



MINUTES

APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2021 – 10:30 A.M.

ACOG BOARD ROOM
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA
WITH ZOOM OPTION

Members Present:

Rockey Burgess, Rep. Mike Burns, Larry Chappell, Dennis Claramunt, Rep. Neal Collins, Joe Dill, Ed Elliott, George Fletcher, Mike Forrester, Don Godbey, Ray Graham, Henry Jolly, Ruth Littlejohn, Dana Moore, E. Riley, Jeff Roberts, Terrence Roberts, Russell Stall, Mildred Tillerson, Cindy Wilson

Guests Present:

Pam Christopher, Grant Hollis, Marcy Loucks, Tim Todd

Staff Present:

Chip Bentley, Pam Eaker, Lance Estep, Trey Eubanks, Brooke Ferguson, Loretta Jackson, Steve Pelissier, Shonda Whitaker, Tim Womack, Arlene Young, Don Zimmer

Call to Order

Chairman Forrester called the meeting to order. Mr. Riley offered the invocation. Mr. Pelissier introduced guests, Marcy Loucks and Tim Todd, both of whom spoke later in the meeting. Mr. Pelissier noted that several board members from Pickens, Spartanburg, and Greenville Counties had scheduling conflicts with the meeting. Chairman Forrester asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 22, 2021, board meeting. Mr. Godbey made a motion to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fletcher. The motion was approved unanimously. The financial statement was accepted as information.

Introduction of New ACOG Employee

Chairman Forrester asked for the introduction of new employees. Mr. Womack introduced Shonda Whitaker, an Information and Resource/Assistance Specialist who began in October.



Recognition of ACOG Board Members Whose Terms Will Expire at the End of the Month

Chairman Forrester acknowledged Mayor Larry Chappell for his service to the ACOG board. He served on the board from 2016 – 2021.

Recognition of ACOG Employees who have Recently Celebrated Milestone Anniversaries

Chairman Forrester recognized Ombudsman, Melissa Drakeford, and Information and Referral/Assistance Specialist Supervisor, Pam Eaker, for five (5) years of service with ACOG. He also recognized Accountant, Loretta Jackson for ten (10) years and Deputy Executive Director, Chip Bentley, for twenty-five (25) years of service. All staff members were given plaques of recognition by the Chairman and Executive Director.

Discover Upcountry Carolina Association

Chairman Forrester introduced Tim Todd, Executive Director of Discover Upcountry Carolina. Mr. Todd explained the organization's role in regional tourism and development, and detailed its marketing strategy. Upcountry SC targets the leisure traveler through travel guides and digital media, including its website upcountrysc.com and social media. Mr. Todd discussed special events, public relations with writers and influencers, and partnerships with other tourism organizations. The agency monitors tourism legislation and policy issues, as well as the economic impact in Upcountry SC. Mr. Todd answered questions from the board and explained COVID-19's effect on tourism.

ACOG FY2021 Audit Presentation

Chairman Forrester called on Marcy Loucks, CPA, a partner with McKinley, Cooper & Co., to report on the annual financial audit ending June 30, 2021. Ms. Loucks reviewed the Statement of Net Position and Statement of Activities and explained the net position increased by \$157,616 from the previous year. She reported that ACOG is making required contributions to the retirement fund. There are no long term assets or debt. The agency requires very little variance and has good budgeting.

Appalachian Leadership Institute

Chairman Forrester asked Mr. Godbey to speak about his experience with the Appalachian Leadership Institute (ALI). Mr. Godbey shared that ALI is made up of forty (40) members from thirteen (13) states ranging from Alabama to New York. He explained how the institute divided the members into groups to share information about each area and its unique issues. Mr. Godbey mentioned several economic development challenges that were discussed.

Mr. Pelissier added that the institute is recruiting for the next class now and encouraged board members to refer young leaders in the area to apply.

Nominations for Regional Board Members to Serve January – December 2022 Term

Chairman Forrester called for nominations for the January – December 2022 term for Regional Board Members. Anderson and Pickens Counties will nominate members at January’s board meeting. Mr. Elliott, from Cherokee County, nominated Henry Jolly. Mr. Godbey, from Greenville County, nominated George Fletcher. Mr. Moore, from Oconee County, nominated E. Riley. Mr. Chappell, from Spartanburg County, nominated Jane Hall. Chairman Forrester approved all four (4) of the Regional Board nominations.

Action Item

Executive Director’s Report

Chairman Forrester asked Mr. Pelissier to give the Executive Director’s report. Mr. Pelissier called on Mr. Womack to give information about the Senior Angel Tree Project. He explained that Aging Services has adopted a long term care facility in Greer this year. All donations go to purchase holiday wish list items for seniors at that facility.

Mr. Pelissier mentioned that Gayle Manchin, as the new Co-Chair of ARC, understands how important tourism is to the region. He also explained that Union County was added into ARC, but it will stay with the Catawba COG.

Member Reports

Ms. Wilson pointed out the growing workforce in Anderson County.

Mr. Riley encouraged others to visit Seneca to see the Christmas lights display.

The next board meeting will be held on January 28, 2022, at 10:30 AM in the ACOG Board Room. Members may also attend through Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM.

Mike Forrester, Chairman

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