



MINUTES

APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2025 – 10:30 A.M.
COUNCIL BOARD ROOM WITH ZOOM OPTION
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Members Present:

Bill Blanton, Bob Briggs, David Cauthen, Rep. Neal Collins, Rick Danner, Joe Dill, Ed Elliott, Ensley Feemster, Mike Forrester, Don Godbey, Karry Guillory, Robert Halfacre, Laura Hinty, Henry Jolly, Claiborne Linvill, Ruth Littlejohn, Alan Mitchell, Charles Pinson, Brett Sanders, David Underwood, Cindy Wilson

Guests Present:

Susan Cyr, Daniel Gambrell, Allie Martinsen

Staff Present:

Chip Bentley, Jill Charlton, Trey Eubanks, Brooke Ferguson, Jeff Guilbault, Steve Pelissier, Tim Womack, Arlene Young, Don Zimmer

Call to Order

Chairman Godbey called the meeting to order. Mr. Elliott offered the invocation. Mr. Pelissier introduced guest, Dorothy Dowe of Greenville City Council. Chairman Godbey asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 24, 2024, board meeting. Mr. Dill made a motion to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Danner. The motion was unanimously approved. The financial statement was accepted as information.

Recognition of an Employee's Retirement from ACOG

Chairman Godbey recognized Arlene Young, Grant Services Director, for leading her department in substantial growth since she joined ACOG in 2016. He stated that Ms. Young was known as a conscientious project manager and was well thought of throughout the community. The board expressed their gratitude and awarded her with a plaque for her service and wished her well in retirement.

ACOG FY 2026 Work Program

Chairman Godbey asked Mr. Pelissier to give an overview of the FY 2026 Work Program. Mr. Pelissier summarized the services provided by each program area, program objectives, current projects, and future plans for FY 2026. The board asked about reviewing the mission, focusing on priorities, and looking at other funding streams. **There was a motion from the Executive Committee to approve the ACOG FY 2026 Work Program.** Chairman Godbey called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Item – Motion from the Committee – Unanimous Vote

Personnel Committee Report

Chairman Godbey asked Mr. Pelissier to report on the Personnel Committee meeting. Mr. Pelissier gave an overview of the current organizational structure and personnel. He explained that since the Executive Committee approved the Personnel Committee’s proposals, the proposals will now be presented as coming from the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee recommended action to one (1) proposed amendment to personnel policy. The Executive Committee recommended changing the Travel Reimbursement section (Section 7.4 Reimbursable Expenses) of the policy manual. Currently employees who are on official travel are eligible to be reimbursed for meals at a set rate of \$14 for breakfast, \$16 for lunch, and \$29 for dinner. The recommended change is to base meal reimbursements on the most current federally published GSA meal reimbursement rates, which are found at www.gsa.gov. The recommended change is to ensure reimbursement rates reflect changing costs and to acknowledge that costs vary by location. Chairman Godbey called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Item: The Executive Committee recommended a change to the personnel policy manual to base meal reimbursement rates on the most current figures published by the US General Services Administration (GSA).

Action Item – Motion from the Committee – Unanimous Vote

The Executive Committee recommended eliminating the Aging Grants Manager (pay grade 12) position and creating an Aging Services Assistant Director Position (pay grade 15). The Assistant Aging Director position would retain all the responsibilities of the Grants Manager position and would add additional tasks. The full job description is listed in the Personnel Committee Report. Chairman Godbey called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Item: The Executive Committee recommended the elimination of the Aging Services Grant Manager position and the creation of the Assistant Aging Director position, as described in the attached report.

Action Item – Motion from the Committee – Unanimous Vote

For FY 2026, the Executive Committee recommended that employees be made eligible to receive up to a 4% salary increase. This is a merit-based increase based on the employee's annual evaluation. Chairman Godbey called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Item: The Executive Committee recommended that for FY 2026 employees become eligible for a merit increase of up to 4%.

Action Item – Motion from the Committee – Unanimous Vote

Finance Committee Report

Chairman Godbey asked Mr. Alan Mitchell, Finance Committee Chair, and Mr. Pelissier to report on the Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Pelissier reviewed the 2025 budget and specific line items of interest. He explained that while the Revenue Over Expenditure surplus is typically placed in the Facility Related Reserve, this year due to federal government funding uncertainty, the Finance Committee recommended the surplus be placed in the Unassigned Reserve Fund. He explained that since the Executive Committee approved the Finance Committee's proposals, the proposals will now be presented as coming from the Executive Committee. Chairman Godbey called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Item: The Executive Committee recommended that the entire FY 2025 excess revenue be placed in the Unassigned Fund Balance.

Action Item – Motion from the Committee – Unanimous Vote

Mr. Pelissier reviewed the proposed FY 2026 budget, schedule of capital items, schedule of consulting and outside services, and contractual services. The projected revenues and expenditures represent slight decreases from FY 2025. Chairman Godbey called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Item: The Executive Committee recommended the adoption of the proposed FY 2026 budget, including the schedules for Capital, and Consulting and Outside Services, and Contractual Services.

Action Item – Motion from the Committee – Unanimous Vote

Legislative Report

Chairman Godbey requested that Brooke Ferguson provide the board with the legislative report. Ms. Ferguson stated that 94 bills have been signed into law. She reported that the state budget had been approved. She reviewed budget highlights including items related to state employee salaries and benefits; COG funding; parks, recreation, and tourism; DOT bridge funding; and Department on Aging funding. She also answered questions about earmarks. Ms. Ferguson offered to check on any other items of interest to board members.

Executive Director Report

Chairman Godbey asked Mr. Pelissier to give the Executive Director's report. Mr. Pelissier reported that during this year's legislative session the Personal Needs Allowance for Medicaid nursing home residents was increased from \$30/month to \$60/month. He notified the board that he authorized \$1 million to be used by Aging Services to pay providers. The money will be returned to ACOG's account when payment is received from the state in August. There will be no board meeting in July.

Member Updates

Ms. Wilson stated that she was thankful for the Highway 29 project at the Jockey Lot and that it has improved traffic safety in the area.

Mr. Dill commented on the naming of (Dianna) Gracely Park in Simpsonville.

The next board meeting will be held on August 22, 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 11:30 AM.

Don Godbey, Chairman

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

