



## MINUTES

**APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2025 – 10:30 A.M.**  
**COUNCIL BOARD ROOM WITH ZOOM OPTION**  
**GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Members Present:**

Sen. Thomas Alexander, Tom Allen, Brandy Amidon, Bill Blanton, Rick Bradley, Rockey Burgess, Rep. Mike Burns, David Cauthen, Rep. Neal Collins, Rick Danner, Joe Dill, Ed Elliott, Lillian Brock Flemming, Britt Gillespie, Don Godbey, Robert Halfacre, Glenn Hart, Laura Hinty, Henry Jolly, Rep. Brian Lawson, Claiborne Linvill, Ruth Littlejohn, Saraí Melendez, Alan Mitchell, E Riley, Jeff Roberts, Terence Roberts, Rep. Blake Sanders, Brett Sanders, Bob Walker, Cindy Wilson

**Guests Present:**

Roy Costner, Lance Estep, Daniel Gambrell, Liz Griffith, Rachel Kern, Butch Kirven, Allie Martinson, Merab Perez, EP Porter, Bryan Webb, Jason Zacher

**Staff Present:**

Chip Bentley, Jill Charlton, Trey Eubanks, Brooke Ferguson, Jeff Guilbault, Steve Pelissier, Tim Womack

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**Call to Order**

Chairman Collins called the meeting to order. Mr. Riley offered the invocation. Mr. Pelissier introduced the speakers and guests. He also introduced two new board members, Rep. Blake Sanders from Anderson County, and Ms. Claiborne Linvill, a County Council member from Pickens County. Chairman Collins asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2024, board meeting. Ms. Wilson made a motion to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Littlejohn. The motion was unanimously approved. The financial statement was accepted as information.

### **Recognition of ACOG Board Members Whose Terms are Ending**

Chairman Collins thanked Mr. Roy Costner of Pickens County for seven years of service and thanked Mr. Butch Kirven of Greenville County for twenty years of service to the ACOG board. He presented both former members with plaques of appreciation.

### **International Transportation Innovation Center (ITIC)**

Chairman Collins introduced Ms. Liz Griffith, the Chief Operating Officer of ITIC. Ms. Griffith explained SCTAC's programs of work, then spoke specifically about the automotive testing track and its use. She explained that ITIC helps automotive companies with federal safety testing standards and requirements, keeping companies in South Carolina. Ms. Griffith described the three-mile oval track that will open in Spring 2025. This track enables continuous driving at highway speed and is large enough for tractor trailers. She answered questions from the board.

### **South Carolina Legislative Report**

Chairman Collins called on Mr. Jason Zacher, President of the Bridge Public Strategy Group, to share his insights on the new legislative session with the board. He reviewed party demographics from the House and the Senate. Mr. Zacher explained each of the Six Pillars (issues) that will be the focus of the House this year and discussed the Senate agenda. He also discussed the history of political disruption and uncertainty with the back and forth change of democratic and republican control.

Ms. Brooke Ferguson passed out an overview of MASC and SCAC focuses of lobbying efforts. She reviewed relevant issues from each list.

### **Annual Update of Transportation Safety Targets in the Appalachian Region**

Chairman Collins asked Mr. Chip Bentley, Deputy Executive Director, to update the board on the new transportation safety targets for this year. Mr. Bentley noted that federal regulations require that the safety targets be updated annually. He reviewed the safety performance measures, which include fatality rates for the region. He explained the baseline and new targets for adoption. The Regional Transportation Committee recommended the adoption of the statewide targets. Chairman Collins called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Bentley updated the board on the SC-105 Corridor Study in Cherokee County. He noted findings from the regional freight study that identified truck traffic using residential streets in the area to bypass congestion on the main road as a challenge.

Mr. Bentley also presented information on the Regional Mobility Pilot Program. He explained ACOG's role in the project. The end product will be a list of projects along identified corridors that seek to wholistically address safety and congestion issues.

**Action Item – Motion from the Committee – Unanimous Vote**

**Election of 2025 Board Officers**

Chairman Collins called on Mr. Ed Elliott, Chair of the Nominating Committee. Mr. Elliott put forth the board officers recommended by the Nominating Committee and asked for other nominations. With no other nominations or discussion, the board voted on the recommendation from the committee to elect: Don Godbey, President; Cindy Wilson, Vice President; and Alan Mitchell, Secretary. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Action Item – Motion from the Committee – Unanimous Vote**

**Nominations for 2025 Regional Board Members**

Chairman Collins asked for Regional Board Member nominations from each county. The term for regional members is one year. Cindy Wilson, from Anderson County, nominated Rockey Burgess. Ed Elliott, from Cherokee County, nominated Henry Jolly. Rep. Mike Burns, from Greenville County, nominated Joe Dill. Glenn Hart, from Oconee County, nominated E Riley. Robert Halfacre, from Pickens County, nominated Ensley Feemster. Ruth Littlejohn, from Spartanburg County, nominated Jane Hall. Chairman Collins approved all appointments of the regional nominees to the board.

**Action Item – Nominations accepted by the Chair**

**Executive Director's Report**

Chairman Collins asked Mr. Pelissier to give the Executive Director's report. Mr. Pelissier gave the date for the next board meeting and stated that the board officers would meet following today's meeting.

**Member Updates**

Ms. Wilson expressed her concern about a lack of infrastructure to support new housing developments and asked for future discussion on that issue.

**The next board meeting will be on February 28, 2025, at 10:30 AM in the ACOG Board Room. Members may also attend through Zoom.**



There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 AM.

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**Rep. Neal A. Collins, Chairman**

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

