

## MINUTES

FULL BOARD MEETING  
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS CONFERENCE ROOM  
MARCH 27, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Judy Gilstrap, Ed Elliott, Wallace Shaw, Terence Roberts, Rick Laughridge, J.W. Sanders, James Batchler, Joe Dill, Amy Ryberg Doyle, Bennie Cunningham, Ernest Riley, Bob Winchester, G. Neil Smith, Connie Bowers, Randy Crenshaw, Lib Fleming, Renee Cariveau, Dale Culbreth, Bob Briggs, Elbert Tillerson, Mike Forrester, and Jane Hall.

GUESTS PRESENT:

Anita Patel, Director of Research, S.C. Export Consortium; John Irion, President, S.C. Manufacturing Extension Partnership; Bill Jordan and Michael Dennis, S.C. Department of Transportation; Mark Powell, Anderson; and Susan Hoag, Greenville Technical College.

STAFF PRESENT:

Steve Pelissier, Joe Newton, Becky Hall, Carol Andersen, Chip Bentley, Debra Brown, Aliza Tourkow, and Debbie Courson.

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Gilstrap. The invocation was offered by Rev. Sanders. On motion by Mr. Shaw, seconded by Rev. Sanders, the minutes of the February 27, 2009, meeting were unanimously approved with one correction. O'Neal Mintz was in attendance.

### **South Carolina Export Consortium and South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership**

Ms. Patel, Director of Research, stated that ECI is a non-profit organization that specializes in the development and implementation of business, marketing and global trade strategies. A customized approach enables them to assist with all of the elements necessary to businesses through in-depth market research, creative marketing solutions and growth strategies, helping to identify and develop new markets, new customers and new products and services.

### **Update on Transportation Planning Activities and Issues**

Mr. Bentley stated that the process to determine how stimulus funding for transportation projects will be distributed in SC has been lengthy. SCDOT was proactive in identifying potential projects so that they could position themselves to quickly use the funds once they became available. However, much of this effort began before there was any solid guidance. Assumptions about what *was* and *was not* eligible changed often between December and March when the allocations were finally approved.

The funding distribution was finalized on March 18<sup>th</sup> by the SCDOT Commission. A total of \$463 million has been allocated to South Carolina for transportation projects. Approximately 65% of all funds have been allocated to resurfacing, interstate maintenance, safety, and bridge replacement. The money was dedicated to these projects because they could meet spending timelines and because the projects met DOT priorities established by existing program formulas. The SCDOT Commission approved the list in February.

The remaining \$150 million was available for local projects. Approximately \$44 million went to urban areas with more than 200,000 people including the Greenville-Pickens MPO. The remaining \$106 million was available for projects identified by SCDOT staff as “eligible” projects based on the *shovel-ready* definition. To be shovel-ready a jurisdiction essentially had to be in the permitting process, have environmental documents approved and have established rights-of-way. In talks with SCDOT, they indicated a project that was *concept-only* in December would not have enough time to get the necessary approvals from SCDOT and the Federal Highway Commission. \$1.5 billion would have been needed to complete the list of SCDOT-eligible projects. Unfortunately, only \$106 million will be available.

At the March meeting, the SCDOT Commission decided to divide money evenly by Congressional District. That made \$17.7 million available for projects in each district to be assigned at the discretion of each respective DOT Commissioner. The Commission established a process to work with DOT staff to select projects at their April meeting. The Commissioners will consider factors including the SCDOT Ranking, economic distress, how it helps other projects and COG/MPO plans.

The exception was that District 3 Commissioner Charles Dalton had made a motion to approve projects that he had already identified for his district, which includes ACOG's Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens Counties. The two projects he asked for approval were the East-West Connector in Anderson and the SC 133 Rail Underpass Project in Clemson. Those funds were approved by the full SCDOT Commission at the March meeting.

#### **Federal Economic Stimulus Legislation**

Mr. Pelissier briefly commented on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. His briefing included an overview of "what's out there, what's available for local governments and how to obtain it". He stated that there are 11 main categories of funding through the federal government that are funded through existing departments. They are: Rural Development Administration, Department of Commerce, Department of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Labor, Department of Justice, Department of Transportation, Small Business Administration and Department of Homeland Security.

#### **Legislative Update**

Mr. Newton provided an overview of activity in the S.C. General Assembly, emphasizing legislation of interest to local governments. He commented on the 2010 Budget, Local Government Fund, cigarette tax, and comprehensive tax reform.

#### **Election of Board Officers for the 2009-10 Term**

Rev. Sanders stated that the Nominating Committee had met and is recommending that the current slate of officers be re-appointed to serve for the 2009-10 term. On motion by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Riley, the Board voted unanimously to approve the recommendation.

Minutes  
Pages Four

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

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Chair

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