



MINUTES

LOWER SAVANNAH COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Virtual
May 8th, 2025

LSCOG Executive Board Members present:

Aiken County: Danny Feagin (Treasurer), Ron Felder, Gary Bunker (alt), John Simmons
Allendale County: Willa Jennings (Vice Chair), Tawni Major (alt), William Robinson (alt)
Bamberg County: Sharon Hammond, Gerald Wright (Chairman)
Barnwell County: Thomas L. Williams, David Kenner (alt), Freddie Houston
Calhoun County: John McLaughlin, Josh Rabon (alt), James Haigler
Orangeburg County: Vernon Stephens, Harry Wimberly (alt), Joseph Garvin (alt)

LSCOG Executive Board Members excused:

Orangeburg County: Michael Butler (Past Chairman)

LSCOG Executive Board Members absent:

Allendale County: John Chaney

Other Board Members Present:

Aiken County: Lessie B. Price
Bamberg County: Wilma Edmonds
Barnwell County: Andy Hogg, Enterick Lee

LSCOG staff present:

Dr. William Molnar, Nora Sanders, Ashley Baker, Jessica Coleman, Sterling Howell

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Willa Jennings (Vice Chair) called the Executive Committee Meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

INVOCATION

Vice Chair Jennings gave the invocation.

ROLL CALL

Dr. William Molnar (Executive Director) conducted a roll call. A quorum was present.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Dr. Gerald Wright (Chairman) requested the adoption of the agenda.

Mr. Freddie Houston made the motion to adopt the agenda, seconded by Mr. John Simmons. The motion carried unanimously.

SPROUTWOOD TRACE PROJECT

Mr. Sterling Howell (Housing Program Manager) presented the Sproutwood Trace Project and requested that \$560,000 of HOME funds be approved for the project. Members of the Board questioned if a public hearing was held for the residents of Barnwell. Barnwell Board members stated

there have been a couple of community meetings and the current location has received pushback. After some discussion, the board members requested additional information be brought to the board, such as an alternative location, the total project cost, if any other funds are involved, is the local housing authority involved in the project, and who will manage the property.

A motion to table the item was made until further information is acquired, perhaps at the June 2025 board meeting. The motion was made by Mr. William Robinson and seconded by Mr. Vernon Stephens. The motion carried unanimously.

BUDGET REVIEW FOR FY 2025-2026

Dr. Molnar and Ms. Ashley Baker (Finance Director) presented the proposed budget FY 2025-2026. They presented a budget with an expected decrease in revenue in all program areas. Some of the corresponding expenditure decreases include salaries/fringe and Aging programs and services. Dr. Molnar explained due to the current situation at the federal level, which include delayed continuing resolution, proposed program cuts and entire agencies being dismantled due to D.O.G.E., it is impossible to predict a firm budget for the upcoming year. The Board should anticipate several budget revisions during the FY 2025-2026 budget year.

Mr. Danny Feagin (Treasurer) made the motion to approve the Budget Review for FY 2025-2026, seconded by Mr. Simmons. The motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Molnar discussed:

- The Administrations “Skinny Budget” that significantly affects all federal discretionary funding, including the proposed elimination of the Economic Development Administration (EDA), HUD Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME funds (homelessness), and USDA Rural Development programs.
- The National Association of Workforce Boards cited a proposed 22.6 % cut in all non-defense discretionary funds, including the Workforce program. The proposal is for a consolidated single programmatic grant with a reduction of \$1.64 billion.
- Older Americans Act Programs are to be moved from the Administration for Community Living (in HSS) and split between two other departments. In the “Skinny Budget”, Respite Services, Medicare Counseling, Ombudsman Services, and Elderly Rights/Legal are to be eliminated.
- Federal funds from the approved March 14th, 2025 Continuing Resolution have not been released, and we do not know when we will receive over 50% of our expected funds. We assume that there will be significantly less aging programmatic and contract (meal & transit) funds in the next federal fiscal year.
- LSCOG conducted a Long Range Transportation Plan public meeting in Sandy Run on Tuesday, May 6th, 2025. The next public meeting will be held in Holly Hill tonight, Thursday, May 8th, 2025.
- The next Board meeting is June 12th, 2025, at the Aiken County Government Complex Sandlapper Room.

ADJOURN

The being no further discussion, Mr. William Robinson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Joseph Garvin. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Wright adjourned the meeting at 1:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William Molnar, Ph.D.
Executive Director