

LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

August 28, 2014

6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

**BEAUFORT COUNTY:**

Gerald Dawson  
Brian Flewelling  
Marc A. Grant  
Mary Beth Heyward  
Bill McBride  
Joseph McDomick  
Lisa Sulka  
Tabor Vaux  
George Williams

Billy Keyserling (Proxy to B. Flewelling)  
Jim Outlaw (Proxy to Pete Hagood)  
Jerry Stewart

**COLLETON COUNTY:**

Bobby Bonds  
Jane Darby  
Joseph Flowers  
Tommy Mann  
Evon Robinson  
Gene Whetsell

Esther Black (Proxy to Chair)

**HAMPTON COUNTY:**

Frankie Bennett  
Pete Hagood  
Pete Mixson  
Buddy Phillips  
Nat Shaffer

**JASPER COUNTY:**

Henry Etheridge  
Carolyn Kassel  
Joey Malphrus  
Gwen Johnson Smith

Henry Lawton, Sr.

**GUESTS:** Beaufort County Council Member Cynthia Bensch; City of Hardeeville Mayor Bronco Bostick; Hardeeville Interim City Manager Mike Phillips; Hardeeville City Council Member Mike Sweeney

**STAFF:** Hank Amundson, Chris Bickley, Ginnie Kozak, Sherry Smith, Carol Stonebraker

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Chairman Gwen Johnson Smith called the August 28, 2014 Lowcountry Council of Governments regular board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. She then turned the gavel over to incoming Chairman Nat Shaffer. Chairman Shaffer led the Pledge of Allegiance after which Evon Robinson gave the invocation. The Chairman asked everyone to remember Jim Outlaw, whose wife Ann passed away earlier in the week. Introduction of guests and staff followed. New LCOG Board Member (Hardeeville City Council Member) Carolyn Kassel was welcomed. Chairman Shaffer presented the June 26, 2014 Board Meeting Minutes, and without objection, declared the minutes approved. He then presented Gwen Smith with a plaque commemorating her tenure as LCOG Board Chairman and thanked her for her year's service. Proxies noted by the Executive Director included Esther Black to

the Chair, Billy Keyserling to Brian Flewelling, and Jim Outlaw to Pete Hagood. All were general proxies. The meeting proceeded after determining a quorum was present.

Chairman Shaffer continued by recognizing the 2014-2015 Board Officers and At-Large Executive Committee Members: Vice Chairman – Tommy Mann/Colleton County, Secretary – Gerald Dawson/Beaufort County, Treasurer – Henry Etheridge/Jasper County; Executive Committee Members Brian Flewelling/Beaufort County, Gene Whetsell/Colleton County, Pete Hagood/Hampton County, and Gwen Smith/Jasper County.

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Chairman Shaffer addressed Old Business and recognized Ginnie Kozak for an update on the US 17 Widening Project in Jasper County. An updated LCOG Transportation Committee Project Summary, prepared by SCDOT staff, was reviewed. The US 17 project was on the Agenda for information only. Ginnie spoke about the project's rising cost, the road's poor condition and safety issues, its statewide and national importance, and the need to secure other funding sources. She said SCDOT Commissioners recommended a joint meeting between the LCOG Board and the LATS Policy Committee. The meeting is scheduled September 17 at 5:30 p.m. in the Sargent Jasper Park meeting room. Discussion followed and centered on the project's importance well beyond the Lowcountry Region. SCDOT staff will attend. Transportation Committee Chairman George Williams urged all LCOG Board Members to be there. Ginnie Kozak briefly reviewed other transportation projects on the list.

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With no New Business on the Agenda, Chairman Shaffer called for Reports and recognized Sherry Smith for the June and July Finance Reports. Copies were in meeting packets. Sherry reported June Accounts Receivable at an all-time high. There was considerable improvement in July, but cash-flow continues to be challenging. The COG increased invoicing State for Workforce expenses to twice monthly and is considering doing the same for Aging. Chris Bickley noted that slow reimbursement from the State is a statewide issue. Sherry said the COG's auditors will soon begin their annual audit, and the report will be presented at the October meeting.

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Michelle Knight was unable to attend, and Chris Bickley submitted the Community & Economic Development Report as written. The department has 53 active projects with another three in the application process.

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The Executive Director's Report was submitted by Chris Bickley as written and without additional comment.

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Chairman Shaffer called for a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel matters that was made by Brian Flewelling, seconded by Mary Beth Heyward, and unanimously approved. Three items were on the Agenda for Executive Session discussion: New Executive Director Search Committee Status Report, Loaned Employee Program, and Employee Annual Leave Accrual. Afterwards, Chairman Shaffer declared the meeting returned to Open Session. He stated the items discussed were those listed on the Agenda and that only one item required action. Bill McBride made a motion to approve the COG's Loaned Employee Program as described in the statement and recommended by staff during the Executive Session. Mary Beth Heyward seconded the motion. Brief discussion followed during which Chris Bickley confirmed the program will be managed to have fewer than fifty employees at all times. The motion carried by majority with dissenting votes from Bobby Bonds and Tommy Mann.

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During Council Time Pete Hagood commented on the recent Nevamar plant closing in Hampton County.

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With no additional business to address, and on motion duly made, seconded and approved, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Copies of the agenda were distributed prior to the meeting. A notice of the meeting was posted on the LCOG bulletin board at least twenty-four hours prior to the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

L. Chriswell Bickley, Jr.  
Executive Director

Attachments

