

MINUTES

FULL BOARD MEETING
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS CONFERENCE ROOM
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2015 – 10:30 a.m.

MEMBER PRESENT: Dennis Claramunt, Neil Smith, Terence Roberts, Ted Mattison, Carthel Crout, Francis Crowder, Mack Durham, Ed Elliott, Rufus Foster, Henry Jolly, David Cauthen, Dennis Stroupe, Grady Butler, Joe Dill, Butch Kirven, Don Godbey, Gaye Sprague, Willis Meadows, Ernest Riley, Bob Winchester, Reg Dexter, Bill Brockington, Margaret Thompson, Ensley Feemster, and Elbert Tillerson

GUESTS PRESENT: John Moore, President with NEXT Greenville; and Toni McKinley, McKinley, Cooper and Associates.

STAFF PRESENT: Steve Pelissier, Don Zimmer, Chip Bentley, Dirk Reis, Doug Burns, Tim Womack, Jessica Winters, and Debbie Courson.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hall. The invocation was offer by Mr. Tillerson. On motion by Mr. Jolly, seconded by Mr. Elliott, the minutes of the October 23, 2015 meeting were unanimously approved.

Recognition of an Employee Who Recently Celebrated His 5th Anniversary with ACOG

Ms. Hall recognized Don Zimmer, Finance Director, for 5 years of service to ACOG.

NEXT Greenville

Mr. Moore, provided an overview of NEXT, whose mission is to attract and grow high impact, knowledge-based companies by developing an entrepreneurial ecosystem and connecting entrepreneurs to it. NEXT is a program of the Greenville Chamber and currently supports over 100 knowledge-attracted companies in Upstate South Carolina.

He stated that from its earliest days, the goal of NEXT has been to provide support that entrepreneurs require to build strong, successful, globally competitive businesses. They cater to risk takers and pioneers because they believe that innovative small companies are critical to true economic development. Mr. Moore stated that they were passionate about creating an ecosystem in the Upstate where such ventures can thrive and that generate high-quality jobs and “wealth through ownership” – serving generations to come. You can contact the Next Innovation Center at www.nextsc.org or e-mail info@nextsc.org.

ACOG FY 2015 Audit Report

Toni McKinley, with McKinley, Cooper and Associates, stated that she had met with the ACOG Finance Committee to go over the FY 2015 audit, at which she provided a more thorough presentation. She stated that the FY 2015 audit expresses an unmodified opinion as in the past. The financial statement is conforming with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States.

COG Entrepreneur Friendly Community Initiative

Mr. Shellhorse briefly discussed ACOG’s “Entrepreneur Friendly Toolkit” program, which is a 7-step planning process and website that helps communities to become more business friendly. Developed with grant support from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), he stated that he has worked with three pilot communities over the past 18 months to design the program: The City of Pickens, Oconee County and the City of Simpsonville. Communities who go through the process develop not only a long-term strategic plan called an “Entrepreneur Friendly Action Plan”, but also a variety of practical short-term deliverables, including a local Business Assistance Guide, a local “Capital Matrix” financial directory, a local business start-up timeline, local Small Business Resource Fair event, and more.

Executive Session to Discuss a Contractual Matter

On motion by Mayor Jolly, seconded by Mr. Elliott, the meeting went into executive session in which no action was taken.

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.