



MINUTES

APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2024 – 10:30 A.M.
COUNCIL BOARD ROOM WITH ZOOM OPTION
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Members Present:

Sen. Thomas Alexander, Tom Allen, Rick Bradley, Bob Briggs, Rocky Burgess, Rep. Mike Burns, Grady Butler, David Cauthen, Rick Danner, Joe Dill, Ed Elliott, Ensley Feemster, Lillian Brock Flemming, Mike Forrester, Britt Gillespie, Don Godbey, Robert Halfacre, Glenn Hart, Laura Hinty, Butch Kirven, Ruth Littlejohn, Alan Mitchell, Charles Pinson, E Riley, Terrence Roberts, Bob Walker, Cindy Wilson

Guests Present:

Alex Butler, Jennifer Campbell, Cindy Claramunt, Carter Evans, Chimene Evans, Daniel Gambrell, Jennifer Kelly, Darren Ledbetter, Allie Martinsen, Tony McEwen, Dale Morris, Angie Omer, Sen. Rex Rice, Sherry Roche, Matt Rowland, Paul Shewmaker, Gian Tavares, Bryan Webb, Matt Wills, Brianna Wood

Staff Present:

Chip Bentley, Anne-Marie Coogler, Brooke Ferguson, Jeff Guilbault, Steve Pelissier, Tyler Stone, Arlene Young

Call to Order

Mr. Godbey called the meeting to order. Mr. Riley called for a moment of silence for Mr. Dennis Claramunt and Mr. Roel Cruz, who passed away earlier this month. Then Mr. Riley offered the invocation. Mr. Pelissier introduced guests and speakers. Mr. Godbey asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 23, 2024, board meeting. Mr. Riley made a motion to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Forrester. The motion was unanimously approved. The financial statement was accepted as information.

Presentation to Family in Honor of Dennis Claramunt

Mr. Godbey introduced the Claramunt family and expressed his condolences about Mr. Claramunt's passing in June. Mr. Godbey and Ms. Wilson reviewed many of Mr. Claramunt's accomplishments and acknowledged his 18 years as a member of the ACOG Board of Directors. Mr. Godbey presented the family with a plaque in honor of Mr. Claramunt.

Nursing Home Personal Needs Allowance (PNA)

Mr. Godbey introduced Anne-Marie Coogler, ACOG Ombudsman, who covers long-term care facilities in Spartanburg and Cherokee Counties. Ms. Coogler explained that the Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) applies to residents in Medicaid-funded facilities. These residents get to keep a small portion of the money that Medicaid pays to the facility for their care each month for personal care needs such as clothing, haircuts, and special food items. She appealed to the board to support an increase in the PNA, as South Carolina and Alabama are the only two states currently at the federal minimum. She presented a video of a resident asking for an increase and explaining how the PNA affects his life.

WorkLink Workforce Development Board

Mr. Godbey called on Ms. Jennifer Kelly, the Executive Director of WorkLink, to provide information about the organization. Ms. Kelly gave an overview of WIOA and explained that the primary focus was to help jobseekers obtain education and employment. She discussed the structure of the SC Works centers, funding, and staffing. She explained program services and reviewed data covering the program year, community impact, and performance measures. Ms. Kelly discussed the WorkLink Workforce Development Board sharing financial goals, fund utilization rate, partnerships, and success stories.

Appalachian Regional 2023-2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Mr. Godbey asked Brooke Ferguson, Economic Development Director, to provide the annual performance report. She gave updates on population, income, housing, education, employment, unemployment, capital investment and job investment, wages, and job growth. She encouraged those who want to read the entire document to visit the ACOG website <https://www.scacog.org/economic-development-services>. The Economic Development Committee recommended that the annual performance report be approved for submittal to the EDA. Mr. Godbey called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Item

American Flood Coalition (AFC)

Mr. Godbey introduced Tony McEwen, Carolinas Director of the American Flood Coalition (AFC). Mr. McEwen introduced Mayor Shewmaker of Simpsonville, who gave examples of how AFC helped the city. Mr. McEwen gave an overview of the AFC and its membership. He explained that they strive to advocate, provide resources, and elevate the voice of the community. He also reviewed the coalition's current focuses such as transportation-focused flood risk, helping small communities, and funding. Gian Tavares presented the statewide standards of the state flood resilience framework. Matt Rowland gave an overview of the climate and what actions to expect from Congress.

Alex Butler, the Resilience Planning Director at South Carolina Office of Resilience (SCOR), gave an overview of the agency and explained its purpose of disaster recovery, mitigation, and resilience. He discussed funding for long-term disaster recovery and case management, mitigation programs, and buyout programs. Mr. Butler reported on the statewide resilience plan that was released last year. He discussed grants and conservation, including a solar grant for low-income participants.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Godbey asked Mr. Pelissier to give the Executive Director's report. Mr. Pelissier informed the board that Chairman Collins requested a By-Laws Committee meeting about board structure. Committee members will be notified about the upcoming meeting date and time. He also reminded board members that the SCARC (SCCOG) Conference will be November 24-26, 2024, in Myrtle Beach. Final confirmation will be sent soon to those who registered.

Member Updates

Mr. Gillespie reported that United Housing Connections will be having a ribbon cutting on the completed affordable housing development in Greenville at 50 Church Street, located at Poe Mill.

The next board meeting will be held on December 13, 2024, at 10:30 AM in the ACOG Board Room.

Members may also attend through Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM.

Don Godbey, Secretary



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

