



MINUTES

APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2024 – 10:30 A.M.
COUNCIL BOARD ROOM WITH ZOOM OPTION
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Members Present:

Chris Bowers, Rick Bradley, Bob Briggs, Grady Butler, David Cauthen, Dennis Claramunt, Rep. Neal Collins, Roy Costner, Roel Cruz, Joe Dill, Ed Elliott, Ennis Fant, Ensley Feamster, Lillian Brock Flemming, Mike Forrester, Don Godbey, Robert Halfacre, Jane Hall, Mickey Haney, Glenn Hart, Rep. Rosalyn Henderson-Myers, Laura Hinty, Henry Jolly, Ruth Littlejohn, Alan Mitchell, Charles Pinson, Brian Ramey, E Riley, Jeff Roberts, Terence Roberts, Bob Walker, Cindy Wilson

Guests Present:

Adam Bodner, Pam Christopher, Lance Estep, Daniel Gambrell, Penny Phillips, Colin Treend, Jim Walden, Bryan Webb

Staff Present:

Chip Bentley, Trey Eubanks, Brooke Ferguson, Jill Francisco, Jeff Guilbault, Steve Pelissier, Jake Whitmire, Tim Womack, Arlene Young, Don Zimmer

Call to Order

Chairman Collins called the meeting to order. Mr. Riley offered the invocation. Mr. Pelissier introduced the guests in attendance. Chairman Collins asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the January 26, 2024, board meeting. Mr. Godbey made a motion to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Forrester. The motion was unanimously approved. The financial statement was accepted as information.

Spartanburg Baseball Stadium Project

Chairman Collins introduced Mr. Chris Story, the City Manager of Spartanburg, SC. Mr. Story reviewed the project elements for the ongoing project in downtown Spartanburg, including: the

minor league baseball stadium, private development, office space, apartments, a hotel, parking, public space, and related infrastructure. He showed a map of the area and site plan and discussed other possible uses of the venue. The board asked questions about the area, development, funding, and how the city originally became interested in the project. The stadium will open for the Spring 2025 baseball season.

Apprenticeship Carolina

Chairman Collins asked Dr. Kathy Dickson to brief the board on Apprenticeship Carolina and its programs. Dr. Dickson reviewed the organizational structure and mission of the agency. She explained that Apprenticeship Carolina works with sixteen SC Technical Colleges. She discussed the registered apprenticeship program and explained that it is an earn while you learn training model and a structured program including job-related education in a classroom setting. Students receive a credential from the Department of Labor upon completion of the program. She discussed the benefits for businesses that participate and gave statistics for the program. Ms. Emily Hodge detailed the process to help businesses build an apprenticeship program and discussed the ongoing support available. She explained education funding for employees/students. To see a list of occupations available for the apprenticeship program go to <https://www.apprenticeship.com/>.

Annual Update of Transportation Safety Targets in the Appalachian Region

Chairman Collins called on Ms. Hall, Chair of the Regional Transportation Committee. Ms. Hall asked Mr. Jake Whitmire, ACOG Transportation Planner, to update the board on the new transportation safety targets for this year. Mr. Whitmire noted that federal regulations require that the safety targets be updated annually. He reviewed the five safety performance measures, which include fatality rates for the region. He explained the baseline and new targets for adoption. The Regional Transportation Committee recommended the adoption of the statewide targets. Chairman Collins called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Item

Regional Transportation Update and TIP Amendment

Chairman Collins asked Mr. Whitmire to continue with the transportation update. Mr. Whitmire explained that the TIP is shifting from a 7- to a 10-year window. He reviewed the timeline and stated that there were no new projects. The Regional Transportation Committee recommended approval of the update to the TIP. Chairman Collins called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Item

Legislative Report

Chairman Collins called on Mrs. Brooke Ferguson, Economic Development Director, to present the Legislative Report. She discussed the budget, a liquor sales and tourism related bill, and the constitutional carry bill. Chairman Collins also explained the proposed teacher pay increase including a \$47,000 minimum salary for teachers with 0-5 years of experience.

Nominations for 2024 Board Officers

Mr. Claramunt, Chair of the Nominating Committee reported that the committee met in February and nominated the current slate of officers for a second term: Neal Collins, Chair; Cindy Wilson, Vice-Chair; and Don Godbey, Secretary. Mr. Ramey made a motion to approve the appointment of the current slate of officers to the board. Mr. Cruz seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Action Item

Executive Director's Report

Chairman Collins called on Mr. Pelissier to give the Executive Director's report. Mr. Pelissier reminded the elected officials that March 31st is the deadline to file the required Ethics Statement and to make sure to get the confirmation email. He informed board members that a speaker for the March meeting will discuss an in-depth housing report and analysis.

Member Updates

Mr. Jolly passed out information about the premier of the documentary, *Success Has No Zip Code: The Story of Coach Willie Jeffries*, that will take place in Gaffney on February 23-24, 2024.

The next board meeting will be held on March 22, 2024, at 10:30 AM in the ACOG Board Room. Members may also attend through Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 PM.

Neal A. Collins, Chairman

The South Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments has complied with the Freedom of Information Act in scheduling and conducting this meeting.

