

MINUTES

FULL BOARD MEETING
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS CONFERENCE ROOM
MARCH 25, 2011

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ed Elliott, Renee Cariveau, Ernest Riley, Dennis Claramunt, Terence Roberts, Eddie Moore, Ted Mattison, Francis Crowder, Rufus Foster, Henry Jolly, Grady Butler, Joe Dill, Don Godbey, Dan Rawls, Bennie Cunningham, Bob Winchester, Reg Dexter, Neil Smith, Larry Bagwell, Mike Forrester, Dale Culbreth, O'Neal Mintz, Jane Hall, Bob Briggs, Elbert Tillerson, Loretta Smith, and Chet Morris.

GUESTS PRESENT:

George Long, Appalachian Development Corporation; Walker Smith, Congressman Jeff Duncan's office; Michael Dennis and Rocque Kneece, S.C. Department of Transportation; Scott Slatton, Municipal Association; and Johnny Edwards, DOT Commissioner.

STAFF PRESENT:

Steve Pelissier, Doug Burns, Don Zimmer, Chip Bentley, Beverly Allen, Dirk Reis, and Debbie Courson.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Elliott. The invocation was offer by Mr. Tillerson. On motion by Mr. Morris, seconded by Mayor Godbey, the minutes of the February 25, 2011, meeting was unanimously approved.

Mr. Godbey made a motion that the resolution to support local governments' flexibility and home rule passed at the last meeting be sent to news media in Charleston, Columbia, Myrtle Beach, and the Greenville News. Mayor Jolly requested that the Spartanburg

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Herald Journal also be included. Ms. Smith seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously.

Interstate 85 Improvement Project

Mr. Dennis with, SC DOT, stated that his office has undertaken a study to identify measures that will resolve congestion and improve safety on I-85 between Greenville and Spartanburg. The study is considering current traffic volumes as well as projected future traffic through the year 2035. The study will also look at ways to lessen the growth of traffic wanting to use I-85, examine means of travel other than by personal automobile, and identify additional potential improvements. The goal of this study is to provide a "buffet" listing of improvements projects based on need, benefit and cost that SC DOT may choose from while staying in line with available funding.

Mr. Kneese briefly reviewed the progress of the study. He stated that traffic counts were completed at all interchange ramps and all frontage roads at interchanges; a corridor model using VISSIM software is being developed and strategies for improvement will be evaluated using the VISSIM model. Model runs are near completion and testing of alternatives/projects are underway and measures of effectiveness are being developed for each project. He stated that the draft report should be completed by mid-April, with the final report being completed by mid-May.

State and Federal Budget Analysis

Mr. Slatton, Senior Field Services Manager with the Municipal Association of South Carolina stated that the tight fiscal climate faced by both South Carolina and the federal government will continue to impact services provided by local governments, as well as other programs affecting economic development, workforce, and human services. Some of the programs affecting our citizens are Aid to Subdivisions, the Community Development Block Grant Program, and broadband funding.

Legislative Report

Mr. Burns provided a report on activities of the 2011 session of the South Carolina General Assembly, with emphasis on issues of importance to local governments, which included: immigration laws, transparency in governments, government re-organization and the budget.

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Report from the Personnel Committee

Mr. Riley stated that the committee reviewed options for employee health insurance. After much discussion, the committee is recommending that COG join the State Health Insurance Program. On motion by Mayor Godbey, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Board voted unanimously to proceed with enrollment in the State Health Insurance Program.

Appointment to fill a Vacant Position and the Chairmanship on the Finance Committee

Chairman Elliott made the following appointments to the Finance Committee: Mayor Godbey to fill a vacancy and Mr. Culbreth to serve as Chairman.

COG Board Officer Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee is recommending the current slate of officers for another one year term. On motion by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Smith, the Board voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Committee.

There was some discussion by the Board concerning the issue of Unemployment Insurance. The State of South Carolina borrowed approximately \$900,000 in federal stimulus to pay for unemployment costs. The \$900,000 must be repaid along with interest and the payments are to begin this fiscal year. Mr. Dexter made motion to have Mr. Pelissier, as Executive Director, draft a letter to the legislature requesting that they review the time line and consider the possibility of spreading the burden of repayment over an extended period of time. Mayor Jolly stated that this action needed to be postponed until the Board could be educated about this issue. Mr. Smith made motion to amend the first motion to be considered at the next meeting. Ms. Smith seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to consider this item at the next meeting.

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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.