



## MINUTES

**APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2023 – 10:30 A.M.**  
**COUNCIL BOARD ROOM WITH ZOOM OPTION**  
**GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**Members Present:**

Sen. Thomas Alexander, Brandy Amidon, Bob Briggs, Rockey Burgess, Rep. Mike Burns, David Cauthen, Brooke Coleman, Roy Costner, Rick Danner, Ed Elliot, John Elliott, Ennis Fant, George Fletcher, Mike Forrester, Sandra Gantt, Don Godbey, Robert Halfacre, Henry Jolly, Butch Kirven, Rep. Brian Lawson, Ruth Littlejohn, Jack Mabry, Alan Mitchell, Rep. Dennis Moss, Charles Pinson, Brian Ramey, E Riley, Jeff Roberts, Terrence Roberts, Mildred Tillerson, Bob Walker, Rep. Jay West, Cindy Wilson

**Guests Present:**

Rep. April Cromer, Paulette Dunn, Daniel Gambrell, Steve Noonan, Penny Phillips

**Staff Present:**

Chip Bentley, Lance Estep, Trey Eubanks, Brooke Ferguson, Jill Francisco, Kimberly Mack, Steve Pelissier, Tim Womack, Arlene Young, Don Zimmer

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**Call to Order**

Chairman Forrester called the meeting to order. Mr. Riley offered the invocation. Mr. Pelissier introduced the speakers for the meeting as well as new board members Rep. Brian Lawson, Alan Mitchell, and Rep. Jay West. Chairman Forrester asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 9, 2022, board meeting. Mr. Godbey 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.

### **Services of the South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs**

Chairman Forrester introduced Paulette Dunn, Upstate Regional Integration Officer. She reviewed the objectives and the strategic plan of the state Veterans' Affairs office. She discussed other veteran service organizations and non-profit support in the state. Ms. Dunn highlighted the Palmetto Pathfinder program, which is a veteran to veteran mentorship program. Steve Noonan, Director of Training and Standardization, discussed the importance of coalition building to help solve the problems that veterans are facing. He stated that currently the greatest need for veterans is rural transportation. He reviewed the function of the county Veteran Affairs offices in the Upstate. The team answered questions from the board.

### **Annual Update of Transportation Safety Targets in the Appalachian Region**

Chairman Forrester called on Lance Estep to update the board on the new transportation safety targets for this year. Mr. Estep noted that federal regulations require COGs, MPOs, and state DOTs to update safety goals annually. He reviewed the five safety performance measures, which included fatality rates for the region. He explained the baseline and new targets for adoption. Mr. Estep also discussed reasons for the COVID-related crash increases. The Regional Transportation Committee recommended the adoption of the statewide targets. Chairman Forrester called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **Action Item**

#### **ACOG Government Services Program Activities**

Chairman Forrester asked Trey Eubanks to give an overview of ACOG Government Services. Mr. Eubanks discussed the four major service areas and how they were relevant to local jurisdictions and their elected officials. He spoke about offering training, providing various methods of technical support, recommending resources, and representing ACOG by sharing information and attending events.

#### **South Carolina Legislative Report**

Chairman Forrester requested that Brooke Ferguson provide the board with the legislative report. Ms. Ferguson reported that there have been many leadership changes, with twenty-seven new House members. The legislative priorities are tax cuts/rebates, infrastructure, education, criminal justice reform, and the opioid crisis. She listed several bills that may be of interest to local governments: ARPA Funds Authorizations, Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act, Educational Scholarship Trust Fund (School Choice), and Department of Behavioral and Public Health (DHEC Reorganization). The board asked questions and had discussion about ARPA funds.

### **Appointment of Regional Members to the ACOG Board of Directors**

Chairman Forrester asked for Regional Board Member nominations from each county. The term for regional members in one year. Cindy Wilson, from Anderson County, nominated Rocky Burgess. Ed Elliott, from Cherokee County, nominated Henry Jolly. Rep. Mike Burns, from Greenville County, nominated Joe Dill. Sen. Thomas Alexander, from Oconee County, sent a letter to nominate E Riley. Roy Costner, from Pickens County, nominated Ensley Feemster. Jack Mabry, from Spartanburg County, nominated Jane Hall. Chairman Forrester approved and appointed all regional nominees to the board.

### **Action Item**

#### **Board Officer Nominating Committee Report**

Chairman Forrester called on Mr. Pelissier, who spoke on behalf of Mr. Claramunt, Chair of the Nominating Committee. Board officers serve for one year terms, of April 1- March 31. Mr. Pelissier presented the slate of officers for 2023: Secretary – Don Godbey, from Greenville County; Vice-Chair – Cindy Wilson, from Anderson County; and Chair – Rep. Neal Collins, from Pickens County. There were no other nominations from the floor. Mr. Riley made a motion to accept the slate of officers. Mr. Pinson seconded the motion. Chairman Forrester called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **Action Item**

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

Chairman Forrester requested that Mr. Pelissier present the Executive Director's report. Mr. Pelissier asked Tim Womack, Aging Services Director, to introduce a new employee, Kimberly Mack, who began working as an Information and Referral Specialist in January. She comes to ACOG with a great deal of social work experience. On January 31, Mr. Pelissier will speak to the House Ways and Means Committee to thank them for supporting the COGs restoration in funding last year and to request continued funding at that level. He reminded the board that the new member orientation will be held on February 24, at 9:15 AM. More information will be sent soon.

**The next board meeting will be held on February 24, 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 11:55 AM.**

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**Mike Forrester, Chairman**

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

