



Southwest Missouri Council of Governments

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 23, 2023

9:00 a.m.

The Library Center 4653 S. Campbell Ave., Springfield, MO

Attendance:

Members:

John Gardner – Saddlebrooke
Dawne Gardner – Kimberling City
Dennis Wiggins – Taney County Partnership
Cindy Stephens – OTC
Stan Whitehurst – Webster County
Neil Brady – Bartlett & West
Andrew Novinger – Anderson Engineering
Bob Senninger – Lawrence County
Randy Owens – Webster County
Devin Sonnenfelt – White River Valley Electric
Ken McClure – Springfield
Jerry Harman – H2Ozarks
John Crawford – Dallas County
Joe Kelley – Mt Vernon
Callie Linville – CU
Chris Tabor – Republic
Todd Wiesehan – Christian County
Steve Childers – Ozark
Chris Daugherty - Hurley
Kristen Haseltine – Show Me Christian County
Hollie Elliott – Dallas County
Brittni Bates – Mt Vernon
Allen Kunkel – MSU
Mark Colussy – Branson
Jennifer Luna-Thompson – Branson
Duane Lavery – GRO Marshfield
Tina Didreckson – Crane
Wayne Blades – Stone
Sam Rost – Marshfield

Attending on Zoom:

Kerry Nelson – Fremont Hills
Tommy VanHorn – Battlefield
Penny Bowers – Diggins
Chris Weiner – Monett
Scott Starrett – Taney County
Luke Davis – Fremont Hills
Melissa Mau – Ash Grove
Cameron Smith – Ozark
Megan Bischof – Ozark
Brad Erwin – Paragon
Jonas Arjes – Taney County Partnership
Trel Ford –
Tracy Slagle – Liberty Utilities

Partners and Guests:

Payton Ruddy – Congressman Alford’s Office
(on Zoom)
Erin Engelmeyer – Senator Hawley’s Office
Ashley Venolia – USDA RD
Alex Cobb – SeniorAge
Alice Wingo – CFO (on Zoom)
Beth Schaller – MoDOT
Kim Ader – MoDOT
Frank Miller - MoDOT
Ronda Burnett – MDC
Andrea Sitzes – Arvest
Theresa Sampaio – DED
David Knaut – OTO
Stacy Burks – Red Cross (on Zoom)
Yolanda Lorge – Grupo Latinoamericano

Staff:

Jason Ray
Jane Hood
Aishwarya Shrestha
Courtney Pinkham
Kelsi Burton
Jake Phillips

Krissy Dickens
Michael Kohler
Emma Horn

Open Meeting

1. Call to Order – Cindy Stephens
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Introductions and Announcements
4. Approval of August 23, 2023, Meeting Agenda – Cindy Stephens
Steve Childers motioned, Allen Kunkel seconded to approve the August 23, 2023, Agenda. Motion carried.
5. Approval of June 28, 2023, Meeting Minutes— Cindy Stephens
Jerry Harmon motioned, and Chris Tabor seconded to approve the June 28, 2023, Minutes. Motion carried.

Legislative Reports

-Erin Engelmeyer – Senator Hawley’s Office

Senator Hawley attended the State Fair and held the Ag Council Forum. He has also introduced a bipartisan bill, Ban Stock Trading for Government Officials Act.

-Payton Ruddy – Congressman Alford’s Office

Congressman Alford has been traveling the state and attended the State Fair. He will be stopping in several communities in the SMOG region on September 5th through the 7th for town halls in Marshfield, Bolivar, Buffalo, etc. The locations and dates are on their social media. You can reach out to Payton for more information.

Business

1. Transportation Needs Priority – Jason Ray & Aishwarya; included in the meeting packet.
Aishwarya reviewed the transportation needs that were shared in the packet of information. The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) has recommended these Road & Bridge and Bicycle & Pedestrian lists as top priority. The lists will be taken to the MoDOT SW Transportation District Meeting on 11/30/23.
Todd Wiesehan motioned, and Joe Kelley seconded to approve the Transportation Priorities List as included in the meeting packet. Motion carried.
2. SMOG Dues Rate Proposal – Jason Ray; included in the meeting packet.
Jason reviewed the current SMOG dues structure and the various proposed future dues options that the Executive Committee has reviewed, explaining that the current dues are not

enough to cover grant matches required of SMCOG. In 2006 when SMCOG held a Strategic Planning session, it was recommended the dues revenues be looked at. We currently bring in \$59,000 local dues revenue. This year we have \$80,000 in State & Federal match requirements. So we have at least a \$20,000 shortfall just in the basic service grants. Steve Childers stated that there has been a lot of discussion regarding the dues increase with the Executive Committee. He is an advocate for the increase and is in favor of going directly to Phase 3.... "Ripping off the bandage". He continued on to say SMCOG has not ever had a dues increase and it is important that we are able to meet our grant match to acquire existing and future grant funds. He also felt the need to have the counties help by paying dues for the smaller (under 300 pop) communities.

Chris Daugherty stated that he appreciated that SMCOG did take into consideration the smaller communities.

Jason Ray asked the Board to review the material and it will be voted on September 27th, 2023 at the Annual Meeting

3. Program Updates – Jason Ray & Staff; included in meeting packet.

Jason mentioned that HUD has issued their new LMI update. Jason has staff working on a spreadsheet for our region. This data has not been updated since 2017. Brandon Jenson with CDBG is working on clarification that a community can receive more than 1 demolition grant. Thomas Cunningham had to miss today's meeting due to a SEMA conference in Jefferson City. Jason gave his update. Aishwarya Shrestha, Kelsi Burton and Jake Phillips gave updates. Their information is in the meeting packet.

Other Business – Cindy Stephens

None

Partner Updates

-USDA – Ashley Venolia

Ashley shared that they have a new director, Logan McGee who is housed in their West Plains office. USDA is switching to the 2020 Census data starting in September of this year.

-MoDOT – Beth Schaller/Frank Miller

Frank shared that their unfunded needs list is out for comment till the end of August. MoDOT has a Local Public Agency (LPA) basic training course. This is good for anyone applying for a TAP Grant, federal grants, etc. More details are listed on their website. They are taking applications for Railroad Advance warning signs which is an open cycle. MoDOT is also organizing meetings for handling the 2020 Census data and using it to decide urban boundaries. (Urban is considered 5000 and above population). It can affect on-system and off-system bridges. Frank will be happy to meet with you if you have questions. Beth commented that the Governor signed into law the Hands-Free Act, which prohibits drivers from holding a phone with any part of their body, watching the screen, or typing while driving. They can still use hands free phone function while driving, this goes into effect on August 28th, 2023. Beth gave some statistics; one mile of major road resurfacing is now costing \$250,000 and the average cost to work on a bridge is over \$1.2 million which does not include the large bridges, with snow removal costing \$52 million per year.

-OTO – Mark Knaut

Mark commented that they have received \$5.5 million in grant funding for sidewalks and trails, this includes parts of the Chadwick Flyer trail.

-MDC – Ronda Burnett

Ronda stated that she has 2 programs, the first is free tree plants for public lands. She will be at the Historic Greene County Courthouse tomorrow discussing this program. The second program is housed within the MO Prairie Foundation Grow Native Program, supported by MDC. They offer a baseline credentialing program for individuals who know how to work with native plants.

-MoDED – Theresa Sampaio

Theresa reported that the Business Community Solutions (BCS) team is splitting into two teams, and they will have separate managers. One business and the other community. This is because the business program is very different than the community programs. In the long run will be beneficial to our communities.

-SeniorAge – Alex Cobb

Alex mentioned that most of the Senior Centers also serve as cooling centers on hot days. Anyone can come for free, but if under age 60 and want food or beverages, they will have to purchase those. The Give 5 program, which started in Springfield, is now overseen by SeniorAge for the SMCOG Region. If you are interested in starting the program in your community, let Alex know. Alex also reminded everyone that the Drury Nonprofit Leadership Conference registration is open. The event is 10/26/23 at the Double Tree Hotel in Springfield. You can get additional information on the Drury home page.

-Red Cross – Stacy Burks

Stacy stated we have had a lot of storms in our region recently. She wants to remind county officials that if you have new staff to make sure they know to reach out directly to their county emergency management director and they will then reach out to the Red Cross as needed. Each year the Red Cross of SW MO does the Sound the Alarm campaign to install smoke alarms. This year they are partnering with the city of Sparta.

Member Updates

Andrea Sitzes stated that the Missouri Economic Development Council (MEDC) is getting ready for next year's legislative session and would like to hear any policy concerns.

Wayne Blades stated that the Jasper County communication vehicle is now transferred and in Stone County. It will be housed in the new Health Department building with Emergency Management. They passed their old vehicle to the Central Crossing Fire Dept.

Callie Linville stated that CU is at their Peak Demand Load. If everyone can just be mindful, one degree makes a difference.

Mark Colussy commented wildfires are happening all over. This is a good reminder to look at our Emergency Management plans.

Adjourn

Next SMCOG Annual Board Meeting will be held on September 27th, 2023, at the Efactory in Springfield.

Steve Childers, Secretary

Date Approve