

CATAWBA REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
REGULAR MEETING

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Catawba Regional Center  
March 10, 2022

A regular meeting of the Catawba Regional Council of Governments was held at 4:40 p.m. on Thursday, March 10, 2022. Notice of the meeting was sent to the local newspaper and posted on the Council's website.

The following members were present:

Chester

Wanda Stringfellow

Lancaster

Alston DeVenny  
Charlene McGriff  
Russell Patrick  
Eddie Moore

Union

Margaret Holloway  
Harold Thompson  
Leroy Worthy

York

Paul Basha  
Brandon Guffey  
Stacey Moore  
Wes Spurrier  
Chad Williams  
Robert Winkler  
Mike Fuesser  
Derrick Lindsay  
Dean Faile  
Laura Ullrich  
Tom Hyslip

The following members were absent:

Chester

Rep. Randy Ligon  
Jim Fuller  
Nettie Archie

Lancaster

Sean Corcoran  
Steve Harper  
Rep. Brandon Newton

Union

Rep. Doug Gilliam  
Frank Hart

York

Wes Burton  
Nikita Jackson  
Todd Lumpkin  
Sen. Wes Climer  
Scott Patterson  
P. N. Saksena  
  
William Roddey  
Guynn Savage  
Christi Cox  
Guynn Savage

Others present included:

Guests

Rep. Annie McDaniel	Jerome Pearson
Teresa Thomas	Christina Lewis
Rick Jiran	

Staff

Randy Imler	Steve Allen
Amy Chitwood	Angela Kirkpatrick
Julie Markow	Nicole Lawing
Randy Pellisero	Grazier Rhea
Candace Barnes	Katherine Edlein
Ed Brock	Cecilia Coutinho
Tyler Lewis	Rob Jackson

The Quarterly Meeting of the Catawba Regional Council of Governments was called to order by Chairman Winkler. This was a hybrid meeting (Zoom and in-person attendees). Mr. Sandifer delivered the invocation. A motion was made to approve the minutes from the December 2, 2021 COG Board meeting. The motion was duly seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously as written.

I. Presentation of 6/30/21 (FY21) Audited Financial Statements and the 12/31/21 COG Interim (six months) Financial Statement

Ms. Chitwood reviewed the FY2021 audit and the six-month interim results for FY2022 focusing on the Government Fund Statements. The most notable change was related to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) COVID-19 Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) grant. Between FYE20 to FYE21, restricted loans receivable increased from \$5.3 million to \$8.4 million. Furthermore, between FYE21 to 12/31/21 (6 month interim FY22) restricted loans rose to almost \$10 million. Ms. Chitwood reviewed the fund balance ten-year trends. The Unassigned/ Unreserved Balances increased modestly from ~\$1.056MM in FY11 to \$1.13MM in FY2021. Restricted Fund Balances have increased from \$3.0MM in FY11 to \$11.9MM at FYE22. Increases have been associated with Revolving Loan Fund assumptions and the EDA COVID-19 RLF grant. By FY22 fiscal year end, total fund balances are anticipated to exceed \$16MM. The Board received this report as information.

II. Transportation Issues

Mr. Allen reviewed the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update. He reviewed the national safety targets which include safety, infrastructure condition, congestion reduction, system reliability, freight movement and economic vitality, environmental sustainability, reduced project delivery delays and how those are measured. After discussion, a motion was made to accept the state's LRTP Safety targets for the Catawba Region, as recommended. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

Mr. Allen discussed the Rural Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The SC 5/Steel Hill Road project in Lancaster County had an original cost estimate of \$1,500,000, and the adjusted cost estimate is now \$1,540,000. The additional \$40,000 was required for right-of-way for the intersection improvements' turn lane. A motion was made to approve this Rural TIP amendment as recommended. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

III. EDA Revolving Loan Fund - New RLF Disaster Grant Application

Mr. Lewis presented the history of Catawba Regional's legacy EDA Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). Catawba Regional assumed six additional loan funds between FY12-FY18 to grow the lending area from four counties to twenty-nine counties. The loan fund has made 151 loans, disbursing \$19.1 million in capital, with \$70.5 million in private capital leveraged. \$1.1 million is currently available to lend. The legacy RLF capital base of approximately \$7.2 million was de-federalized on March 9, 2022. De-federalized capital is eligible to be used as match funds for economic development grant awards.

Mr. Lewis presented the proposed EDA RLF disaster grant application for \$2 million (\$1.8 million in RLF capital grant and \$200,000 in administrative grant). Funding will be 80% federal and 20% local match. The Council would use a portion of the de-federalized RLF fund to provide the match for the new grant. The motion comes from the Executive Committee for the Board to approve up to \$500,000 of defederalized RLF funds as local match for a new \$2 million EDA RLF grant application. As the motion was from committee, it needed no second. Following discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

IV. Study of Catawba Regional COG Operating Agreement – Formulas for Member Dues and Board Composition

Chair Winkler and Mr. Imler provided information regarding the current COG Operating Agreement. The Operating Agreement specifies county COG Board membership and the COG's dues formula. Changes to both COG Board composition and County dues take place following each decennial census. The Executive Committee will begin working to revise the Operating Agreement to ensure long-term balance on the board and an equitable dues structure. In light of this study, it was recommended that any dues increases/decreases or changes to the COG Board's composition be deferred until the completion of the study and findings can be presented to the full Board in the summer of 2022. Staff will conduct research regarding other SC COG Board representation and dues formulas and will present recommendations to the Executive Committee in the second quarter of 2022. The Executive Committee will then bring a recommendation for amendment of the Operating Agreement in the third quarter of 2022. Any changes in the Operating Agreement must be ratified by three of four counties in the COG region.

V. ARP Act Funding and Community Development Grants and Applications

Ms. Rhea provided an update regarding grants in process, applications under development, and deadlines for grants in the spring round. There are 35 active grants, totaling \$27.2 million, and 22 grants applications are being prepared, totaling approximately \$24.9 million. Mr. Imler discussed the proposed ARP Act funding allocations and legislation under consideration by the SC General

Assembly. Between \$800 and \$900 million of ARP Act funds are being recommended by the SC House and the SC Senate for the Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) grant program. If passed into law, the RIA is proposing that these funds will be awarded to projects in several different rounds beginning in July of 2022. Mr. Imler and Ms. Rhea stressed that now is the time to work with the grants department to start developing potential RIA-ARP Act projects.

VI. Regional Roundup

Representatives from each county provided brief highlights about projects and activities in their respective cities and counties.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Randy Imler".

Randy Imler  
Executive Director