

CATAWBA REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
REGULAR MEETING

Catawba Regional Center
June 9, 2022

A regular meeting of the Catawba Regional Council of Governments was held at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 9, 2022. Notice of the meeting was sent to the local newspaper and posted on the Council's website.

The following members were present:

Chester

Joe Branham
Sen. Mike Fanning

Lancaster

Sean Corcoran
Alston DeVenny
Charlene McGriff
Rep. Brandon Newton
Russell Patrick

Union

Margaret Holloway
Harold Thompson
Leroy Worthy

York

Paul Basha
Mike Fuesser
Tom Hyslip
Todd Lumpkin
Stacey Moore
Scott Patterson
P. N. Saksena
Wes Spurrier
Chad Williams
Robert Winkler

The following members were absent:

Chester

Nettie Archie
Jim Fuller
Wanda Stringfellow

Lancaster

Steve Harper
Eddie Moore

Union

Rep. Doug Gilliam
Frank Hart

York

Wes Burton
Sen. Wes Climer
Dean Faile
Brandon Guffey
Nikita Jackson
Derrick Lindsay
William Roddey
Guynn Savage
Laura Ullrich

Others present included:

Guests

Dennis Marstall
Ann Solan

Sen. Mike Fanning
Christina Lewis

Staff

Randy Imler
Amy Chitwood
Nicole Lawing
Grazier Rhea
Eleanor Mixon

Steve Allen
Corrie Alewine
Autumn Cauthen
Tyler Lewis
Marty Little

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). Mayor Thompson delivered the invocation. A motion was made to approve the minutes from the March 10, 2022 COG Board meeting. The motion was duly seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously as written.

I. Presentation of 4/30/22 COG Interim (ten months) Operating Statement

Ms. Chitwood presented the interim financial results as of April 30, 2022. To date, operating revenues were \$2,083,211 and operating expenses were \$2,032,663. The operating surplus was \$50,548. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) passthrough revenues and expenses were \$2,215,138 and EDA Brownfields Assessment Grant passthrough revenues and expenses were \$3,131. EDA COVID-19 Revolving Loan Fund grant revenue was \$3,495,288 and EDA SC Agribusiness Loan Fund grant revenue was \$275,504, with required local matching funds of \$68,876. Year-to-date, total revenues exceeded expenses by \$3,752,464. The Board received this report as information.

II. SC Rural Infrastructure Authority- \$900 million American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Allocation and Funding Round

Ms. Rhea discussed the recently announced \$900 million allocation of funding from the ARPA as allocated by the SC Legislature. These funds are to be allocated as follows: \$683 million for Community Impact Grants, \$80 million for Regional Solutions Grants, \$20 million for Viability Planning Grants, and \$100 million for Economic Development Projects through the SC Department of Commerce. There will be one funding round with applications due on September 12, 2022. Localities are encouraged to discuss water/ sewer infrastructure projects with COG staff now to prepare for this funding opportunity.

III. Transportation Issues

Mr. Allen presented transportation planning items for the Board's consideration, including proposed amendments to the Catawba Region's Long-Range Transportation Plan's (LRTP) Priority Project List. The amendments include adding 10 repaving projects and 3 intersection improvement projects. A motion was made to accept the list of projects as recommended. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

IV. Consideration of FY2023 Program of Work

The COG's mission is to facilitate growth of the economy, assist in planning for the region's future, support communities in need, and encourage collaboration, communication, and cooperation among leaders and governments of the Catawba Region.

The Program of Work is integrated across three areas: Economic Development, Community Development, and Government Services.

1. Community Development grants have increased 30% FY21, with more grants anticipated in FY2023. Total grants under management include 39 projects for \$29.3 million in process. There have been 15 grant applications submitted for \$20.2 million pending approval.
2. Workforce Development funding through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is declining approximately 5% to \$2.45 million for SC Works operations, training, and administration. The focus for the upcoming year will be on increasing funds deployed for training and exploring new efficiencies and shared services with other workforce areas as funding declines.
3. Catawba Regional has originated (life to date) \$90.45 million in economic development loans, leveraging \$169 million of private capital, and creating or saving over 3,200 jobs. The Economic Development Administration (EDA) provided an \$8.2 million-dollar COVID-19 Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) grant in FY21. The COVID-19 RLF has made 35 loans for \$8.07 million with one loan left to close in FY2023. In FY22, CRCOG successfully completed the de-federalization of the legacy EDA RLF.
4. The COG and Development Corporation have sold 32 Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP) lots generating \$224,000 in gross revenue. Additionally, there are 29 NIP lots under contract, for a projected total of ~60 lots sold in this fiscal year.
5. Transportation Planning currently has \$5.6 million of DOT Guide Share Funds to program annually. In FY23, the COG will participate as a pilot region in the SCDOT data-driven Corridor Investment Strategy.
6. Planning has two different types of contracts with local governments: general technical assistance contracts and project contracts. These contracts cover GIS, comprehensive plans, small area plans, general technical assistance, strategic planning, capital improvement plans, and other types of planning work. In FY23, work will continue on the CARES Act Planning Grant (extended for an additional 12 months).

The Chair explained that a motion was being brought to the full Board from the Executive Committee to approve the CRCOG's Program of Work for FY2023. No second was necessary and the motion passed unanimously.

V. Consideration of FY2023 Operating and Passthrough Budgets

Mr. Imler and Ms. Chitwood presented the FY2023 operating and passthrough budgets which previously had been reviewed by the Executive Committee. Major changes include an increase in the state grant for this fiscal year. The Rural Infrastructure Authority program will also increase because of the state allocation of ARPA funds. The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Planning Grant was new for this fiscal year, and revenue from ARC is anticipated to increase next fiscal year. Union County will provide the matching funds for the ARC planning grant. Two new hires are anticipated in the next fiscal year. Following discussion, the Chair brought a motion for approval of the FY23 budgets from the Executive Committee. Coming from committee, the motion required no second, and the motion to approve the FY2023 COG Operating and Passthrough budgets passed unanimously.

VI. Executive Session pursuant to SC Code Section 30-4-70 for discussion of Contractual Matters related to Catawba Regional Council of Governments

A motion was made, seconded, and passed for the Committee to go to executive session with Mr. Imler, Ms. Chitwood, and Mr. Lewis invited to remain with the Board. At the conclusion of executive session, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved to come out of executive session.

Following executive session, a motion from the Executive Committee was presented by the Chair. The motion was made to recommend amendments to the CRCOG Operating Agreement and Bylaws. The proposed Operating Agreement amendments will 1) modify the population formulas for appointment of COG Board members; 2) revise the methodology by which county dues are assessed, and 3) adjust the frequency with which county dues adjustments are re-calculated. The proposed Bylaws amendments would modify the size and composition of the COG Executive Committee, and would be contingent upon three-fourths of CRCOG member counties approving the proposed Operating Agreement amendments. Coming from committee, the Chair brought the motion to recommend changes to the Operating Agreement, and it was passed unanimously. Mr. Imler will coordinate with each County Administrator to present this information and request for Operating Agreement amendment consideration by each County Council. Mr. Imler will present a report of progress at the September 8, 2022 CRCOG Board meeting.

VI. Regional Roundup

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

Respectfully submitted,



Randy Imler
Executive Director