

MINUTES

FULL BOARD MEETING
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS CONFERENCE ROOM
APRIL 29, 2011

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ed Elliott, Ernest Riley, Renee Cariveau, Dennis Claramunt, Eddie Moore, Carthel Crout, Francis Crowder, Rufus Foster, Henry Jolly, Grady Butler, Joe Dill, Dan Rawls, Bennie Cunningham, Bob Winchester, Reg Dexter, Neil Smith, Tom Hendricks, Dale Culbreth, Jane Hall, Elbert Tillerson, Loretta Smith, and Chet Morris.

GUESTS PRESENT: Tim Todd, Discover Upcountry South Carolina; and Sarah Nuckles, S. C. Department of Transportation.

STAFF PRESENT: Steve Pelissier, Doug Burns, Chip Bentley, Carol Andersen, Don Zimmer, Beth Lewis, Debra Brown, and Debbie Courson.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Elliot. The invocation was offered by Mr. Tillerson. On motion by Mr. Dill, seconded by Mr. Foster, the minutes of the March 25, 2011, meeting was unanimously approved with one correction. During the discussion on the Unemployment Insurance issue, the minutes stated that South Carolina borrowed \$900,000 in stimulus money. The amount should have been \$9 million.

Asset Based Tourism - Discover Upcountry South Carolina

Mr. Tim Todd, Executive Director of Discover Upcountry South Carolina, stated that ACOG formed Discover Upcountry several years ago through an ARC grant to promote asset based tourism in the region as an economic development tool. Asset based tourism highlights the region's economic history, which was originally based on agriculture until textiles became the state's leading industry after 1900. Then it shifted from cotton to synthetic fabrics in later years. Then BMW established their North American Plant in Spartanburg along with Michelin's headquarters and plants, which created opportunity for related industries.

From there grew the opportunity for tourism, drawing visitors from around the nation. South Carolina bounds with natural resources and recreational opportunities. There are lakes and rivers, state parks, national monuments, heritage preserves and designated wilderness areas that accommodate hiking, camping and horseback riding. It's not just the outdoors that will inspire you; there are museums and art galleries all over the 6-county area.

South Carolina Unemployment Insurance Tax Rate

As requested by the Board, Mr. Burns provided an overview on the issues surrounding changes to unemployment insurance tax rates in the state, as well as potential legislation addressing tax rates. He stated that the State of South Carolina borrowed approximately \$9 million in federal stimulus to pay for unemployment costs. This money must be repaid along with interest. The legislation is currently addressing the burden this would put on local governments.

Legislative Report

Mr. Burns provided a report on activities of the 2011 session of the S. C. General Assembly, with emphasis on issues of importance to local governments, which included the \$8.5 million budget, Immigration, ATI, and voting machines.

Highlights of 2010 Census Figures for the S.C. Appalachian Region

Due to time constraints, this agenda item was deferred to the next Board meeting.

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

Chairman

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