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## MINUTES

**APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 2025 – 10:30 A.M.  
COUNCIL BOARD ROOM WITH ZOOM OPTION  
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

**Members Present:**

Tom Allen, Bill Blanton, Bob Briggs, Rocky Burgess, Rep. Mike Burns, Grady Butler, David Cauthen, Garey Collins, Rick Danner, Grant DeShields, Joe Dill, Ed Elliott, Ensley Feemster, Lillian Brock Flemming, Don Godbey, Karry Guillory, Jane Hall, Glenn Hart, Laura Hinty, Henry Jolly, Claiborne Linvill, Ruth Littlejohn, Alan Mitchell, Charles Pinson, E Riley, Rep. Blake Sanders, David Underwood, Cindy Wilson

**Guests Present:**

Susan Cyr, Daniel Gambrell, Tony Jones, Penny Phillips, Jim Walden, YiYun Zou

**Staff Present:**

Chip Bentley, Trey Eubanks, Brooke Ferguson, Jeff Guilbault, Steve Pelissier, Jake Whitmire, Tim Womack

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**Call to Order**

Chairman Godbey called the meeting to order. Mr. Riley offered the invocation. Mr. Pelissier introduced the speakers and guests. Chairman Godbey asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2025, board meeting. Mr. Riley 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.

**Momentum 2050: Moving South Carolina Forward**

Chairman Godbey introduced Mr. Jim Walden, the Regional Planning Manager from SCDOT. Mr. Walden discussed Momentum 2050, the South Carolina transportation plan for the next 25 years, which includes a multimodal transportation plan, a transportation asset management plan, and a state transportation improvement plan. The plan aims to address concerns about road conditions and congestion, and it considers trends such as growing ports, changing demographics, and

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evolving transportation technology. Mr. Walden also presented a revenue forecast for the next 25 years, highlighting the impact of inflation on the total dollar amount available for transportation improvements.

### **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update**

Chairman Godbey called on Ms. Jane Hall, Chair of the Regional Transportation Committee, and Mr. Jake Whitmire, Transportation Planner, to review two issues in the ACOG Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). Mr. Whitmire provided information regarding change in scope to a project along US 76/123 (from N. Walnut St. to SC-130) in Oconee County. This change did not eliminate the project but altered the scope of the project and did not require a vote from the board. Mr. Whitmire then presented a proposed amendment to the TIP to remove a resurfacing project on US 123 from the Georgia border to Dixon Road from the ACOG program. The Transportation Committee recommended removing this project from the list, as initial cost estimates were more than 3 times the amount of ACOG funding allocated to this project. Chairman Godbey called for a vote on removing the resurfacing project of US 123/Georgia border to Dixon Road in the TIP. The motion was unanimously approved.

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

### **Enhancing Regional Disaster Recovery & Resiliency Planning**

Chairman Godbey asked Mr. Chip Bentley, Deputy Executive Director, to update the board on the new EDA project. Mr. Bentley presented an overview of a new initiative to address natural hazards and their impacts on communities in the upstate region. The project, funded by EDA, will involve partnering with the South Carolina Institute for Sustainability and Resilience to develop tailored plans for each county, focusing on stakeholder engagement, vulnerability assessments, and identifying priority projects. The initiative aims to help communities implement these plans by aligning them with existing strategies and assisting with funding opportunities.

### **Legislative Report**

Chairman Godbey asked Ms. Brooke Ferguson to present the Legislative Report. Ms. Ferguson discussed bills of interest including liquor liability, tort reform, the energy bill, and income tax reduction. Senate Bill 2, the Office of Behavioral Health, was ratified and awaits the Governor's signature. The budget was discussed, with significant differences between the House and the Senate, including increased funding for State employed retirees. The board asked questions about earmarks and their potential impact on government spending.

### **Board Committee Assignments**

Chairman Godbey announced the new chairs and members of the advisory committees and noted that there were several changes to the Executive Committee. Staff will email a complete list of committee assignments to the board members.

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

Chairman Godbey called on Mr. Pelissier to give the Executive Director's report. Mr. Pelissier informed the board of the uncertainty surrounding the allocation of federal funding for aging programs, and the current delay in the release of funds. The White House draft budget proposed significant cuts to aging programs, which could impact staff and services. The board expressed the need for a list of compelling reasons to present to members of Congress when advocating for funding. Staff will email information to all board members following the meeting.

**The next board meeting will be on May 23, 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 11:55 AM.**

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### **Don Godbey, Chairman**

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

