

MINUTES

FULL BOARD MEETING
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS CONFERENCE ROOM
MARCH 28, 2008

MEMBERS PRESENT: Marion Lyles, Judy Gilstrap, Wallace Shaw, Dennis Claramunt, Michael Thompson, Terence Roberts, J. W. Sanders, James Batchler, Joe Dill, Bob Gaillard, Bennie Cunningham, Eddie Wynn, Craig Brandon, J. Connie Bowers, Renee Cariveau, O'Neal Mintz, Elbert Tillerson, and Bob Briggs.

GUESTS PRESENT: Lamar Bailes, Oconee County; Ed Schafer and Chip Broyles, Municipal Association of South Carolina; Tom Martin, McNair Law Firm; and Ralph Haggard, Cherokee County.

STAFF PRESENT: Steve Pelissier, Carol Andersen, Chip Bentley, Joe Newton, Becky Hall, William Springer, and Debbie Courson.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lyles. The invocation was offered by Rev. Sanders. On motion by Ms. Cariveau, seconded by Rev. Sanders, the minutes of the February 22, 2008, meeting were unanimously approved.

Illegal Immigration and Local Governments

Mr. Martin stated that illegal immigration has generated significant interest with both the federal and state government, as well as several local governments across the region. He stated that there are currently 40 separate bills in the House and Senate to do with illegal

immigration. Federal government sets the guidelines as to who is legal and who is not, and this cannot be changed by local governments. Mr. Martin stated that it is likely that pending state legislation would override any local ordinances. As a result, he recommended that any action on local regulations be delayed until the end of the legislative session.

Legislative Update

Ed Schafer, Legislative Council with the Municipal Association of S.C., provided an update on activities of interest to local governments that are taking place in the S.C. General Assembly, which include: the budget, fire sprinklers, spending caps, annexation, immigration, revenue bonds, municipal capital project sales tax, business license, and wireless broadband.

Changes to Federal Air Quality Regulations

Mr. Bentley stated that on March 12, 2008, EPA significantly strengthened its national ambient air quality standards for ground-level ozone, the primary component of smog. EPA is revising the 8-hour ozone standard to a level of 0.075 parts per million (ppm). The previous standard, set in 1997, was 0.08 ppm. Currently, the majority of monitors for the Appalachian region exceed the new standard. Non-compliance with these standards would cause all, or portions, of the region to be designated as a non-attainment area. That designation would bring additional permitting requirements for new industry and roads and a potential loss of federal funds for roadway projects that could deter future development.

These regulations will not go into effect until the spring of 2010. However, it is the air quality conditions between today and 2010 that will determine where non-attainment areas are designated. States must make recommendations to EPA no later than March 2009 for areas to be designated as attainment or non-attainment. EPA will issue final designations of attainment status no later than March 2010.

The Council of Governments will continue to work with representatives from each of our counties, as well as the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), to identify strategies to improve our air quality to achieve attainment before 2010. The groups will also look into developing an agreement with EPA similar to the Early Action Compact that would allow a deferment of the effective date of additional regulations, provided the region meets certain deadlines for meeting the new ozone standard.

SCDOT 2008 Rural Transportation Enhancement Grant Program

Mr. Bentley stated that SCDOT (S.C. Department of Transportation) has recently announced that \$4 million has been allocated for the rural portion of the Transportation Enhancement Program for 2008, with an application deadline of May 16, 2008. The Transportation Enhancement Program provides an opportunity for local governments to pursue a broad range of non-traditional transportation related activities, such as bicycle and pedestrian facilities, streetscaping, scenic and landscaping programs, and historic preservation.

Report and Recommendation from the Personnel Committee

Rev. Sanders stated that the Personnel Committee had met to consider several items. The first item was to repeal the ACOG policy providing for agency paid retiree health insurance as of June 1, 2008. On motion by Mr. Wynn, seconded by Mayor Briggs, the Board voted unanimously to make this change. The second item was a recommendation to adjust the pay table up 4%. On motion by Mr. Brandon, seconded by Ms. Floyd, the Board unanimously approved the adjustment. The third item was the recommendation of staff merit increases for FY09 to be from 0 to 4%. On motion by Rev. Sanders, seconded by Mr. Thompson, the Board unanimously accepted the recommendation.

Election of Board Officers for the 2008-09 Term

Mr. Gaillard stated that the nominating committee had met and was recommending the following for Board Officers: Judy Gilstrap, Chair; Wallace Shaw, Vice-Chair, and Ed Elliott, Secretary/Treasurer. On motion by Mr. Gaillard, seconded by Ms. Floyd, the Board voted unanimously to accept the recommended slate of officers.

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

Chair

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

