



MINUTES

APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2023 – 10:30 A.M.
COUNCIL BOARD ROOM WITH ZOOM OPTION
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Members Present:

Sen. Thomas Alexander, Brandy Amidon, Rick Bradley, Bob Briggs, Rockey Burgess, Rep. Mike Burns, David Caughen, Dennis Claramunt, Brooke Coleman, Rep. Neal Collins, Roy Costner, Rick Danner, Joe Dill, Ed Elliot, John Elliott, Ensley Feemster, Mike Forrester, Sandra Gantt, Don Godbey, Britt Gillespie, Jane Hall, Rep. Rosalyn Henderson-Myers, Henry Jolly, Butch Kirven, Ruth Littlejohn, Jack Mabry, Charles Pinson, Brian Ramey, E Riley, Brett Sanders, Marta Wahlen, Cindy Wilson

Guests Present:

Joel Dill, Daniel Gambrell, Mike Shealy

Staff Present:

Chip Bentley, Lance Estep, Brooke Ferguson, Amanda Mlinar, Steve Pelissier, Tim Womack

Call to Order

Chairman Collins called the meeting to order. Mr. Riley offered the invocation. Mr. Pelissier introduced the new members and guests in attendance. Chairman Collins asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 24, 2023, board meeting. Mr. Riley made a motion to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ed Elliott. The motion was unanimously approved. The financial statement was accepted as information.

Broadband Equity, Access, and Development (BEAD) Planning

Chairman Collins introduced Mr. Mike Shealy, from the Digital Equity Office at the SC Department of Administration. Mr. Shealy presented data regarding broadband studies. He explained that rural areas and subgroups in urban areas are not using broadband. Funding for broadband has increased over the last three years due to COVID-19 and the need for online learning. Mr. Shealy

discussed the Infrastructure Act/BEAD and how the Act appropriated nationwide broadband funding. He specified how the digital equity program promotes digital inclusion, gave a timeline, key planning strategies, and the importance of filling out the broadband survey. Mr. Shealy answered questions from the board

Regional Transportation Updates

Chairman Collins asked Lance Estep, Planning Director, to update the board on the status of regional transportation projects. Mr. Estep provided information on two intersection projects, one in Gaffney, and one in Anderson County. He explained that the 2020 Census brought changes in how the Census defines urban areas. In 2020, the definition was based on housing density, which was different from the 2010 definition, which was based on population. These differences will result in the change of MPO boundaries. Mr. Estep discussed next steps and upcoming deadlines. The board asked questions, requested a chart with the breakdown of the current funding levels of the MPOs, and a copy of the presentation.

Procurement of Oconee County Meal Provider

Chairman Collins called on Joe Dill, RAAC Committee Chair. Mr. Dill asked Tim Womack, Director of Aging Services, to present the information from the committee. Mr. Womack explained that Senior Solutions was contracted mid-term as the Oconee County meal provider due to the termination of another provider in the county. The RAAC Committee recommended that Senior Solutions continue as the current meal provider for Oconee County at the same pay rate for a contract of 1 year. Mr. Womack noted that meal contracts for all six counties will go out to bid next year. Chairman Collins called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Item

South Carolina Legislative Report

Chairman Collins requested that Brooke Ferguson provide the board with the legislative report. Ms. Ferguson stated that thirteen bills have been signed into law. She reported that ARPA funds have been authorized and commented on other bills of interest. Ms. Ferguson explained that the Senate and House versions of the budget were similar and gave details. She answered questions from the board.

Board Committee Assignments

Chairman Collins explained that board members had been notified of their committee assignments if they were new or if they had any changes to their assignments. All other assignments are staying the same. Mr. Pelissier passed out the new assignment list for reference.



Executive Director's Report

Chairman Collins asked Mr. Pelissier to present the Executive Director's report. Mr. Pelissier reminded the board about the SC BEST Program. The Appalachian COG region is receiving \$148,000 to be used for Phase 1 and Phase 2 environmental assessments and analysis for brownfield sites. He encouraged members to inform others who may be interested in applying.

Member Updates

Chairman Collins invited members to attend the SC 250 Commission meeting in Clemson on May 18th, 6-8 PM. There will be a guided tour of Andrew Pickens' gravesite, Hopewell, and Fort Rutledge.

The next board meeting will be held on May 26, 2023 at 10:30 AM in the ACOG Board Room. Members may also attend through Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:50 AM.

Neal Collins, Chairman

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

