. The property owner purportedly disputes ownership of the dam.
- Q: Doesn't SCDOT have a public right-of-way under the road?
- A: No. We have an easement through that the area but we do not own the property nor the dam. Liability purposes and other issues make it impossible to repair the dam but it may be possible that SCDOT could place a culvert pipe underneath the road eliminating the need for a dam.
- Q: Why has that not been done?
- A: The options are currently being negotiated between DHEC and the property owner. Until there is a resolution, SCDOT cannot repair the road.
- Q: Would SCDOT have the power to move forward with the installation of a culver under the road while the responsibility of the dam repair is being disputed?
- A: It is a major decision that would have to be negotiated between SCDOT, DHEC and the property owner.
- Q: Is DHEC and the property owner aware of the amount of people impacted by the road closure?
- A: The impact has been communicated to them. Mr. Winn also shared the community's concerns with SCDOT upper management.
- Q: Who owns the property?
- A: Mr. Winn did not know.
- A DHEC representative will be invited to the next LCOG Board Meeting for further discussion of the predicament.

3. New Business

- 3.1. Approval of the 2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) – Michelle Knight
- LCOG receives funding each year from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to use in developing economic development projects, to assist with the preparation of the CEDS and to support the counties' economic development efforts. One of the requirements to keep the designation as an Economic Development District and the ability to pursue EDA funding is to prepare a major update to the CEDS document every five years. Minor updates are also done annually.
 - The 30-day time frame to receive public comments on the 2017 CEDS is now closed. No comments were received.
 - A copy of the document was distributed in agenda packets.

- Action
- MOVED by Brian Flewelling, Seconded by Mary Beth Heyward to approved the 2017 CEDS. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Reports

4.1. Finance Report for December 2017 – Sherry Smith

- Revenues over expenditures were \$32,414. 70% of the budget has been expended. However, at half way through the fiscal year, this percentage should be closer to 50. The higher percentage is attributed to the expenditure of Aging's federal funds. Directives from the Lt. Governor's Office on Aging has requested local agencies disperse federal, state, then local funds on Aging programs respectively. LCOG's percentage of expended budget will even out over time.
- The audit report for the Lowcountry Regional Development Corporation (LRDC) is historically presented in January. Due to a scheduling conflict with the auditor, the report will be presented at the next meeting.
- Copies of the monthly Financial Statement were distributed at the meeting.

4.2. Community and Economic Development Report – Michelle Knight

- The EDA Wastewater Treatment Plant project in Walterboro is 80% complete. Final completion is anticipated in March/April.
- An RIA grant was awarded to the Town of Smoaks. The water system improvements will begin soon.
- In the fall round of CDBG grant applications, (7) of the (8) project proposals were awarded. The spring round of applications are due in March.
- There will be a CDBG Project Development Meeting on Feb. 14 from 10:30-1:00 in the LCOG Board Room. Representatives from the SC Dept of Commerce will be available to discuss and plan for future community and economic development projects. Invitations to cities, towns and counties will within the week.
- Copies of the Community & Economic Development Report were distributed in agenda packets.

4.3. Director's Report – Sabrena Graham

- Thanks to all who attended the November 2017 SCARC Conference. Gerald Dawson was appointed vice-chair of the SCARC Board. He will serve as president in 2019 when LCOG hosts the event.
- (24) people representing (12) local governments attended the LCOG Regional dinner on Oct. 30. Some of the local governments are interested in receiving help from LCOG with the census. We are exploring this idea.
- I attended Hardeeville's City Council Strategic Planning retreat in December. They will be working on a master plan and LCOG is available to assist in the planning process.
- In December, LCOG prepared an RFP on behalf of Beaufort County Council seeking an Executive Search Firm for a County Administrator. The RFP closed on Jan. 16, 2018. LCOG may continue assisting with the process if requested.
- The (10) SC COG Directors held their annual retreat in November. Much time was spent focusing on how to become more impactful in the areas we serve but more importantly more impactful as a unified statewide association. The directors agreed on five focus areas: 1) marketing and message, 2) agency relationships, 3) political relationships, 4) inter COG collaboration, 5) new lines of business. I will be serving as the leader of our directors group this year. My goal is to work with my colleagues towards a more impactful statewide association through the five identified focus areas.
- In December I completed the SC Diversity Leaders Initiative Program and am now a Riley Institute Diversity Fellow. Classmate and teammate Alice Howard also completed the program.

- Looking ahead to 2018, the areas of focus are:
 - Economic Development
 - Continue & expand current services and serve areas/individuals we have not in the past.
 - Continue to assess our aging programs; implement changes to make our programs and services more efficient; and provide services to more seniors.
 - Convene the region on topics of importance in the communities, local government, and the region.
 - Transportation – continue discussions on expanding/adding routes to LRTA that serves other areas in the region.
 - Road improvements
 - Workforce training program/plan for the region.
- Copies of the Director’s Report were distributed during the meeting.
- 4.3.1. LCOG Annual Report 2016-2017
 - Copies of the Annual Report were presented at the meeting. The report will also be available on the LCOG website and sent local governments & partner agencies.
- 4.4. Planning Reports – Distributed for Information: 208 Report, Regional Unemployment Chart & The People & the Economy of the Lowcountry.

5. Council Time

- There were no reports.

6. Adjourn

- Action
- MOVED by Brian Flewelling, seconded by Evon Robinson to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:12 pm.

Minutes submitted by Connie Schroyer

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