

MINUTES

FULL BOARD MEETING
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD ROOM
JANUARY 25, 2008

MEMBERS PRESENT: Marion Lyles, Wallace Shaw, Judy Gilstrap, Larry Greer, Gracie Floyd, Michael Thompson, James Batchler, Ed Elliott, Leola Robinson-Simpson, Grady Butler, Joe Dill, Bob Gaillard, Bennie Cunningham, Eddie Wynn, Rex Rice, J. Connie Bowers, Dale Culbreth, O'Neal Mintz, and Bob Briggs.

GUESTS PRESENT: Lamar Bailes, Mayor, City of Walhalla; Cameron Jones, Jim Frierson, Bill Jordan, Kayin Jones and Michael Dennis, S.C. Department of Transportation; Zach Hampton and Jarrod Bruder, Cong. Gresham Barrett's Office; Gregg White, U.S. Department of Agriculture; and Kevin Laird, Goodwyn, Mills and Cawood.

STAFF PRESENT: Steve Pelissier, Joe Newton, Becky Hall, Dave Mueller, Dirk Reis, Carol Andersen, Vickie Williams, William Springer, Carl Sakony, Barbara Jardno, Siri Taylor, Amy Wright Webber, and Debbie Courson.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lyles. The invocation was offered by Ms. Gilstrap. On motion by Mr. Shaw, seconded by Mr. Elliott, the minutes of the December 7, 2007, meeting were unanimously approved.

Community and Economic Development Programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture

Mr. White provided an overview of USDA activities and grant programs that support community and economic development. Rural Development has provided housing, water and sewer funds, hundreds of millions of dollars in business loan guarantees, telecommunications and electricity loans and grants, public safety buildings, rescue equipment, libraries, town halls, and access to broadband. He stated that the USDA offers direct loans, grants, and guarantee loans with the goal to build viable and sustainable rural communities.

Update to the Appalachian Region Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Bentley provided the Board with an updated STIP financial statement from the S.C. Department of Transportation. The spread sheet reflects two minor changes for two projects. These changes represent only the transfer of funds from FY 07 to FY 08 or 09 to reflect the delay in the start of these projects. There are no changes in the projects themselves.

On motion by Mr. Briggs, seconded by Mr. Elliott, the Board unanimously approved the two changes.

Regional Transit Funding Application Approval

Mr. Bentley stated that ACOG received six transit grant applications for Section 5310 (Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities) totaling \$320,602. The total amount available was \$321,457. One application was received for Section 5316 (Job Access Reverse Commute) totaling \$111,275. The total amount available was \$744,020. Two applications were received for Section 5317 (New Freedom) totaling \$58,000. The total amount available was \$538,212. He stated that because the requests for funding do not exceed the amount of funding available, staff did not have to undertake the ranking process to prioritize the funding request. The Department of Transportation will review and make the final recommendation on the funding of these projects.

On motion by Mr. Gaillard, seconded by Ms. Robinson-Simpson, the Board unanimously endorsed all transit funding applications.

S.C. Department of Commerce 2008-09 Draft CDBG Program Statement

Mr. Reis stated that in January the S.C. Department of Commerce released its draft 2008-09 CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) Program Statement. The document outlines priority areas and activities for the statewide CDBG program for the period April 2008 through March 2009.

Report and Recommendations from the Personnel Committee

Mr. Pelissier stated that the Personnel Committee had met prior to the Board meeting to discuss issues that the COG will be facing in the new budget year. He stated that it appeared that there would be \$25,000 to \$35,000 surplus in the budget; however, expect health insurance cost and retiree insurance cost to rise. The committee gave staff direction on these items, which will be presented to the Board at the February meeting.

Legislative Update

Mr. Newton briefed the Board on a number of probable legislative issues that will affect our local governments, which include: budget, cigarette tax, immigration, spending caps, local smoking bans, highway funding, education funding, and fire sprinklers.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Chairman

THE SOUTH CAROLINA APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS HAS
COMPLIED WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IN SCHEDULING
AND CONDUCTING THIS MEETING.