

LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

September 25, 2014

6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

**BEAUFORT COUNTY:**

Gerald Dawson  
Brian Flewelling  
Mary Beth Heyward  
Bill McBride  
Jim Outlaw  
Jerry Stewart  
Lisa Sulka

Marc A. Grant  
Billy Keyserling (Proxy to B. Flewelling)  
Joseph McDomick  
Tabor Vaux (Proxy to Chair)  
George Williams (Proxy to Chair)

**COLLETON COUNTY:**

Esther S. Black  
Joseph Flowers  
Thomas (Tommy) Mann  
Evon Robinson  
Gene Whetsell

Bobby Bonds  
Jane Darby

**HAMPTON COUNTY:**

Frankie Bennett  
James (Pete) Hagood  
Travis L. (Pete) Mixson  
Charles (Buddy) Phillips  
Nat Shaffer

**JASPER COUNTY:**

Henry Etheridge  
Carolyn Kassel  
Henry Lawton, Sr.  
Joey Malphrus  
Gwen Johnson Smith

**GUESTS:** Mike Phillips, Interim Hardeeville City Manager; Celia Price, guest of Esther Black; Alan M. Matienzo and Joy Shealy, SCDOT Lowcountry RPG

**STAFF:** Hank Amundson, Chris Bickley, Barbara Johnson, Michelle Knight, Ginnie Kozak, Sherry Smith, Carol Stonebraker

---

Chairman Nat Shaffer called the September 25, 2014 Lowcountry Council of Governments regular board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Pete Hagood gave the invocation. Introduction of guests and staff followed. Minutes of the August 28, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved on motion by Henry Lawton and second from Mary Beth Heyward. Proxies presented by the Executive Director included Billy Keyserling to Brian Flewelling and Tabor Vaux and George Williams to the Chair. All were general proxies. Jane Darby called to say she could not attend. The meeting proceeded after determining a quorum was present.

---

Chairman Shaffer opened a Public Hearing at 6:35 p.m. on the Lowcountry Regional HOME Consortium (LRHC) Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). A summary was sent to board members prior to the meeting, and the hearing had been properly advertised in regional newspapers. Affordable Housing Manager Barbara Johnson was recognized to present the information. She reviewed the report and said the HOME Consortium Advisory Committee met September 18 and recommended approval. During its 8<sup>th</sup> program year, LRHC expended approximately \$772K and

contributed 25% local match, spending a little over \$1M on regional affordable housing. Sixty-nine rehab units and one new construction unit were completed. Six families received tenant-based rental assistance. Five rehab units are under construction in Colleton County. Barbara plans to meet with the Colleton County Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors in October to promote the program. The Chairman called for questions or public comments and there were none. He closed the hearing at 6:40 p.m.

---

With no Old Business brought forward, Chairman Shaffer addressed New Business and called for action on the Lowcountry Regional HOME Consortium CAPER presented at the public hearing. Tommy Mann made a motion to approve the report as information. The motion unanimously carried following a second from Mary Beth Heyward.

---

Sherry Smith was recognized for the August Finance Report. Sherry reported Revenues over Expenses are near 16% as budgeted. She reviewed Unrestricted Cash and Accounts Receivable. Receivables were at an all-time high and included June, July and August receivables from the Lt. Governor's Office on Aging. Sherry said those funds were received and the COG is now current with that agency. The COG's independent auditor conducted its review in September and is on schedule to present the audit report at the October board meeting.

---

Michelle Knight was recognized for the Community & Economic Development Report. Michelle submitted the report as written and recommended contacting her soon about projects for the spring funding round. She said that staff is looking for ways to streamline public hearings and will try to schedule needs assessment public hearings between January and mid-February. Michelle responded to a question about when completed projects drop off the report. She said projects shown as programmatically closed do not come off the list until a final audit letter is received from State. That status does not affect a community's ability to apply for new projects. Also, the Penn Center EDA project in Beaufort County requires a nine-year report that is coming up soon. The project will not be listed once confirmation is received that all requirements have been met.

---

Chris Bickley was recognized for the Director's Report, which he submitted with comments. The SC Association of Regional Councils (SCARC) annual conference is Nov 23-25, and board members wanting to attend should turn in registration forms by October 11. The Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is implementing significant changes to the federal grants process. Chris recommended that board members from jurisdictions directly administering federal grants be certain their staff is aware and preparing for the changes. He noted that a Lowcountry Labor Force and Employment summary by region was included with the Unemployment Chart.

---

Chairman Shaffer called for a motion to enter Executive Session to receive and discuss the Executive Director Search Committee Report. The motion was made by Brian Flewelling, seconded by Pete Hagood, and unanimously approved. On return to Open Session, Brian Flewelling made a motion that the Chairman be authorized to negotiate a contract of employment for the position of Executive Director with Sabrina Graham; that the contract be according to the draft provided to board members with additional wording stating an annual performance review is required and that the effective date of the contract be no later than January 5, 2015. Jim Outlaw seconded the motion. Search Committee Chairman Brian Flewelling said the motion was developed by and in agreement with the full Committee. For the benefit of staff and guests returning to the room, the motion and comments were repeated, after which Chairman Shaffer called for a vote and the motion was unanimously approved. Ms. Graham came into the meeting, and everyone welcomed her to the COG.

There were no comments during Council Time, and with no additional business to address, and on motion duly made, seconded and approved, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:10 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

