

CATAWBA REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Catawba Regional Center
Rock Hill, South Carolina
July 22, 2025

A regular meeting of the Catawba Regional Council of Governments Executive Committee was held in person at 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 22, 2025.

The following members were present:

Alston DeVenny
Todd Lumpkin
Charlene McGriff, Chair

Harold Thompson
Chad Williams
Leroy Worthy

Others present included the following:

Staff

Amy Chitwood
Randy Imler

Eleanor Mixon
Elizabeth Morgan

At 12:20 p.m., following the Call to Order and Invocation, a motion was made to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2025, COG Executive Committee meeting. The motion was duly seconded and approved unanimously.

I. Review of FYE25 Internal Financial Report (unaudited)

Ms. Chitwood reviewed the FYE25 unaudited internal financial report. Total revenue was \$3,459,614 as of June 30, 2025; this was about 101% of the budget. Total operating expenses equaled \$2,953,498, which was 97% of the projected budget. This brought net operating revenue to \$506,116 before other income and expenses. The passthroughs and other revenue and expenses included, but were not limited to, a COVID-19 RLF drawdown of \$804,295, insured replacement costs (new air conditioning units), and parking lot improvements. This brought the excess of revenues over expenditures to \$1,120,880 at year end. Approximately \$800,000 of this excess was the last drawdown of the COVID-19 RLF grant. A significant portion of the remaining excess funds was the result of interest income on the revolving loan funds. The Committee received this report as information.

Additional expenses for this coming year may include the hiring of a lender and the renovation of the kitchen, which is the only significant part of the COG office that has not been updated.

II. Update on Workforce Housing Study / RFP Process

Mr. Imler and Ms. Morgan provided an update on the workforce housing study. The stakeholder group met last week for an update on the current status and to discuss next steps. The group has raised \$270,000 in funding for this study. All four counties in the Catawba region as well as municipalities and private sector and special purpose district representatives have agreed to

participate in this study. The next step is to hire a consultant and begin the study. Ms. Morgan reminded the Executive Committee that this study will target workforce housing, which is targeting households with 80-150% of the area median income (AMI). The stakeholder group established a small group of approximately 12 participants to develop the request for proposals (RFP) for a consultant. The RFP committee will meet this Thursday to review the draft RFP. The COG staff anticipates having the RFP ready to bid by August 22, 2025, with a goal of signing a contract and beginning the study in October. The study is anticipated to take approximately six months, so it should be available in the spring of 2026.

III. Update on Charlotte Water Interbasin Transfer Request

Mr. Imler provided an update on the Charlotte Water interbasin transfer (IBT) request. He provided the Committee with a copy of a North Carolina bill, which recently passed the North Carolina General Assembly, that establishes a two-year moratorium on large IBT requests while a study of the IBT process is conducted and recommendations are developed. Due to this bill, Charlotte Water's IBT request is on hold, but Charlotte Water can continue the background work during the moratorium period in order to file the IBT request application at the end of the two-year period.

The South Carolina process for approving IBT requests differs from that of both North Carolina and Georgia. Mr. Imler communicated with the SCDES Executive Director about the possibility of South Carolina coordinating with North Carolina while North Carolina conducts its study.

IV. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage Policy and Potential AI tools for use at CRCOG

Mr. Imler discussed the proposed draft Artificial Intelligence Usage Policy. Before the COG moves forward with using AI tools, the COG needs to establish a general AI use policy to set parameters on the staff's use of AI.

A COG staff member is attending an AI Academy to be educated on the various AI platforms that the COG can utilize. The COG will offer similar guidance to interested localities in the region. In January 2025, the Catawba region's city and county managers indicated that AI is an important issue right now. At this time, the COG is investigating the GovAI platform and a Microsoft Copilot platform that has a firewall component.

The Executive Committee members will communicate any comments that they have on the AI Usage Policy to Mr. Imler. Then, Mr. Imler will revise and condense the AI Usage Policy and provide the updated version to the Executive Committee for further consideration.

V. Topic Discussion for 2026 Forum

Mr. Imler indicated that the next Elected Officials Forum will likely take place on January 8, 2026. The COG will probably partner with the Chambers of Commerce throughout the Catawba region again. Mr. Imler asked the Executive Committee if there are any issues or topics that the COG

should consider for the forum theme. Mr. Imler asked the Committee members to let him know if they have any recommendations.

VI. Board Member Engagement – Board meeting time, location, etc.

Mr. Imler indicated that the May 2025 COG Board meeting lacked a quorum. With this in mind, Mr. Imler asked the Committee if 4:00 p.m. is the best time of day for the COG Board to meet. Mr. Imler said that other COGs have Board meetings with lunch or dinner. The Committee decided that if the attendance still is not good at the next couple of COG Board meetings, then the COG will survey the Board members regarding the meeting day, time, and location / venue.

The Executive Committee indicated that a higher priority is addressing the issue of Board members who do not attend meetings. The COG Chair recently sent a letter to a locality whose representative on the Board has not been present for over three years.

VII. Other Business

Mr. Imler indicated that the COG won NADO Aliceann Wohlbruck Impact Awards this year for the Town of Jonesville Streetscape Improvements and the Chester County Emergency Response GIS Application projects. He provided the press releases to the Executive Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Randy Imler
Executive Director