



MINUTES

**APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FRIDAY, MAY 28, 2021 – 10:30 A.M.
ZOOM MEETING
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

Members Present:

Sen. Thomas Alexander, Rocky Burgess, Larry Chappell, Dennis Claramunt, Rep. Neal Collins, Francis Crowder, Joe Dill, Ensley Feemster, Lillian Brock Flemming, George Fletcher, Don Godbey, Ray Graham, Jane Hall, Henry Jolly, Ruth Littlejohn, Jack Mabry, Willis Meadows, Dana Moore, Fletcher Perry, Tom Ponder, E Riley, Cindy Wilson

Guests Present:

Jeff Cunningham, Christina Lewis, Erin Porter, Mark Williamson

Staff Present:

Chip Bentley, Trey Eubanks, Brooke Ferguson, Steve Pelissier, Tim Womack, Arlene Young

Call to Order

Chairman Forrester was absent from the meeting. Vice Chairman, Neal Collins presided. Chairman Collins called the meeting to order. The invocation was offered by E. Riley. Steve Pelissier introduced a new board member, Dennis Stroupe, who was appointed by the Cherokee County Municipal Association. Mr. Pelissier asked Lance Estep to introduce SCDOT guests. Chairman Collins asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 23, 2021 board meeting. Don Godbey made a motion to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Joe Dill. The motion was approved unanimously. The financial statement was accepted as information.

The ACOG's Role in Regional Transportation Planning

Chairman Collins called on Chip Bentley to give an overview of regional transportation planning. Mr. Bentley explained how funding is divided and reviewed the 2020 Approved SCDOT Highway Budget. He discussed how expensive transportation projects are and how that limits the number of projects that can be accomplished. The cost necessitates strategic planning. Projects are

prioritized through a ranking formula. Mr. Bentley also noted that the ACOG serves as a liaison between SCDOT and local governments. The agency is able to communicate challenges and opportunities between the two entities.

SCDOT Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Grant Program Project Recommendations

Chairman Collins introduced Jane Hall, Chair of the Regional Transportation Planning Committee. Ms. Hall deferred to Lance Estep, Principal Planner, to present information on Federal Section 5310, which improves transportation opportunities for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Mr. Estep discussed how much funding is available and how it is divided. He explained that the number of applications for this grant was lower this year due to extra COVID-19 funding for organizations, as well as delays from SCDOT. The Regional Transportation Planning Committee recommended two (2) projects for funding. Chairman Collins called for a vote. The vote carried unanimously.

Action Item

SCDOT System Performance Report Summary

Chairman Collins asked Mr. Estep to provide a summary of the Annual SCDOT System Performance Report. He explained that the Federal Highway Administration asked COGs to incorporate this report into their long range transportation plans as an appendix. Mr. Estep reviewed various performance measures with the board.

Board members asked questions about specific freight mobility areas. Erin Porter and Christina Lewis, with SCDOT, answered questions.

ACOG FY 2022-2023 Rural Planning Work Program for Transportation

Mr. Estep reported that the two-year work program for transportation is normally approved when the agency-wide work program is presented and approved. However, SCDOT asked for the work plan for transportation to be approved by June 1 this year. Mr. Estep gave 2021-2022 program highlights and shared anticipated projects for the upcoming two (2) fiscal years, 2022 and 2023. The Regional Transportation Planning Committee recommended approving the 2022-2023 Rural Planning Work Program for Transportation. Chairman Collins called for a vote. The vote carried unanimously.

Action Item

SCDOT Complete Streets Initiative

Chairman Collins called on Steve Pelissier to explain the new Complete Streets Initiative. Mr. Pelissier serves on the Complete Streets Council, which was created by SCDOT to ensure safe

street access to all users. He reviewed the background and need for the initiative and guidelines, as well as the expected timeframe. Mr. Pelissier explained how Complete Streets concepts will be applied to plans and projects in the future.

SC 2021 Legislative Report

Chairman Collins introduced Brooke Ferguson, who gave the Legislative Report. Ms. Ferguson provided a list of bills that passed this year. Then she presented a list of bills that are left for next year.

Executive Director's Report

Chairman Collins asked Mr. Pelissier to give the Executive Director's report. Mr. Pelissier called on Tim Womack, Aging Services Director, to discuss the Regional Aging Advisory Committee (RAAC) meeting. Mr. Womack explained that he needs the board to recommend members for the RAAC meeting. The number of members needed from each county at this time are as follows: Oconee-1, Cherokee-1, Greenville-1, Pickens-2, and Spartanburg-1.

It is understood that Senator Graham and Representative Norman are working to add Union County to the Appalachian Regional Commission. If that happens, the county would not join the ACOG. The ACOG remains neutral on any decision to add Union County.

The next board meeting will be held on June 25, 2021, at 10:30 AM in person at the new Senior Action facility. Members may also attend through Zoom. The board packet sent prior to the June meeting will include directions to the meeting location as well as a Zoom link.

The August meeting will take place at the Spark Center in Spartanburg.

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

Neal Collins, Acting Chairman

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