#### **COMBINED MEETING**

# LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS LOWCOUNTRY REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 2017 6:30 P.M. POINT SOUTH, SOUTH CAROLINA

# **MINUTES**

PRESENT: ABSENT:

**BEAUFORT COUNTY:** Michael Covert Phil Cromer / proxy to Alice Howard

> Gerald Dawson Marc Grant

Brian Flewelling Mary Beth Heyward

Herbert Glaze York Glover Alice Howard Joseph McDomick

Dan Wood

**COLLETON COUNTY:** Joseph Flowers Esther Black Tommy Mann **Bobby Bonds** 

Crawford Moore Evon Robinson Gene Whetsell

**HAMPTON COUNTY:** Frankie Bennett

> Pete Hagood Ronald Mixson Pete Mixson **Buddy Phillips** Nat Shaffer

**JASPER COUNTY:** Tom Johnson John Carroll

> Henry Lawton Joey Malphrus Gwen Johnson Smith

GUESTS: Michael Pitts, SCDOT; Lisa Wechsler, Crowley-Wechsler & Assoc.; Craig Winn, SCDOT

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

Smith

1. <u>Call to Order</u> Chairman Dawson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

- 1.1. Pledge of Allegiance
- 1.2. Invocation
  - Led by Brian Flewelling.
- 1.3. Introduction of Guests and Staff
- 1.4. Welcome New Board Members
  - Michael Covert & York Glover of Beaufort County Council were welcomed to the board.
- 1.5. Proxies
  - Phil Cromer to Alice Howard, John Carroll absent.
- 1.6. Approval of October 27, 2016 Minutes

Action - MOVED by Pete Hagood, seconded by Joseph McDomick to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

#### 2. Presentations

- 2.1. SCDOT Progress Report Craig Winn
  - A progress report of SCDOT road and bridge projects in the region was given. Copies of the report were distributed in agenda packets.
  - SCDOT anticipates nearly \$293M worth of road work to be completed between now and 2021.
  - In Hampton County, there are (6) pavement preservation and rehabilitation projects (resurfacing) that were let out to bid on Jan. 10, 2017. Rejection is anticipated as the bids fall outside of the federal award guidelines.
    - Q: What happens to the funds if the bids are rejected?
    - A: The funds stay with the projects. A second letting for these projects will open in a couple of months.
    - Q: Are the resurfacing projects funded with federal or state money?
    - A: It depends on the project. Most are funded federally with a state match, some with CTC funds, some with state funds.
    - Q: Compared to the other counties, Hampton County does not seem to have equitable distribution of funds for roads projects. How are monies allocated?
    - A: The disbursement of the funds look skewed due to two major interstate projects. Of the \$292M in area projects, \$132M is allocated for interstate improvements. Also, some of Colleton County's projects include sections of Hampton County. Bridge replacements are a factor as well. All road projects except resurfacing are ranked by the guidelines established in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in which the COG and Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS) are a part of.
  - There will be a public hearing on Feb. 23, 2017 from 5:00-7:00 pm, location TBA, for the widening of Hwy 17 near the GA state border. Construction is scheduled for spring 2018.

# 3. New Business

- 3.1. Lowcountry Regional Development Corporation (LRDC) Regular Meeting
  - 3.1.1. LRDC Annual Financial Report for the Years Ended September 30, 2016 and 2015 Lisa Wechsler
    - A detailed report of the financial year was given. The financial statements of the LRDC presented fairly. No deficiencies were found. Copies of the report were distributed at the meeting.
    - End of year net assets and cash were \$ 514,840.
    - The LRDC owns one building; a spec building in Hampton County that is currently being rented out.
    - All other leases have been paid off and settled.
    - The LRDC is still holding funds from the sale of the Parrish Market.

#### 2. Department Reports

- 4.1. Finance Report for December 2016 Sherry Smith
  - Revenues over expenditures were \$12,695
  - 48% of the budget has been expended
  - Copies of the monthly financial statement were distributed in agenda packets.
- 4.2. Community and Economic Development (C&ED) Report Michelle Knight
  - Public Hearings to conduct Needs Assessment during county and municipal meetings will be held in January & February.
  - March 15 is the deadline for the CDBG and SC Rural Infrastructure grants. Full applications for CDBG are due April 14.
  - An EDA grant for upgrades to the Walterboro Wastewater Treatment Plant was approved.
  - New to the monthly C&ED Report is the status of the HOME Consortium projects. To date,
    33 applications have been dispersed and 11 have been received and are under review. \$0 has

been expended in Jasper County due largely from the homeowner's inability to meet the program requirements. Applicants must have a stick-built home, have clear ownership of the property and carry homeowners insurance. The Aging & Disability Resource Center and C&ED have partnered through the Legal Assistance Program to help obtain property titles. Also, an Emergency Repair program is now available for up to \$7,500 per house to fix issues, such as a leaky roof, that prevent homeowners from obtaining insurance. Other options being pursued are reaching out to local insurance agents and distributing informational flyers in the Jasper County community.

- Flyers about the HOME Consortium programs will be drafted for the other counties and distributed at the next meeting.
  - Q: What is the status of the Ruth Street Sewer Improvement Project in Estill?
  - A: The financial monitoring was conducted last week. A project extension was filed to allow for the final drawdown of funds and to finish the closeout paperwork. C&ED is confident that this will be completed before the March deadline.

# 4.3. Director's Report – Sabrena Graham

- The proclamation establishing the Reconstruction Era National Monument in Beaufort County was signed by President Obama on 1/12/17.
- LCOG has a new phone number 843-473-3990. The 7526 number will be turned off in a few weeks.
- LCOG Affordable Housing Manager, Barbara Johnson, has been appointed to serve on the SC Housing Trust Fund Advisory Committee. Barbara will represent all of the COGS in the state.
- A student intern will spend a few months in the Aging Dept. Arieanna Morrall will be assisting with the Ombudsman Friendly Visitor program.
- Sherry and I are meeting monthly to discuss and review financial matters so that I can remain knowledgeable and up-to-date with the financial health of the COG.
- I have recently made LCOG presentations in Bluffton, Colleton County and the Hampton County Municipal Association.
- Areas of focus in 2017 will be: Continue and expand current services; convene the region on topics of local importance; begin discussions on expanding/adding routes to LRTA to help serve other areas in the region; road improvements; and Workforce Training program/plan for region.
- The first LCOG Annual Report was distributed. Copies will also be shared with local governments, partners and posted to the website.

# 4.4. Planning Reports – (for information)

The 208 Report and Regional Unemployment Chart were distributed in agenda packets.
 The People & the Economy of the Lowcountry: A Demographic Overview was also distributed.

### 3. Council Time

There will be a public scoping meeting regarding the Jasper Ocean Terminal on Jan. 31, 2017
 at the Hardeeville Elementary/Middle School. Open house at 5:30 pm, meeting at 7:00 pm

# 4. Adjourn

Action

MOVED by Joseph McDomick, seconded by Brian Flewelling to adjourn the meeting.
 Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:27 pm

Copies of the agenda and supporting documents were distributed prior to the meeting. Notice of the meeting was posted at www.lowcountry.cog.org and on the office bulletin board in accordance with the law.

Minutes submitted by Connie Schroyer