



**Southwest Missouri Council of Governments
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 25, 2021**

9:00 a.m.

Zoom

Attendance:

Members:

Chris Coulter- Greene County
Andrea Sitzes – Show Me Christian Co
Melissa Mau – Ash Grove
Cindy Stephens – OTC
Chris Berndt - SMESO
Cary Charles – OTC
Howard Fisk – Fisk Transportation
Todd Wiesehan – Christian County
Hollie Elliott – Dallas Co Economic Dev
Bill Monday - Buffalo
Chena Simmons – Branson
Joel Hornickel – Branson
Stan Whitehurst – Webster County
Randy Owens – Webster County
Dana Louderbaugh – Fair Grove
John Forrester – Allgeier, Martin
Devin Fisher – White River Elec. Coop
Jared Rasmussen – Olsson
Sam Rost – Marshfield
Hank Smythe – Stone County
Stephen Short – Fair Grove
Lindsay Reichart – Paragon Architecture
Jason Gage – Springfield
Jim Furgerson - SEMA
Joan Doss – Christian County

Allen Kunkel - MSU

Brendan Griesemer - Springfield
Cindy Robbins – Nixa
Martha Smartt – Strafford
Jon Holmes - Aurora
Bob Senninger – Lawrence County
Ken McClure - Springfield
Kristi Beattie – Sapp Design
Mark Maples – Stone County
Megan Bischof – Ozark
Nancy Edson – Esterly, Schneider
Neil Brady – Bartlett & West
Steve Schultz – Bartlett & West
Shawn Barry – Toth & Assoc
Stephen Short – Fair Grove
Steve Walensky – Cassville
Tommy VanHorn – Strafford
Natasha Longpine - OTO

Partners and Guests:

Erin Engelmeyer – Sen. Hawley’s Office
Beth Schaller - MoDOT
Jeremy Pruett – Congressman Long’s Office
Laura Laramore – Mo Higher Ed
Zeke Hall – MoDot
Stacy Burks – Red Cross
Ashley Venolia – USDA RD
Ron Seyl – MoDED
Pamela Duitsman – MO Extension
Dennis Wiggins – Ozark Reg Career Center

Andy Schiller – MO DNR
MO Rep. Travis Smith – District 155
Alex Woodson – Springfield CoC
Dan Waddlington – Sen. Blunt’s Office
Rob Hunt - MoDNR
Theresa Sampaio – Mo DED
Alice Wingo – CFO
Sherri Rhuems – Joplin WIB
Staff:
Jason Ray

Jane Hood
Lindsay Farrow
Dorothy Wittorff-Sandgren
Aishwarya Shrestha
Thomas Cunningham
Lexi Mason
Courtney Pinkham
Chris Kempke
Hanna Schinstock

Open Meeting

Introductions and Announcements— Chris Coulter

Approval of August 25, 2021 Meeting Agenda—Chris Coulter

Dana Louderbaugh motioned, and Sam Rost seconded to approve the revised Agenda for the August 25, 2021 meeting. Motion Carried.

Approval of June 23, 2021 Meeting Minutes— Chris Coulter

Bill Monday motioned, and Dana Louderbaugh seconded to approve the Minutes for the June 23, 2021 meeting. Motion Carried.

U.S. Legislative Reports

-Dan Waddlington – Senator Blunt’s Office

Senator Blunt voted for the Infrastructure Bill which passed the Senate. He will not vote to pass the \$3.5 trillion Budget bill. The House would like to pass both bills at the same time as a package.

-Erin Engelmeyer – Senator Hawley’s Office

Afghanistan is now being focused on. They are working around the clock to help some Americans get to safety before the 8/31/21 withdrawal deadline. Senator Hawley voted no on the Infrastructure Bill. He thought it was too much spending with current inflation and would continue to drive up prices. Less than 1/10th of the money was for actual infrastructure. Her office number is 417-869-4433 if they can be of assistance.

-Jeremy Pruett – Congressman Long’s Office

The House passed the budget bill last night. Has not passed the Infrastructure bill. Congressman Long will probably not vote for it as not much for infrastructure.

State Legislative Reports

State Rep. District 155 - Rep Travis Smith

Broadband Sub-committee has been working all summer and have determined that 18% of Missourians do not have good access to the internet. There are 40 electric cooperatives in the state which would be a good way to get service to rural areas. Only 8 cooperatives have internet service at this time. We need to encourage the cooperatives to add the service.

Business Meeting

1. Recommendation to approve Bike/Ped Regional Priority Needs List – TAC Members – Jason Ray

This is part of our region's MoDOT regional transportation prioritization process for the rural part of our region.

Bob Senninger motioned, and Howard Fisk seconded approval of the Bike/Ped Regional Priority Needs List. Motion carried.

2. Program Reports – Jason Ray & Staff

See Program Report for full list of activity that was emailed out prior to meeting.

Census will release data the end of September.

Revolving loan fund documents are being reviewed by attorney and will then be submitted to EDA for approval.

Partner Updates

-USDA Rural Development – Ashley Venolia

They are still working from home. Most funds have been allocated so request will have to go to national office for approval. There is a new rural healthcare program. Details are forthcoming.

-MO Dept of Transportation – Beth Schaller

The construction program is very busy with repair and maintenance. They are working on unfunded needs priority list.

-Ozarks Transportation Organization (OTO) – Natasha Longpine

Working on Multi-Modal unfunded needs list, STIP priorities and taking public comment on their Long-Range Transportation Plan. Will be voting on it in September. Go to

<https://tinyurl.com/Destination2045>

-MO Dept of Natural Resources – Andy Schiller

Rob Hunt was recently appointed to the Springfield office. He previously worked in Jefferson City for the Director's office.

-Ozark Region Workforce Development Board – Dennis Wiggins

Sally Payne was recently name as their permanent director. They continue to hold hiring events including TSA in attendance. Pop-Up events are being held in the surrounding counties.

They were recently awarded a 3 year, \$3million grant from the Dept of Labor working with the Dept of Corrections.

-Dept of Higher Education - Workforce Development - Laura Laramore

Job Center Connect Town Hall meeting will be held on 10/15/21 at 8:30am at the Double Tree Hilton. It is to connect with the professional workforce determine how to better serve.

-MO Dept of Economic Development – Theresa Sampaio

Looking to connect with local communities on DED projects and programs. Companies that are interested in exporting or are already exporting, DED International team can assist.

-SeniorAge- Alex Cobb

Senior Centers continue to be open to the public, serving meals, etc. Offering limited programs.

-Community Foundation of the Ozarks – Alice Wingo

They have partnered with the Coover Charitable Foundation to set up Coover Regional Vaccination Initiative to encourage vaccinations. Affiliate foundations can receive money as their vaccinations rates go up. Have started sessions on “How Philanthropy Can Affect Workforce Development.” To find other grant opportunities go to

<http://www.cfozarks.org/find-grant-scholarships#hero-end>

-American Red Cross – Stacy Burks

They are responding to emergencies coast to coast. September is Sickle Cell Awareness month. Working with VA to help individuals who are affected by the situation in Afghanistan.

Red Cross has smoke detectors to give out.

Member Updates

Dana Louderbaugh reported the filing deadline for municipal candidates has changed. It starts 12/7/21 and ends 12/28/21. The Fair Grove Heritage Reunion will be 9/25-9/26.

This is Dana’s last meeting as she is retiring the end of September. She introduced her successor, Chrystal Warren, new city clerk.

Chris Coulter thanked Dana for all her years of service to SMCOG.

Adjourn

Randy Owens motioned, and Dana Louderbaugh seconded. Motion Carried.

Todd Wiesehan, Secretary/Treasurer

Date Approve