

LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

May 28, 2015

6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

BEAUFORT COUNTY:

Philip (Phil) Cromer
Gerald Dawson
Brian Flewelling
Herbert Glaze
Mary Beth Heyward
Bill McBride
Joseph McDomick
Jerry Stewart

Marc A. Grant
Alice Howard (proxy to G. Dawson)
Lisa Sulka (proxy to Chair)

COLLETON COUNTY:

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

Jane Darby

HAMPTON COUNTY:

Frankie Bennett
James (Pete) Hagood
Travis Mixson
Nat Shaffer

Charles (Buddy) Phillips (proxy to Chair)

JASPER COUNTY:

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

Carolyn Kassel (proxy to chair)

GUESTS: Brad Samuel, SCANA Corporation; Bill Tomes, Public Management Consultant

STAFF: Hank Amundson, Sabrena Graham, Michelle Knight, Ginnie Kozak, Connie Schroyer, Sherry Smith

1. Call to Order - Chairman Shaffer called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.
 - 1.1. Pledge of Allegiance – Chairman Shaffer led the Pledge of Allegiance
 - 1.2. Invocation – Rev. Robinson led the Invocation
 - 1.3. Introduction of Guests and Staff
 - 1.4. Welcome New Member – Chairman Shaffer welcomed Beaufort County Council Member Herbert Glaze to the board.
 - 1.5. Approval of April 23, 2015 Minutes –
ACTION: Moved by Joseph McDomick, seconded by Mary Beth Heyward to approve minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
 - 1.6. Proxies – Proxies presented by the Executive Director included Alice Howard to Gerald Dawson; Lisa Sulka, Buddy Phillips and Carolyn Kassel to the chair. The meeting proceeded after determining a quorum was present.

2. Presentation

- 2.1. Executive Committee Planning Retreat Report [attachment] - Chairman Shaffer recognized Dr. Bill Tomes, Public Management and Leadership Development Consultant, to present the Lowcountry Council of Governments Executive Committee Planning Retreat Summary which took place on May 7, 2015.

Dr. Tomes began the presentation by highlighting the role of the organization and its board members as outlined in the enabling legislation for regional councils; Title 6, Chapter 7, Article 3 of the South Carolina Code of Laws. There are three main activities for regional councils; 1) to coordinate and promote cooperative programs in the region; 2) prepare studies and recommendations on the common interest of the participating governments; 3) provide technical assistance to members of local governments. Specifically, the board is to provide policy leadership for the organization through strategic framework, budgeting preparation and oversight. The board shall also monitor organizational performance by assessing the goals of the organization, evaluating the performance of the executive director and by building and sustaining linkages to stakeholders. Board members have the power and are expected to influence non-members for the good of the organization. Effective boards have rules and procedures for conducting meetings. They allow and encourage communication among its members and speak with one voice. An effective board supports decisions that better the region as a whole. The executive director has the role of directing the policies and directives set forth by the board, managing the staff and the processes of the day-to-day operations, and in sharing administrative financial reports.

Dr. Tomes then reported on the activities and outcome of the planning retreat. Advance copies of the summary were sent to board members and are attached to serve as the official record; and which includes the Vision Statement and the 2015-2016 Goals and Strategies.

On page one of the summary, second bullet point of the liabilities, Mr. McDomick commented that “crime and drug use among youth” was not a liability exclusively of youth, but a liability of all citizens in general. A consensus of the board agreed. Dr. Tomes will edit the summary and redistribute.

ACTION: Moved by Joe Flowers, seconded by Joseph McDomick to approve the summary with aforementioned edit. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Old Business

- 3.1. FY2014-2015 Agency Budget Revisions [attachment] – Sherry Smith presented the revised budget for the current year adjusting for unknown revenues and expenditures incurred during the year. Copies were distributed in meeting packets and the major changes were reviewed by the finance director. The budget totals \$6.9M, an increase of approximately \$275,000 from the original budget. The revised contingency increased by approximately \$12,000. Specific notes are as follows:

- The estimated contingency in operating funds increased from \$55,621 to \$67,896
- The contingency for salary increases has been zeroed out and added back to the operating funds contingency. The line item was not used.
- \$10,000 had been budgeted for miscellaneous local expenses associated with a new director search. Very little was spent.

Sabrena Graham clarified that the budget increase of \$275,000 was from additional funds that the COG already had or received.

ACTION: Moved by Joe Flowers, seconded by Evon Robinson to accept the Agency Budget Revisions as reported. Motion carried unanimously.

1. New Business

- 4.1 Appointment of Nominating Committee – Chairman Shaffer appointed Frankie Bennett (H), Henry Etheridge (J), Mary Beth Heyward (B), and Gene Whetsell (C) to the Nominating Committee who will propose the slate of 2015-2016 board officers during the June Board Meeting. There were no objections.

5. Reports

- 5.1. April Finance Report [attachment] – Sherry Smith reviewed the April Finance Report. The report does not reflect the budget revisions as presented in Item 3.1. The revenues over expenditures for the period ending April 2015 is at \$56,252, reflecting 93% of the year-to-date budget expended. Next month when expenditures are posted against the revised budget, the variances that are severely over or under and the percentage of expended budget will align within the norm. Accounts Receivables and Accounts Payables continue to be monitored closely to ensure solvency. The Finance Department is now drafting next year's budget which will be presented at the next meeting.
- 5.2. Community and Economic Development Report [attachment] – Copies of the report were submitted in meeting packets and submitted as written. Michelle Knight also reported that the department has completed the Clarification Memo process for the spring round of CDBG funds. Commerce has begun scoring applications with funding results hopefully released by July 1. Also submitted were the responses to the Further Consideration Letter for the current EDA application. Another EDA application will be submitted June 12th for the City of Walterboro. The fall round for CDBG will be upon us soon. Preliminary discussion among several localities in the region indicates that it will be a heavy round. If your locale is contemplating a project, you are encouraged to speak with the Community and Economic Development Department early.
- 5.3. Director's Report [attachment] – Sabrena Graham reminded the Executive Committee of the Budget Worksession scheduled on June 11th at 4:30 to review the upcoming budget. A final draft will be presented for the approval of the full board at the June 25th meeting. Information about the Promise Zone Designation was distributed with the Director's Report. The designation is a great opportunity to bring federal programs and federal dollars to the region in which the LCOG plans to take full advantage of. USDA will be the federal liaison with Southern Carolina Alliance as the designee. In preparation of a new website design, Mrs. Graham encouraged board member input on the attached website survey. The new office manager and executive assistant Connie Schroyer was introduced. The leadership team continues to tell LCOG's story. The team was well received at the Hampton County Municipal Association meeting and is scheduled to speak at the Kiwanis Club of Beaufort. Eager to spread the word, let Mrs. Graham know of any organization interested in learning more about the services of the COG.
- 5.4. 208 Report [attachment] - Copies of the report were submitted in meeting packets and submitted as written.

6. Executive Session

6.1. Personnel Matter [attachment]

ACTION: Moved by Pete Hagood, seconded by Brian Flewelling to move the board into executive session to discuss the performance evaluation of the executive director. Motion carried unanimously. The executive session convened at 7:12 p.m.

ACTION: Moved by Pete Hagood, seconded by Evon Robinson to resume open session. Motion carried unanimously. Open session resumed at 7:17 p.m.

During executive session, the board discussed its reluctance in giving a full review using the evaluation template due to the short tenure of the director. In lieu of a formal evaluation, the executive committee drafted a favorable opinion regarding the performance of the executive director as concluded to date.

ACTION: Moved by Pete Hagood, seconded by Henry Lawton to receive the opinion of the executive director's performance as recommended by the executive committee. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Council Time

During the discussion of Item 2.1 Planning Retreat Report, Philip Cromer asked what has been done in the past to communicate with the legislative delegation in regards to the needs and activity of the LCOG. There is not a formal procedure in place. The former director made relatively routine phone calls to keep the delegation abreast of activities of the Board. It was noted that a member of the delegation should be on board but that requests to fill the seat have gone mostly unanswered. Members of the delegation do receive agendas of board meetings to stay aware of the topics if they choose to attend. Mr. Cromer suggested the Board be more forward with its communication through more direct dialogue and face-to-face interaction.

8. Adjourn

With no other business to discuss, **ACTION: Moved by Pete Hagood, seconded by Brian Flewelling to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.** The meeting adjourned at 7:21 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,

Connie Schroyer
Executive Assistant

Attachments