



Santee Lynches Regional Council of Governments
Board of Directors' Meeting
Monday, December 2, 2019 - 6:00pm
CCTC Advanced Manufacturing Technology Training Center
853 Broad Street, Room A101
Sumter, South Carolina

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Members Present

Clarendon County: Benton Blakley, Shirley Keels, Julia Nelson, Dwight Stewart

Kershaw County: Brad Hanley, John Wesley Lee, Kenneth McCaskill

Lee County: Grady Brown, Jackie Josey, Travis Windham

Sumter County: Jim McCain, Vivian McGhaney, David Weeks, Chuck Wilson, Earl Wilson

Members Absent

Clarendon County: Kevin Johnson

Kershaw County: Julian Burns (excused), Alfred Mae Drakeford (excused), Laurie Funderburk (excused), Jeffrey Graham (excused), Sammie Tucker (excused)

Lee County: Will Wheeler (excused)

Sumter County: Eugene Baten (excused), Steve Corley (excused), Jay Davis (excused), Ione Dwyer (excused), Joe McElveen (excused), David Merchant (excused)

- 1. Welcome and Call to Order:** Chairman Vivian McGhaney called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.
- 2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance:** Mr. John Lee provided the invocation and all attendees participated in the pledge.
- 3. Introduction of Guests:** Mr. McKinney welcomed special guests, Mr. Sandy Jenkins of Santee-Wateree Regional Transportation, Ms. Briana Bateman of Senator Tim Scott's Office and Dr. Trevor Ivey of the Charter School of Sumter.
- 4. Quorum Determination:** Chairwoman McGhaney determined there was a quorum. 15 of 29 board members were present.
- 5. Adoption of Agenda:** Mr. Jim McCain made a motion to adopt the amended agenda which added the Charter School of Sumter presentation. Mr. Chuck Wilson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- 6. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** Mr. Jim McCain made a motion to approve the October 7, 2019 meeting minutes. Mr. Roland Robinson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- 7. Public Presentations**
 - a. Senator Tim Scott's Office - Ms. Briana Bateman, Regional Director with Senator Tim Scott's office opportunity informed the board that their office is continuing to work with SC Opportunity Zones, an initiative designed to encourage long-term private investments in low-income areas, and have

been touring several Opportunity Zones across the state. Ms. Bateman also reported that during the Small Business Administration's National Small Business Week, Kershaw County's Kathryn Couch, owner of Pink Stable women's boutique, was named Young Entrepreneur of the Year and received the "Salute to Small Business" award, which is a win for the Santee-Lynches Region.

- b. Charter School of Sumter – Mr. Trevor Ivey delivered a presentation on the proposed Charter School for Sumter. Mr. Ivey reported that the proposed school will focus on STEAM career pathways and the goal is to provide students with rigorous and relevant academic workplace learning experiences through personalized project-based learning to prepare them for success in college or career. The school is scheduled to open in Fall 2021.
- c. SC COG 25-Year Recognitions – Chairman McGhaney and Mr. McKinney presented the following Board Members with awards for their dedicated service to the Board: Mrs. Shirley Keels – 26 years, Mr. John W. Lee – 23 years and Mr. Benton Blakely – 20 years. Members were also recognized during the 2019 SC Council of Governments Conference in Myrtle Beach.

8. Staff Briefings:

- a. **COG Financial Report:** Ms. Rachel Katorkas, Finance Chief, reviewed the October 2019 financial report. She reported that as of October 31st the budget was at 33% thru the fiscal year with 18.2% of budgeted revenue received and 25.4% of budgeted expenses have been expended. She reported that SC Thrive, the new line item under Health and Human Services, has an annual contract of \$80,000 and will be reflected in the budget amendment to presented in the spring. She informed the Board that the COG requested and was awarded an additional \$60,000 in Respite funds for the Family Caregiver program.
- b. **Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP) Update:** Ms. Areatha Clark, Deputy Executive Director and Workforce Development Chief reminded the Board that the NIP Program helps preserve, increase the property value and the value neighborhoods in the City of Sumter and Camden through the demolition of abandoned properties purchased by the Regional Development Corporation. The project is in the maintenance phase of 80 demolished properties which includes lawn and general landscaping. SLCOG along with the City of Camden, the City of Sumter and SC Housing, are working on a process to sell the properties to interested parties once the RDC liens have been dropped.
- c. **Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program (TBRA) Update:** Ms. Clark reminded the Board that the TBRA Program which is operated by the COG, is intended to help individuals and their families attain and maintain self-sufficiency by providing temporary assistance with housing. The program's goal is to assist individuals who are participating in workforce development training or are furthering their education in order to become self-sufficient. This assistance takes the burden off those individuals so they can concentrate on upgrading their skills. The program provides up to \$500 per home for rental assistance and works with a variety of colleges and agencies including: Central Carolina Tech, USC-Sumter, Morris College, Vocational Rehabilitation and SC Works. Since the program's inception in 2016, 53 people have been assisted with over \$282,000 paid directly to their landlords, not individuals, for their housing. The COG following up with participants who have completed the program to find out how the program benefitted them in an effort to determine if there is a true return on investment. The program is intended to be a hand up, not a hand-out.

9. Committee Reports:

- a. **Executive Committee: NADO Training Conference:** Mr. McKinney reported that he, along with board members Mr. Jim McCain, Ms. Julia Nelson and Mr. Sammie Tucker attended the 2019

National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for conference in Reno, Nevada. Ms. Nelson shared that it was a good recommendation by Mr. McKinney that board members attend the conference. She stated that it was a full conference and that they all attended the opening sessions and decided on sessions that each would attend individually in order to maximize investment. Sessions she attended covered: regional needs of housing and challenges presented in other states; how to make your community friendly and sustainable and keeping buildings revitalized. Mr. Jim McCain reported that the keynote speaker, Doug Griffiths, author of the book "13 Ways to Kill Your Community" was very engaging and he left with several take-aways from the session. He encouraged everyone to read the book which was provided to Board members at the November meeting by the COG. Ms. Nelson added that another session of importance was related to the Department of Transportation, how its funding works and grants available through DOT.

- b. **Executive Committee: Adoption of COG Personnel Policy Manual** - Chairman McGhaney reported that the adoption of COG Personnel Policy Manual for 2020 was discussed at the last meeting but no action taken in order to give everyone an opportunity to review the policy manual. At the Executive Committee meeting a motion to adopt the personnel policy manual was made by Mr. Sammie Tucker, seconded by Mr. Jim McCain and the policy manual adopted. The Board voted unanimously to approve the Personnel Policy Manual.
- c. **Workforce Committee: Status of Transition to Contractor** - Mr. Earl Wilson, Committee Chair reported that the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Case Management Service Delivery transition to Eckerd Connects Workforce Development has been a very seamless and smooth process. Staff is in place and providing services in the four-county region. COG Workforce Development Staff are working very closely with contractor staff to provide oversight, guidance and technical assistance.

Mr. Wilson also reported that the COG's Workforce Development Department and programs were monitored by SC Department of Employment and Workforce on October 2nd - 4th. During the financial and programmatic audit, the outcome was "0" findings/issues. The smooth transition with Eckerd Connects and COG Workforce staff working diligently together netted this positive outcome.

- d. **Planning and Projects Committee: Transportation Needs Assessment** - Mr. Dwight Stewart, Committee Chair, reported that the COG's Government Services Department, and Executive Director McKinney, have been involved in multiple presentations regarding the Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority (SWRTA) needs assessment. He reported that presentations have been made to the City of Sumter and Sumter County with upcoming meetings to include Lee, Clarendon and Kershaw counties before the end of December. Additional data and resources have been compiled in hopes of generating partnerships with regional healthcare providers that may allow a decrease in financial burden on the current SWRTA operating budget.
- e. **Aging and Human Services Committee: Long-term Healthcare Contract Update** - Mrs. Shirley Keels, Committee Chair, reported that October was the first month for Health and Human Services (HHS) to report data on the SC Thrive LTHC application assistance pilot project. Area Agencies on Aging across the state are responsible for completing ten (10) applications and twenty-seven (27) events by June 30, 2020. Regionally, the HHS Department utilizes Aging Specialists to assist with outreach events at each senior center within the region. In addition, HHS staff refers eligible seniors seeking assistance with LTHC applications to SC Thrive for services. Communication with SC Thrive is strong through monthly conference calls wherein process improvements and best practices are shared.

10. Executive Director's Report: Mr. McKinney provided updates on the following:

Transportation for Veterans - At the previous board meeting a \$10,000 award from the State Department on Aging to assist elderly veterans with transportation was presented. The funds have been received and Mr. McKinney has met with the HHS Chief and staff to devise a plan on executing the program with excellence. The funding will allow for the provision of rides to veterans starting January 2020. Eligible veterans who apply and are approved will receive a \$100 voucher to use for rides to a convenient store or pharmacy. There are approximately 350-400 across the four-county region that fall into the category of elderly and veteran.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Updates

Clarendon County

Manning

- Received grant for vacant/dilapidated residential properties demolition in 2018
- 23 houses to be demolished
- Use of ordinances to condemn properties complete
- Advertising now for contractor to conduct asbestos abatement
- Awarded amount \$308,880

Turbeville

- Received grant for sewer trunk line in 2019
- Awaiting approval of Environmental Assessment from Dept. of Commerce
- Awarded amount \$693,000

Lee County

Lee County/Bishopville Joint Project

- Received grant for demolition of 31 vacant/dilapidated residential in properties in 2019
- Project recently award - work has not begun
- Amount requested \$473,000
- Amount awarded \$473,000 if staff is not doing their jobs these awards could not be awarded - work won't be done until the fall of 2020

Cassatt Water - St Charles Water Tank Project

- Received a grant to put in a water tower in 2017
- Elliott/English Water line extension completed
- Awarded amount \$462,000

City of Bishopville

- Received grant to upgrade sewer trunk line (Phase II) in 2019
- Currently conducting Environmental Assessment
- Awarded amount \$928,000

Sumter County

Mayesville beginning stages

- Received grant for demolition of 43 vacant/dilapidated residential properties in 2019
- Work has not begun
- Amount requested \$543,950
- Amount awarded \$543,950

Shannon Town

- Received grant for demolition of vacant/dilapidated residential properties demolition in 2018
- 8 houses demolished
- 4 houses remaining
- Expected completion: Dec 9th
- Awarded amount \$283,983

Total amount of recent CDBG Grant awards for Santee-Lynches COG Region = \$3,692,813

Mr. McKinney informed the Board that the next round of CDBG applications indicating intent for infrastructure projects are due approximately March 15, 2020 with the full application due 30 days later.

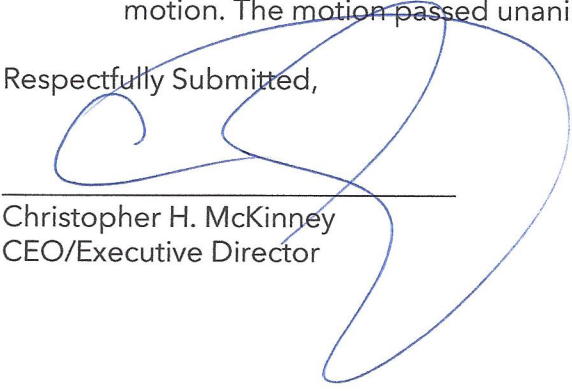
He also gave an update on staffing at the COG and introduced the agency's Executive Leadership Team:

- Areatha Clark - promoted to Deputy Executive Director
- Angela Jacobs - Administrative Department Chief
- Rachel Katorkas - Finance Department Chief
- Janae Stowe - promoted to Health & Human Services Department Chief
- Dennis Cyphers - Government Services Department Chief (formerly ECS)

11. Chairman's Remarks: Chairman McGhaney congratulated the Executive Leadership Team and commended Mr. McKinney for being precise in his hiring practices.

12. Adjournment: Mr. John Wesley Lee made a motion to adjourn and Dwight Stewart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:12 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Christopher H. McKinney
CEO/Executive Director