



## **MINUTES**

**APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2020 – 10:30 A.M.  
COUNCIL BOARD ROOM  
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Members Present:**

Ernest Riley, Francis Crowder, Rep. Ann Thayer, Cindy Wilson, Mack Durham, Dennis Claramunt, Jeff Roberts, Henry Jolly, Ed Elliott, David Cauthen, Rep. Mike Burns, Willis Meadows, Joe Dill, Lillian Brock-Flemming, Don Godbey, Grady Butler, Russell Stall, Rep. Mike Forrester, Jane Hall, Roger Nutt, Larry Chappell, Jack Mabry, Manning Lynch, Mildred Tillerson, Dana Moore, Rep. Neal Collins, Ensley Feemster

**Guests Present:**

Ms. Andre Smith | Senior Action; Mr. John Concklin | Institute for Child Success; Ms. Dayle Stewart | Rebuild Upstate; Mr. Joel Dill; Mr. Daniel Gamble

**Staff Present:**

Steve Pelissier, Chip Bentley, Brooke Ferguson, Tim Womack, Arlene Young, Don Zimmer, Lance Estep, Amanda Plumley, Denise Ernul

Chairman, Joe Dill called the meeting to order. Invocation lead by board member, Rep. Mike Burns. Steve Pelissier welcomed all guests and presenters. A motion to adopt January 24, 2020 meeting minutes was approved unanimously by the Board.

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## Innovative Strategies for Providing Senior Services

Ms. Andrea Smith, Executive Director, Senior Action

As the character and needs of seniors change, organizations providing aging services must become innovative to keep pace with evolving demands. Greenville's Senior Action is recognized as a leader in providing innovative services. Ms. Smith provided an informative presentation on the organization's initiatives.

### > History

- A group of concerned and passionate members of the Greenville community formed Senior Action in 1967, after recognizing a need for senior programs and services. With the help and support of the five downtown churches (Buncombe Street United Methodist Church, Christ Church Episcopal, First Baptist Church Greenville, First Presbyterian Church, and St. Mary's Catholic Church), the City of Greenville, and Greenville County, their first location of the organization was located on McBee Avenue in downtown Greenville.
- The Board of Directors seek funding from various entities: private foundations (6%), churches, government grants (52%), and private donations (1%). Other funding comes from the United Way (24%) and program revenues (6%) and fundraisers (11%).
- In the 90's, Senior Action partnered with other non-profit groups to expand its services and opened four outreach sites to serve seniors closer to their homes and neighborhoods; currently 9 sites.
- Each of the eight outreach sites are jointly operated in partnership with the City of Greenville (David Hellams Center), Greenville County (Freetown, Mt. Pleasant, Slater-Marietta, Sterling, and Greenville County Aquatic Complex), City of Greer (Needmore Community Center), and Pleasant Valley Connection. Senior Action also partners with Meals on Wheels Greer/Greer Community Ministries and Rebuild Upstate to provide home-based programs.
- Senior services have grown from activities and daily meals in each of our nine locations, to also include home-delivered meals, minor home repair, lawn service, and medical transportation; servicing over 5000 people daily.

### > Challenges Resolved – Opening Late Summer of 2020

- Location, Location, Location: 3715 East North St. – less than 2 miles from current building
- One-level building with enough program space: 69,000 sq. ft. building; once renovated will provide 32,000 sq. ft. of program space (Art, Music, Movement Studio), 400 seat conference center, expanded fitness area, and a business center
- Ample parking: Strip mall parking lot provides great space
- \$6.8M Total Project Cost: Sell current building for \$2M, obtain grants & state support, rent from tenants, fundraisers, and individual donors, and bank financing.

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> Long-Term Vision

- Focus on tenants who service the senior population.
- "Senior Village"
- Create sustainable business model to serve more people.
- Promote organizations endeavors and continue to raise money

### Institute for Child Success

Mr. John Concklin, Research Associate, Institute for Child Success

The Institute for Child Success is a Greenville based research and policy organization that works to create a culture that fosters the success of all children. The Institute focuses on providing resources to those who help young children succeed by working with stakeholders to seek holistic solutions to complex early childhood challenges. Mr. Concklin addressed research and current initiatives of the organization.

- > Launched in 2010, the Institute for Child Success (ICS) is a private, nonpartisan research and policy organization. ICS works to create a culture that facilitates and fosters the success of all children.
  - ICS supports policymakers, service providers, government agencies, funders, and business leaders focused on early childhood development, healthcare, and education
    - > all to coordinate, enhance, and improve those efforts for the maximum effect in the lives of young children (prenatal to age eight).
    - > focuses on helping those who help young children succeed by working with stakeholders to seek holistic solutions to complex early childhood challenges
    - > ICS pursues its mission in four primary ways:
      - Proposing smart public policies, grounded in research.
      - Advising governments, nonprofits, foundations, and other stakeholders on strategies to improve outcomes.
      - Sharing knowledge, convening stakeholders, embracing solutions, and accelerating impact.
      - Encouraging and cultivating catalytic, innovative leadership in early childhood.
- > Keys to promote early childhood development
  - Increase access to healthcare
  - Promote economic growth
  - Provide affordable childcare for early education
  - Increase support and availability to resources for cognitively delayed children

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- Decrease adverse childhood experiences
  - Reduce homelessness
  - Reduce domestic violence
- > Focus on early childhood development and available resources for children to thrive impacts every one in every sector.
- Special education is another area where early investments in what works can help prevent larger costs of remedial services in the future, improving outcomes for children and their families.
  - The return on investment for early childhood development is greater when provided early support before entering kindergarten.
  - For every \$1 spent on early childhood education, you will save \$3 on future interventions.
  - Through the expansion of high-quality preschool programs, children who are in need of special education during their preschool years will be more likely to be identified and served. Children 0-5 are most critical ages to invest for best future outcome.
  - Intervening early with children with disabilities has been shown to result in children needing fewer special education and other rehabilitative services later in life; being retained in grade less often; and, in some cases performing similarly to typically developing classmates years after intervention.
- > Legislative Accomplishments
- 2013 legislations standardize early childhood organizations across the state creating safer educational environments
  - 2015 expanding 4K, allowing more children to start school early and parent to return to work; improving better test scores, assessments, and grade retention.
  - 2015 Increase funding for literacy programs
  - 2016 Programs pairing nurses with first-time mothers decrease Medicaid expenses in NICU
  - 2017 Creating private-public partnerships through capital funding investor programs
  - S.C. is becoming the model for early childhood agenda and investments
  - ICS is working closely with state and local governments to increase funding and focus on early childhood education and initiatives.

### **Distressed Area Certification Activity Under the SC Textile Community Revitalization Act**

Ms. Brooke Ferguson, Economic Development Director

The SC Textile Community Revitalization Act provides tax incentives to redevelop abandoned textile and related sites. Under a 2018 amendment to the law, to receive the tax credit, a subject property must be in a distressed area, as designated by the local council of governments.

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The Appalachian region has seen several requests for distressed area certification in recent months. Ms. Ferguson discussed development proposals in these areas.

- > 15 projects across the region (not all new, some under planning or first phase)
- > 4 counties (Greenville, Spartanburg, Pickens, and Oconee)
- > 3 requests for special distressed area designations (2 in Greenville and 1 in Pickens)
- > Mix of uses ranging from residential to light industrial; developers are pursuing past mill village concept
- > Next month's speaker will provide information on project perspectives around the state and maximizing tax credits efforts.

### **Legislative Report –**

Ms. Brooke Ferguson, Economic Development Director

Ms. Ferguson provided information in items of interest to local governments to be address by the South Carolina General Assembly during the 2020 legislative session..

- > 2019-2020 LEGISLATIVE SESSION: Year TWO
  - Santee Cooper is still a debacle
  - Education bill has Senate at a standstill
  - Business license bill was amended and made it out of the House
  - The budget is moving along with full house debate the week of March 9th
  - Attempts to get the broadband study committee legislation out this term

### **Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Steve Pelissier, Executive Director

- > ARC would like our members to participate in a survey linked on the ACOG website at [www.scacog.org](http://www.scacog.org)
- > Final stages of our building expansion needs assessment project should be presented by McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture firm within the couple of weeks
- > Thanks Mike Forrester for his efforts and advocacy with the House Ways and Means to restore State funding to the councils of governments.
  - Fully restored funding would benefit seniors the most due to increase in service availability.

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> Next meeting will be the 27<sup>th</sup> of March.

**The next Board Meeting will be at 10:30 am on March 27, 2020. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon.**

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Mr. Mike Forrester, Chairman

The South Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments has complied with the Freedom of Information Act in scheduling and conducting this meeting