

MINUTES

FULL BOARD MEETING
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS CONFERENCE ROOM
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2016 – 10:30 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Neil Smith, Joe Dill, Ted Mattison, Mack Durham, Cindy Wilson, Ed Elliott, Rufus Foster, Henry Jolly, David Cauthen, Grady Butler, Don Godbey, Gaye Sprague, Willis Meadows, Brandy Amidon, Ernest Riley, Bob Winchester, Reg Dexter, Bill Brockington, Ensley Feemster, Neal Collins, Mike Forrester, Jane Hall, Elbert Tillerson, Junie White, and Roger Nutt.

GUESTS PRESENT:

Joel Dill, Dianna Womack, Administrator, City of Travelers Rest; Andrew Mark; Drew Perry, Greenville County School Drop-out Prevention Program; Rebecca Cooper, Travelers Rest County Council; Daniel Gamble; Charles Williams, Executive Director, Greenville County School Dropout Prevention Program; SC Upstate Equine Council; Charles Williams, Executive Director, Clemson University T. Ed Garrison Arena; Danielle, Intern, Sen. Scott's Office.

STAFF PRESENT:

Steve Pelissier, Chip Bentley, Don Zimmer, Dirk Reis, Tim Womack, Donna Kazia, and Debbie Courson.

The meeting was call to order by Vice-Chairman Smith. The invocation was offered by Mr. Tillerson. On motion by Mr. Godbey, seconded by Mr. Mattison, the minutes of the September 23, 2016, meeting were unanimously approved.

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Equine Industry in Upstate South Carolina

Mr. Charles Williams, Executive Director, Clemson University T. Ed Garrison Arena; and Donna Patterson, President, SC Upstate Equine Council provided an overview of the equine programs and their impact to the region. They reported that in the late 90's, a large group of citizens affiliated with the equestrian interests along with representatives of local governments, Clemson University, other educational institutions, and the Vision Plan leaders from the Upstate counties of Anderson, Pickens, and Oconee, came together to explore collaboration to increase the importance on the equine presence in this region. The three counties, with more than 11,000 horses, an annual economic impact over \$63 million, saw the need to expand and improve the facilities at Clemson's T. Ed Garrison Arena, and some of the adjoining property making Clemson and its surrounding area a premier destination for equine sports competitions and other activities, and create an avenue for cross-county and multi-day competitions.

Ms. Patterson stated that SC Upstate Equine Council brought in \$478 million for the state. They are currently working on two programs. Supporting youth equine programs and developing more trails in Anderson, Pickens, and Oconee counties. Future programs include: hunter/jumper for the arena; additional outdoor show; addition warm-up areas; cross-country field and humps; and a steeplechase field.

School District of Greenville County Dropout Prevention Program

Mr. Drew Perry, Dropout Prevention Specialist gave a brief report on programs offer by the Greenville County School District to reduce the high school dropout rate. He stated the school district has made a commitment to improving the dropout rate in its high schools. Recent data suggests that commitment is paying off, and the result is likely to be a more prepared workforce to meet the needs of employers who want to ring jobs to Greenville County. He commented that the more students staying school results in greater opportunities for individuals who in the past might simply have fallen by the wayside and never lived up to their full potential.

US 25 Safety Issues in Northern Greenville County

Mr. Bentley stated that in June 2016, SCDOT conducted an assessment of US-25 between Travelers Rest and the State Line and determined that several safety issues exist. The section of US-25 between SC 414 and the State Line falls within the ACOGs planning area. Mr. Cooper presented details of the assessment, including recommendations for improvements. Students leave school for a variety of reasons: They can be in trouble, they can be facing problems such as addiction or they might have to work to help support the family. The school district identifies the problem and designs programs that are targeted at those specific areas. Mainly student need people who are involved in their lives to encourage them to stay in school.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned 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.**