

Land of Sky Regional Council

March 27, 2019

Regular Meeting



Please mute all electronic devices, including cell phones, laptops, tablets, and recorders. Delegates are requested to state their names when moving on orders of business. Thank you!

AGENDA

Special Presentation – Regional Transportation Update from MPO and RPO Staff (12:45pm)

- I. Call to Order (1:15pm)
- II. Invocation
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
- IV. Roll Call
- V. Modification and Approval of Agenda
- VI. Public Comment
- VII. Recognition of Special Guests
- VIII. Chairman's Comments and Roundtable
- IX. Approval of Minutes from the February Regular Meeting
- X. Consideration and Approval of Consent Agenda Items
- XI. Presentation
 - A. Strategic Plan Implementation Update – Justin Hembree, Executive Director
- XII. Old Business
- XIII. Annual Meeting
 - A. Election of Council Officers and Executive Committee
- XIV. Executive Director's Report
 - A. Communication and Programs Committee
 - B. Legislative Relations Committee
 - C. Vacant Board of Delegates Positions
- XV. Important Dates
- XVI. Adjournment



BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

- Subject:** Transportation Projects Update
- Item Number:** Special Presentation
- Responsible Party:** Lyuba Zuyeva, FBRMPO Director and Vicki Eastland, LOSRPO Coordinator/
LOSRC Economic and Community Development
- Attachment(s):**
- Background:** Lyuba Zuyeva (FBRMPO) and Vicki Eastland (LOSRPO) will provide a brief update on the status of major transportation projects in our region as programmed in the Draft 2020-2029 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for the next ten years in our region. An overview of projects in Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania Counties will be provided. Land of Sky Regional Council is the Lead Planning Agency for the FBRMPO and the Land of Sky RPO. Additional information at
<https://www.ncdot.gov/initiatives-policies/Transportation/stip/development/Documents/2020-2029-draft-stip.pdf>
www.fbrmpo.org; <http://www.landofsky.org/rpo.html>
- Staff Recommendation:** Informational Item
- Suggested Motion(s):** No Action



BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

- Subject:** February Board of Delegates Meeting Minutes
- Item Number:** X. Approval of Minutes from the February Regular Meeting
- Responsible Party:** Zia Rifkin, Administrative Services
- Attachment(s):** Minutes from the February 2019 Meeting
- Background:** A quorum was present to conduct business at the February 2019 meeting and the minutes provide a recap of the special presentation regarding North Carolina's Statewide Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Master Plan. The business meeting included a presentation of Land of Sky's Employee Service Awards, recognizing staff for their service milestones with the organization. Under New Business, the Land of Sky Strategic Plan 2019-2021 and the Nominating Committee for 2019/2020 Officers' Slate and Executive Committee members were affirmed by the Board.
- Staff Recommendation:** Recommend acceptance of the February 2019 meeting minutes.
- Suggested Motion(s):** Move to approve the February minutes as submitted

Meeting of
Land of Sky Regional Council Board of Delegates
February 27, 2019

Minutes

Special Presentation – Jennifer Haynie and Francine Durso with North Carolina’s Department of Environmental Quality provided a presentation on the Statewide Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Master Plan; providing background about the Division and funding that is available for local governments. Francine Durso noted that the funding comes from the EPA, which comes through the state from the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) to make loans to local jurisdictions. The other funding comes through the General Assembly (GA) and varies from year to year. A chart was presented, which showed spending on water infrastructure, showing the level of funding provided by the federal government, which was about 4% of what was spent nationwide in 2014. It was noted that the bulk of the money comes from ratepayers for water and sewer system improvements. Recognizing there is so little money, the state created a nine-member board to oversee water and sewer infrastructure funding. In the state, there is a need, over the next 20 years, which equals about \$26 million to provide loans to local governments to improve and upgrade water and sewer infrastructure. The state wants these utilities to be viable and it is the local governments who ultimately decide how much money is allocated towards water/sewer system infrastructure. Francine Durso shared that assistance is provided with financing and information is shared on how local governments can look to their rates to assure those would be able to pay for some of the necessary upgrades.

Chair Harris shared his curiosity about smaller jurisdictions (in Madison/Transylvania) and how they provide water/sewer services. Mike Hawkins noted that only the City of Brevard and the Town of Rosman have water/sewer systems. Nancy Allen shared that Madison County is similar with the Towns of Marshall and Mars Hill providing water/sewer service. Mayor Volk noted that the City of Hendersonville has its own system.

Discussion occurred regarding the local municipalities/jurisdictions that have used the loan system provided through NCDEQ.

Francine Durso reviewed a chart of utilities in the state and their water and sewer utility operating margins. It was noted that the chart is for the operating expenses local governments face when they operate their own water/sewer systems. It was shared that in higher, more densely populated areas, the length of pipe paid for is smaller than in less populated areas, where more pipe is required to reach customers on the system.

Jennifer Haynie shared that financing water/sewer systems is a major challenge for all local governments. Many local governments are in a reactive stance around making repairs to water/sewer systems. She noted that there is hope to shift from that reactive stance to a proactive one. One way to do that is to set aside funding regularly to make the requisite repairs when those are needed. This would require local governments to accurately assess their water/sewer system needs. Jennifer Haynie reviewed resources available to local governments, which can help determine infrastructure needs, adequate billing levels, and development of viable systems. She also reviewed various non-construction grant programs available to local governments, which could be used to assess current water/sewer systems; develop capital improvement plans; and, determine if consolidation would be a viable route to pursue. Finally, there is a state run program, without the numerous federal requirements, that local governments could use to assess their current systems.

- I. Call to Order – Chairman Larry Harris called the meeting to order at approximately 1:15pm.
- II. Invocation – Chairman Harris gave the invocation.
- III. Pledge of Allegiance – All stood as Chairman Harris led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- IV. Roll Call – Justin Hembree called the roll. The following members were present: Matt Wechtel, Mike Hawkins, George Goosmann, Jonathan Kaniipe, Larry Harris, Maggie Tuttle, Albert Gooch, Bob Davy, Barbara Volk, Nancy McKinley, Nancy Allen, John Mitchell, George Morosani, Bob Tomasulo, and, Gaylyn

Justice. The following guests were present: Francine Durso, Jennifer Haynie, Josh Harrold, Nathan Bennett, Robin Ramsey, and April Riddle. Justin Hembree announced a quorum was present to conduct business.

V. Modification and Approval of Agenda – The agenda was presented with no modification requested

Jonathan Kaniipe moved to approve the agenda as presented. Bob Davy seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.

VI. Public Comment – No comments were received from the public.

VII. Recognition of Special Guests – Chairman Harris recognized Nathan Bennett, April Riddle and Robin Ramsey.

VIII. Chairman's Comments and Round Table – George Morosani – Shared that the economy is very vibrant. Maggie Tuttle – Shared that things are going well in the Town of Black Mountain. The Town is working hard on the water situation. Nancy Allen – Shared that in the Town of Marshall some of the old buildings are coming to life again and things are going well. Jonathan Kaniipe – Shared that the Town of Biltmore Forest is still working on water. Bob Tomasulo – Shared that the next quarterly meeting of the Regional Aging Advisory Council is April 11 and the meeting will be held in Transylvania County. The topic of the meeting will be certified nursing assistants as there is a severe shortage of them in the region. On May 15, the Director of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services will be speaking at LOSRC on the topic of Medicaid expansion. Nathan Bennett – Shared that he is the newly appointed Manager for the Town of Mars Hill. April Riddle – Shared that on April 1st, Workers Comp rates in the state are going to drop significantly. John Mitchell – Shared that Henderson County is deep in its budget process. Nathan Ramsey – Announced that the region would receive a \$400 thousand grant to support early childhood education in the region. The funds will help to provide additional childcare slots by training folks in early childhood education.

Discussion occurred about the state potentially abolishing the ABC system and privatizing it. Nathan Ramsey shared that Representative McGrady is sort of leading the effort. He noted that the ABC system was created to maximize revenue and to limit consumption of alcoholic beverages. John Mitchell shared that one of the big issues is that spirits can be made but not consumed on premises. Discussion also occurred about profits on liquor, some of which remain with the county where the sale originated; but the rest go to the state. Profits help to pay locally for schools, etc. It was noted that there is not a bill for review yet. The bill that could be proposed would privatize liquor sales. The intention is that city/municipalities would be held harmless for losing the revenue. Nathan Ramsey shared that his only experience regarding bills around liquor in the GA was a request from the City of Asheville to allow liquor tasting in local ABC stores. Robin Ramsey shared that there would be three separate bills, one to privatize the system, the second would be a distillery bill and the third would be the omnibus bill to put all of the regulations in one bill. Chair Harris commented that current regulations/processes is very cumbersome and some revision is needed to simplify. It was also noted that it would be very disruptive to close down the ABC stores.

IX. Approval of Minutes from the January Regular Meeting – *George Goosmann moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Bob Davy seconded and the motion carried without further discussion.*

X. Consideration and Approval of Consent Agenda Items –

XI. Presentations/Work Session –

A. Land of Sky Regional Council Employee Service Awards –

Justin Hembree shared that every year, Council recognizes employees who have hit milestones in their service to the organization. The following LOSRC staff were recognized with Employee Service Awards:

Ruth Price was recognized for five years of service to the Council.

Nancy Hogan, Project C.A.R.E. Coordinator was recognized for five years of service. Nancy Hogan shared about Project C.A.R.E., which provides services to caregivers/families of dementia patients. She is one of six Project C.A.R.E. coordinators in the state.

Jon Beck and Stacy Friesland were each recognized for 15 years of service to Council.

Geri Ballew was recognized for 20 years of service. She works with Mountain Mobility, helping to build the system into what it is today.

XII. Old Business –

XIII. New Business –

A. Land of Sky Regional Council- Strategic Plan 2019-2021 – Justin Hembree shared that the draft Strategic Plan is included in today's meeting packet. He directed Council's attention to the additional action item added at Action Item 2.4 (under Goal 2.1). This action item would develop a system of liaisons between the Board of Delegates and additional boards housed under LOSRC to improve information sharing (Workforce Development, MPO/RPO, etc.). He noted that staff recommends the Board approve the Strategic Plan and then implementation can begin; the survey is currently being designed. Justin Hembree recognized the Strategic Planning Committee for their efforts to develop the current document.

George Goosmann moved to approve the Strategic Plan, including the additional action item, and begin implementation. Bob Davy seconded and the motion was approved upon a vote.

Bob Davy noted that the Strategic Plan is meant to be an integral part of the work accomplished for the region by LOSRC.

Chair Harris noted that the Strategic Plan provides a framework and pathway for Justin Hembree to evaluate staff and the work that is done by the organization.

B. Nominating Committee – Chair Harris communicated to the Board that Nancy Allen, Albert Gooch and Bob Davy have agreed to serve as the Nominating Committee for Officers and Executive Committee members for 2019/2020. He noted that the Nominating Committee would present the slate of Officers/Executive Committee nominations at the March Board meeting.

George Morosani moved to approve the Nominating Committee members. Albert Gooch seconded and the motion carried as all were in favor.

Justin Hembree shared the slate developed to date: Larry Harris to continue as Chairman, Barbara Volk, nominated for Vice Chair, Patrick Fitzsimmons to continue service as Secretary; Mike Hawkins to continue as Treasurer; and, Bob Tomasulo as the representative for Aging Services. The recommendations presented next month would also include Nancy Allen to serve as the Minority Representative on the Executive Committee. He noted too, that work is being done with the counties to fill the vacancies on the Regional Council for minority representation. He shared that the Nominating Committee has mostly been working through emails; however, a meeting was held with Mayor Volk to determine her interest in serving as Vice Chair.

XIV. Executive Director's Report –

A. Audit for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2018 – Justin Hembree shared that Cannon & Company presented the audit for Fiscal Year ending June 30 2018 to the Executive Committee. He communicated about the Chatham Mills issue and noted that LOSRC would be responding to the Local Government Commission (LGC) about the issue. Chair Harris emphasized that these funds are not a liability for the organization as the EPA has gifted the funds to LOSRC. He explained that \$900,000 was lent to Chatham Mills Ventures in Winston-Salem to develop a mixed use development. Currently, Chatham Mills is not making payments on the loan as they also have a HUD loan, which requires first repayment. LOSRC is second in line for repayment. The issue for LOSRC is that the monies are currently a debit on the books for the loan to

Chatham Mills. George Goosmann noted that the organization is pursuing the collection of these funds. Justin Hembree communicated that LOSRC is working with the LGC to accurately reflect these funds. He noted also that this loan has been on the books for ten years and had not been flagged by LGC reviewers previously. Any questions about this matter should be directed to Justin Hembree. Chair Harris mentioned looking at new audio equipment for Board meetings. Justin Hembree shared that the audio portion of the refurb could be handled by the end of the current fiscal year.

B. 2019 NCARCOG Legislative Day – Justin Hembree shared that the NCARCOG Legislative Day is Wednesday, March 27 (also the date of the next Council meeting). He invited Delegates to join LOSRC staff, who will be attending the event. The local delegation is planning to meet with legislators on the evening of the Legislative Day.

C. 2019 BBQ Event – Justin Hembree shared that staff is currently searching for a new (bigger) venue to hold the Annual BBQ event (planned for Wednesday, July 24, 2019). This has turned into a great event for the region.

XV. Important Dates –

A. Net Inclusion 2019 – Local and State Elected Officials are invited to join JDIA and the North Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Office for “Closing the Digital Divide 101” on Monday, April 1, 2019 at the Federal Reserve Bank in Charlotte, NC.

XVI. Adjournment – As there was no further business, Chair Harris adjourned the meeting.



BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

Subject: Strategic Plan Implementation Update

Item Number: XI. Presentations/Recognition; Item, A.

Responsible Party: Justin Hembree, Executive Director

Attachment(s): None

Background: Staff will provide an update on efforts that are underway in relation to the implementation of the recently adopted Strategic Plan.

Staff Recommendation: N/A

Suggested Motion(s): N/A



BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

Subject: Election of Council Officers and Executive Committee

Item Number: XII. Annual Meeting; Item A.

Attachment(s): Recommended Slate from Nominating Committee

Background: Per Council Bylaws, the Annual Meeting/Elections are to be held during the March meeting of each year. The attached slate is recommended by the Nominating Committee. Nominations from the floor are also permitted.



**2019 Officers/Executive Committee
(Terms Ending March 24, 2020)
Nominating Committee Recommendation**

Chair: Larry B. Harris, Black Mountain (Buncombe)

Vice-Chair: Barbara Volk, Hendersonville (Henderson)

Secretary: Patrick Fitzsimmons, Weaverville (Buncombe)

Treasurer: Mike Hawkins, Transylvania County

County Delegate: John Mitchell, Henderson County

Municipal Delegate: Albert Gooch, Flat Rock (Henderson)

Past Chair Delegate: George Goosmann, Biltmore Forest (Buncombe)

Minority Representative Delegate: Nancy Allen, Marshall (Madison)

Aging/Volunteer Services Representative: Bob Tomasulo, Regional Aging Advisory Committee



BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

Subject: Executive Director's Report

Item Number: XIV. Executive Director's Report

Responsible Party: Justin Hembree, Executive Director

Attachment(s): None

Background: The following items will be presented as part of the Executive Director's Report:

- A. Communication and Programs Committee
- B. Legislative Relations Committee
- C. Vacant Board of Delegates Positions

Staff Recommendation: N/A.

Suggested Motion(s): N/A