

LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS
THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2020 6:00 P.M.
ZOOM – FACEBOOK LIVE
POINT SOUTH, SOUTH CAROLINA

MINUTES

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

BEAUFORT COUNTY:

Philip Cromer
Herbert Glaze
Joseph McDomick
Mary Beth Heyward
Brian Flewelling
Dan Wood

Gerald Dawson
Tamara Becker
Mark Lawson
Chris Hervochon
Paul Sommerville

COLLETON COUNTY:

Joe Flowers
Phillip Taylor, Sr.
Esther Black
Tommy Mann
Greg Pryor

Gene Whetsell
Tim Grimsley
Crawford Moore

HAMPTON COUNTY:

J.L. Goodwin
Pete Hagood
Charles Savino
Nat Shaffer
Pete Mixson

Ronald Mixon
Buddy Phillips

JASPER COUNTY:

John Carroll
Danny Lucas
Tom Johnson

Gwen Johnson Smith
Chris DuBose

GUESTS: Craig Winn, SCDOT

STAFF: Sabrena Graham, Sherry Smith, Mike Butler, Michelle Knight, Ginnie Kozak, Letisha Scotland, Kira Fuller

1. **Call to Order** Chairman Hagood called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.
 - 1.1. Roll Call
 - 1.2. Invocation
 - Led by Phillip Taylor, Sr.
 - 1.3. Proxies
 - Buddy Phillips to Pete Hagood
 - 1.4. Approval of January 23, 2020 Minutes
 - MOVED by Phillip Taylor, seconded by Brian Flewelling to approve the minutes as presented. **Motion carried.**
 - 1.5. Approval of April 30, 2020 Executive Committee Minutes
 - MOVED by Philip Taylor, seconded by Brian Flewelling to approve the minutes as presented. **Motion carried.**
2. **Public Hearing:**
 - 2.1. SFY 2020-2021 Section 5310, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program Applications for Beaufort, Hampton & Jasper County Council on Aging Agencies – Ms. Letisha Scotland

- The Lowcountry Council of Governments Area on Aging Agency has submitted applications to the SCDOT for Section 5310 the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program for Councils on Aging in Beaufort, Hampton, and Jasper counties. Each agency is requesting an estimated \$50,000 of federal funding for the purchase of service for the period July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. These funds will support the transportation of seniors to nutrition program sites, senior centers, trips, pharmacies, and essential shopping. Also, please note that the Colleton County Council on Aging submitted their own application again this year to purchase a van. All 4 counties are applying for this funding.
- MOVED by Philip Taylor that we go into the public hearing for SFY 2020-2021 Section 5310, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program Applications for Beaufort, Hampton & Jasper County Council on Aging Agencies. Seconded by Herbert Glaze. **Motion carried.**
- MOVED by Philip Taylor, seconded by Herbert Glaze, to close the public hearing. **Motion carried.**

3. **Presentation:**

3.1. SCDOT Project Progress Report – Craig Winn

- If you have interest in any specific resurfacing projects, please email Craig.
- Full report is available in board packet.
- Jasper County Projects: I-95 rehabilitation of asphalt pavement along NB/SB lanes of Interstate 95 will occur from MP 23 to MP 33. The contract completion date is 10/15/2020.
- Q: Will the I-95 bridge replacement relieve some congestion in that area?
- A: No, it will not relieve congestion; however, SCDOT has a project moving forward that will widen between MM 0 and MM 8. This information should be in a subsequent report coming up.

4. **New Business:**

4.1. Appointment of a Board Officer Nominating Committee

- Chairman Hagood appointed: Herbert Glaze (Beaufort), Esther Black, Chairwoman (Colleton), Danny Lucas (Jasper), Ronald Mixon (Hampton) to the 2020-2021 Nominating Committee.
- MOVED by Mary Beth Heyward to adopt the Chairman's recommendations for the Board of Officers Nominating Committee. Brian Flewelling seconded. **Motion carried.**

5. **Department Reports:**

5.1. Finance Report April 2020 – Ms. Sherry Smith

- The target percentage for revenues and expenditures are about 83% through the end of April. At the end of April, accounts receivables increased to nearly \$1.8 million due to the Covid pandemic. It is almost June, so we have begun working on our budget for next year. The FY 2020-2021 budget will be presented at June's board meeting.
- Q: As we look at the impacts of Covid-19, are you seeing roughly 22%-27% of deficits in funding?
- A: Due to the nature of work we perform at the COG, we have not seen any deficits in funding. We have seen increases in special grants and funding to deal with the Covid-19 virus. We have not heard back from local governments on local dues that we use for local matching, which may present a concern.

5.2. Community & Economic Development – Ms. Michelle Knight

- Since January, we have received two EDA grant awards. Jasper County received \$1.125 million for Highway 278 Corridor project and the City of Walterboro received \$15.6 million for wastewater treatment facility, a second phase improvement. After the tornados, the City of Walterboro was granted an emergency grant through the IRA of \$483,500. Due on June 12th, we have a noncompetitive grant for Colleton County for \$360,000. Spring CDBG projects deadline was moved from April to June 15th.
- An announcement was made of \$248 million in CARES funding through the EDA. There are approximately 5 applications in the cue to receive that funding. The applications are due on June 15th.
- If we are asking for information (from each particular jurisdiction), please submit it quickly because time is of the essence.

5.3. Workforce Development Update – Mr. Michael Butler

- As of May 11th, two staff members at the Beaufort office tested positive for Covid-19. We sent all staff home for 14 days, per CDC guidelines, and staff provided services remotely. We had the Beaufort office sanitized by a professional company. As of May 26th, all staff is back at the Beaufort office.
- We are hoping to reopen our centers to the public sometime next week. Our opening will be a soft opening and will not be advertised to the public. We are awaiting PPE for staff and customers.
- As of May 16th, the state has filed 467,513 UI claims. The Lowcountry's UI claims are as follows: Beaufort: 15,512 (roughly 70.33% of Lowcountry UI claims) Colleton: 2969 Jasper: 1921 Hampton: 1253. The state's average unemployment rate is 12.1%. All four of our counties are under the state average. Beaufort: 11.9%, Colleton: 9%, Jasper: 9.3%, and Hampton: 7.2%.

5.4. Director's Report – Ms. Sabrena Graham

- On April 1st, LCOG closed offices and staff worked remotely from home. We are now returning to the office and will be on a regular schedule by June 1. A safety plan has been implemented for all staff and visitors to our building. Offices will remain closed to the public for some as we transition back. Currently, we are not scheduling the board room for outside agencies to use. All departments and programs have continued to work and provide services. Zoom meetings and conference calls are how we have conducted business.
- The Aging Department has received almost a million dollars for emergency services and programs. With those funds, we are providing frozen meals weekly to over 800 non-clients during the pandemic. Meals and other supplies and service have also been provided our regular clients.
- Michelle Knight & C&ED staff have written some emergency grants for some of our local governments that incurred damage from the tornadoes last month. We need you all to communicate with us, let us know your needs. We want to take advantage of every opportunity to receive grant awards for our local governments from these emergency funding sources while they are available.
- Workforce has provided Lowcountry businesses with information and assistance to apply for emergency assistance via the Paycheck Protection Program. Over 22,000 individual unemployment claims have been filed from the Lowcountry Region in the past 7 weeks (March 30 to May 16, 2020). Workforce Director Michael Butler and I participate on weekly conference calls with SC Department of Employment and Workforce.
- Planning Director, Ginnie Kozak, has officially retired effective March 30. She continues working under contract on certain projects. We certainly thank Ginnie for her years of service to LCOG. A senior planner position was filled today. Planning has been invited by the Department of Defense to apply for a Resiliency Planning Grant of \$400,000 - \$500,000. Congratulations to Ginnie on this effort. We are also submitting an RFP for consulting services to assist us with all upcoming transportation programs.
- I want to introduce our Executive Assistant Kira Fuller. She joined us April 1 and we are happy to have her.
- We have continued efforts to advertise and promote Census 2020. Please help spread the word.
- Upcoming Board Conferences: The NADO Annual Training Conference is still scheduled for October 17 – October 20, 2020, in Columbus, Ohio. Please caucus and select your one representative. The SC Councils of Government conference held in November at Myrtle Beach has been cancelled for this year. To the Executive Committee, our Budget Work Session is June 18th at 5:00PM.
- Thank you for your support of LCOG.

6. Executive Session

- MOVED by Brian Flewelling to go into the Executive Session to discuss the personnel matter specifically the Executive Director's annual evaluation. Seconded by Mary Beth Heyward. **Motion carried.**
- MOVED by Phil Cromer, seconded by Brian Flewelling to conclude the Executive Session. **Motion carried unanimously.** The open session of the Board resumed at 6:57pm.
- MOVED by Philip Taylor, Sr. Seconded by Brian Flewelling to accept the Executive Committee evaluation recommendations and 3% performance increase for Executive Director. **Motion carried.**

7. **Council Time:** No comments.

8. **Adjourn**

- MOVED by Phillip Taylor, seconded by Brian Flewelling to adjourn the May 28th, 2020 LCOG Board of Directors Meeting. **Motion carried.** The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Caucus: Board will caucus by county to select one (1) member to attend The NADO Annual Training Conference to be held October 17th, 2020 through October 20th, 2020 in Columbus, Ohio.

Result: Hampton County selected Charles Savino, Beaufort County selected Brian Flewelling, Jasper County selected Danny Lucas, and Colleton County selected Philip Taylor.

Minutes submitted by Kira Fuller.

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