



MINUTES

APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025 – 10:30 A.M.
COUNCIL BOARD ROOM WITH ZOOM OPTION
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Members Present:

Tom Allen, Bill Blanton, Bob Briggs, David Cauthen, Garey Collins, Rep. Neal Collins, Joe Dill, Ed Elliott, Ensley Feemster, Mike Forrester, Don Godbey, Karry Guillory, Robert Halfacre, Jane Hall, Henry Jolly, Claiborne Linvill, Ruth Littlejohn, Saraí Melendez, Alan Mitchell, Charles Pinson, E Riley, Terence Roberts, David Underwood, Bob Walker, Cindy Wilson, Wayne Wright

Guests Present:

Rick Bradley, Amanda Lynn Bright, Susan Cyr, Daniel Gambrell, Allie Martinsen, Dr. Michael Mikota, Katie Marie Owens, Archit Patel, Daniel Rumpfelt, Alex Sanchez, Seth Taylor, Mary Haley Thompson

Staff Present:

Chip Bentley, Jill Charlton, Jalesha Deloatch, Trey Eubanks, Jeff Guilbault, Steve Pelissier, Dani Vankirk, Tim Womack, Arlene Young, Don Zimmer

Call to Order

Chairman Collins called the meeting to order. Mr. Riley offered the invocation. Mr. Pelissier introduced the speakers and guests. He also introduced a new board member, retired judge Mr. Karry Guillory, from Spartanburg County. Chairman Collins asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2025, board meeting. Mr. Riley made a motion to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Elliott. The motion was unanimously approved. The financial statement was accepted as information.

Recognition of ACOG Board Member Whose Term is Ending

On behalf of the board, Chairman Collins thanked Mr. Rick Bradley of Greenville County Council for his term of service at ACOG. He presented him with a plaque of recognition.

Aging Services Nutrition Program

Chairman Collins introduced Ms. Dani Vankirk, ACOG Aging Services Nutrition Program Manager. Ms. Vankirk presented an overview of the nutrition program, which includes home-delivered meals, congregate meals, education, activities, and exercise programs at senior centers in the ACOG region. She gave statistics, discussed the wait list and funding issues. Mr. Tim Womack, Aging Services Director, spoke about possible federal funding changes and resulting impacts.

Spartanburg Community College (SCC)

Chairman Collins called on Dr. Michale Mikota, President of Spartanburg Community College (SCC). Dr. Mikota presented a handout with an overview of SCC. He discussed workforce needs and demands in the Upstate. He presented charts on demographics, population growth, employment growth by sector, and others. Dr. Mikota explained how SCC offers curriculum to match the needs of employers, especially highlighting the RN program.

110 North Kitchen + Commissary

Chairman Collins introduced Ms. Mary Haley Thompson, the Director of Strategic Projects for the City of Anderson. Ms. Thompson presented an overview of Anderson's new licensed commercial shared kitchen that provides a pathway for food entrepreneurs to start and grow their business. She explained that it has been entirely functional for about a year. The space is fully booked, and staff has trained over 400 entrepreneurs in their business education classes. The kitchen plans to offer dining space in the future.

Legislative Report

Chairman Collins asked Mr. Steve Pelissier to present the Legislative Report. Mr. Pelissier highlighted bills of interest including tort reform, organized retail crime, and the Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity Act. He explained that the House budget is finished and gave details of relevance to the board.

Executive Director's Report

Chairman Collins called on Mr. Pelissier to give the Executive Director's report. Mr. Pelissier explained that the new chairman of the board will take over in April. He requested that current board members who want to change committees and the new members who haven't been assigned to a committee should let Mr. Godbey or him know their preference for committee assignments before the April board meeting.



Member Updates

Mr. Wright congratulated the Walhalla girls' basketball team on winning the State Championship.

Ms. Littlejohn reminded the board of the first Spartanburgers baseball game on April 15, and of SCC's commencement on May 12, 2025.

Board Chair Remarks

Chairman Collins commented that he is in his 11th year on the ACOG board and appreciates all the board members who come to the meetings and do the work to make themselves better public servants. Mr. Godbey stated that he was thankful for the work Chairman Collins does, and he is looking forward to serving as ACOG Chair.

The next board meeting will be on April 25, 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 12:05 PM.

Rep. Neal A. Collins, Chairman

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

