

CATAWBA REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Catawba Regional Center
Rock Hill, South Carolina
September 10, 2024

A regular meeting of the Catawba Regional Council of Governments Executive Committee was held in-person and by Zoom, at 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 10, 2024.

The following members were present:

Nettie Archie
Joe Branham
Alston DeVenny
Charlene McGriff, Chair
Stacey Moore
Harold Thompson
Chad Williams
Leroy Worthy

Others present were:

Staff
Amy Chitwood
Randy Imler
Tyler Lewis
Eleanor Mixon

Following the Call to Order and Invocation, a motion was made to approve the minutes of the May 7, 2024, COG Executive Committee meeting. The motion was duly seconded and approved unanimously. Consideration of the August 21, 2024, COG Executive Committee special meeting minutes was deferred until after the executive session.

I. Review of FYE24 Internal Financial Statements and 7/31/24 (1 month interim) FY25 Operating Statements

Ms. Chitwood reviewed the FYE24 internal financial statements. She noted that there was an increase in cash of approximately \$700,000 from FYE23 to FYE24, mostly due to interest income. The total fund balance at FYE24 was \$18,892,870. The total revenues over expenses were \$1,319,020, bringing the total fund balance to \$20,211,890 at FYE24. Much of this fund balance is restricted. The Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) fund of \$7,406,346 is defederalized money, but it must be used for an economic development purpose. The COG Board has chosen to restrict these funds as lending assets. Additionally, as a local government, the COG can participate in the state investment pool with cash on hand. The interest income for FY24 through the state investment pool was higher than normal due to higher interest rates on deposits. This resulted in an operating income in the general fund of \$107,843, \$114,047 in the RLF fund, \$125,987 in the SCBLF fund, and \$29,380 in the SCALF fund. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) passthrough revenues and expenses were \$2,133,346. The SC BEST DHEC Assessment Grant passthrough

revenues and expenses were \$312,797. The EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant passthrough revenues and expenses were \$100,597. The COG drew down \$1,002,640 from the EDA COVID-19 RLF grant in FY24. The remainder of the EDA COVID-19 RLF grant will be drawn down in FY25. Estimated total revenues for FY24 exceeded expenses by \$1,319,020, mostly due to the EDA COVID-19 RLF grant. The Board received this report as information.

Additionally, rather than reviewing the one-month interim FY25 operating statements, Ms. Chitwood reviewed the more recent August 31, 2024, (two-month interim) FY25 operating statements. Operating revenues were \$529,476, and operating expenses were \$483,574, with revenues exceeding expenditures by \$45,902. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Brownfields (SC DHEC) passthrough revenues and expenditures totaled \$454,260. EDA COVID-19 RLF grant revenue was \$275,000. The remainder of this grant will be drawn down this month. Total revenues exceeded expenses by \$320,902. The Board received this report as information.

II. Executive Session to discuss Contractual and Services Items per SC Code § 30-4-70

A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously for the Committee to go to executive session with Ms. Mixon, Ms. Chitwood, and Mr. Lewis invited to remain. 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 was made to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2024, COG Executive Committee special meeting. The motion was duly seconded and approved unanimously. A motion was also made to ratify the final Charlotte Water Interbasin Transfer public comment letter dated August 20, 2024. The motion was duly seconded and approved unanimously.

III. Consideration of City of Rock Hill Life Sciences Memorandum of Understanding

Mr. Imler indicated that the City of Rock has looked at the highest and best use of the former potential Panthers' training site. The City has determined that it would like site development to focus on life sciences and is trying to garner community support so that it is well positioned to pursue funding for development. The City of Rock Hill has requested that the COG engage its staff and Board to support efforts to seek or encourage investment by private third parties and the state of South Carolina where such support is not in conflict or dispute with another locality in the Catawba Region. The City and COG staff have developed a draft Memorandum of Understanding to this effect.

Following discussion, a motion was made to approve the City of Rock Hill Life Sciences Memorandum of Understanding with the modifications made by COG staff. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously. The motion will be taken to the full COG Board at its September 19, 2024, quarterly meeting.

IV. Consideration of Proposed Updated to COG Policies due to changes in Code of Federal Regulations (CFR 200)

Mr. Imler and Ms. Chitwood discussed the proposed changes to the COG Operating Policies and Procurement Policy, which are necessary to be in compliance with changes in CFR 200 and to address outdated information and duplication in the policies. The COG has operating, financial, and procurement policies.

a. Operating Policies

Mr. Imler specifically noted that the COG now has a new cybersecurity policy, which is included in the operating policies. When the cybersecurity policy has been finalized, the Executive Committee will be notified. Required changes to the operating policies due to new guidance in CFR 200 include adding a whistleblower policy and cybersecurity policy. The COG will investigate adding a harassment policy to the personnel manual and will notify the Executive Committee of the associated change in the manual.

Following discussion, a motion was made to approve the modified Operating Policies. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

b. Procurement Policy

Ms. Chitwood stated that the major change in the Procurement Policy is the addition of the Conflicts of Interest policy and policy violations, required by CFR 200. Following discussion, a motion was made to approve the revised Procurement Policy. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

The Executive Committee will review the modified policies and notify the COG if there are any concerns. At the next Executive Committee meeting, COG staff will provide an update on the Committee's concerns, specifically as it relates to the addition of a harassment policy.

V. Update on Insurance Settlements and Capital Projects

Mr. Imler informed the Committee that the COG has six new air conditioners and three new cars. The hail damage repairs on the fourth COG car are in progress. Additionally, the COG is working toward repainting the beige portion of the building exterior, again due to hail damage. Parking lot improvements will be coming soon after. Finally, COG staff are considering carpet replacement in the second-floor hallways and offices. The COG received approximately \$180,000 in the insurance settlement that followed the hailstorm earlier this year, which is funding most of the previously mentioned capital projects. However, per the COG's FY25 budget, the COG set aside funds from local resources to fund the remainder of these capital improvements.

In the past several years, the COG administered neighborhood demolition grant projects on behalf of a few localities in the Catawba region. The COG has been engaged in two lawsuits as a result

of one of these projects. The COG settled one lawsuit in 2023. The other lawsuit is ongoing. The Insurance Reserve Fund of South Carolina has taken the case and is defending the COG.

VI. Consideration of Additional Brownfields Properties for Environmental Assessments

Mr. Lewis presented an update on the EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant and the SC Brownfields Environmental Site Testing (BEST) Program. The Executive Committee serves as the Brownfields Task Force for both programs. The Task Force selects top-priority brownfields sites for assessment. Mr. Lewis presented two additional sites for consideration: an abandoned parking lot in the Town of Lockhart in Union County and a suspected former unregulated wastewater treatment plant in York County. Then, Mr. Lewis reviewed the sites currently being assessed in CRCOG's four counties.

Mr. Lewis also mentioned that COG staff presented last month about the SC BEST program at an Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials symposium in Portland, OR, at the request of the SC Department of Environmental Services. Finally, Mr. Lewis noted that Catawba Regional received a 2024 Impact Award from the National Association of Development Organizations for the SC BEST program. Mr. Imler stated that COG staff will submit the SC BEST program as a nominee of the SCCOGs "Project of the Year" award this year.

Following discussion, a motion was made to approve for the two additional sites in Union County and York County to receive assessment grant funds from EPA and/or the SC BEST Program. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

VII. Other Business

Mr. Imler provided the Executive Committee with handouts of several SC Department of Transportation corridors in the Catawba region. The COG will be moving toward selecting projects based on corridors, of which there are 19 in the Catawba region.

Mr. Imler also reviewed the list of grants that the COG Community Development Department is administering as well as applications currently in progress. In addition, the COG will be managing a grant for the City of Rock Hill and will continue overseeing Davis Bacon work for York County.

Lastly, Mr. Imler noted that, as of September 10, EDA approved the COG's final draw under the COVID-19 RLF grant, and the COG will have expended all of its \$10.9 million allocation.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Randy Imler
Executive Director