

**Meeting of
Land of Sky Regional Council
April 22, 2015**

Minutes

- I. Call to Order - George Goosmann called the meeting to order at 1:00pm
- II. Invocation - The invocation was given by Brenda Mills
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
- IV. Roll Call - The roll was called by George Goosmann: The following members were present: Miranda DeBruhl, Glen Enggram, Gwen Wisler, George Goosmann, Jonathan Kanipe (voting), Larry Harris, Anne Coletta, Albert Gooch, Bob Davy, Alison Melnikova, Gene Knoefel (voting), Dottie Sherrill, Brenda Mills, Mark Burrows, Kathe Harris. Guests present included: April Riddle (Governor's Western Region Representative) Roger Kumpf (Congressman Patrick McHenry's Representative), Kathy Kyle (Blue Ridge Literacy Council) and G'Anne Sparks (Kathleen Godwin Cole Award recipient) It was announced that a quorum was not present.

Mr. Goosmann requested that Erica Anderson introduce the NEMT team. Ms. Anderson introduced: Deon Lytle- NEMT Lead, and the NEMT Specialists: Pegge Dixon, Kim Ward, Kim Moore, Stephanie Gilliland, and Zack Schmitt. Ms. Anderson also introduced Lyuba Zuyeva, LOS' Transportation Manager to Council as well as Shana Doyle, Senior Program Assistant with Mountain Mobility. Ms. Anderson also provided a brief overview of the NEMT services that are handled through the on-site call center. In order to facilitate a smooth transition for the County's non-emergency Medicaid transportation program, Buncombe County has also loaned the services of Deb Berlage to LOS/NEMT until the program is established here.
- V. Modification and Approval of Agenda - No action taken.
- VI. Public Comments - No public comments
- VII. Recognition of Special Guests - Mr. Goosmann recognized Ms. April Riddle with the Governor's Office and Roger Kumpf from Congressman McHenry's Office.
- VIII. Chairman's Comments and Roundtable -
Bob Davy- the Town of Fletcher will be having its budget retreat. Mr. Goosmann- the Town of Biltmore Forest is beginning its budget process for what's expected to be a challenging year. Brenda Mills- the City of Asheville will be holding a reverse vendor fair next Tuesday which is a great opportunity for vendors to come in and talk with local government. Gene Knoefel- the Town of Weaverville is working on its budget and advertising for a new town manager. Alison Melnikova- the Town of Laurel Park is beginning its budget process and discussing health insurance for employees. Miranda DeBruhl- reported that the biggest thing for Buncombe County is the Bond Referendum which can provide some funds for road paving from the sale of those bonds. Anne Coletta- the Town of Flat Rock has started its budget process, kudos was expressed to Flat Rock's Tax Collector, Martha Orr as property taxes are nearly fully collected. Glen Enggram- shared that Raumedic will be placing its production facility (first in the US) in Mills River creating 172 jobs and a \$26 million dollar investment; Henderson County's unemployment rate is about 4%, and lastly, the average property valuation increased about 5%. Mark Burrows- Transylvania County Commissioners will start the budget process Monday night - 250 people expected for planning workshop. Larry Harris- the Town of Black Mountain is starting its budget process and the Beautification Committee's Annual Garden Show is coming up on May 16th. The group also works with the women's' prison. Jonathan Kanipe- the Town of Biltmore Forest is working on its budget as well.

Mr. Goosmann took a moment to share that Biltmore Forest mailed out a letter to all residents regarding Senate Bill 369 (currently in committee) as it could affect the Town's taxes by a reduction of about \$320,000. While the biggest cities stand to lose the most if the bill becomes law, it will severely affect Biltmore Forest too. It is hoped that the bill is defeated by the General Assembly. Mr. Harris commented that Montreat would be hit hard as well, if the bill were to pass.

- IX. Approval of Minutes from the January & February Regular Meetings - No action taken.
General discussion occurred regarding the lack of a quorum to conduct business at today's meeting. Currently there are a few vacancies on Council which will hopefully be filled as soon as possible. Mr. Davy shared that an amendment to the by-laws in order to address the quorum issue may be helpful. Justin Hembree shared that the past couple of months have been a perfect storm of events that have led to less than a quorum being present to conduct business. He acknowledged that the By-laws could be reviewed to determine revisions to alleviate the quorum issue and he shared that outreach to our municipalities to get vacant seats filled on Council would be conducted over the next several weeks.
- X. Consideration and Approval of Consent Agenda Items - No action taken
A. February & March FY2015 Treasurer's Reports
B. FY 2015 Budget Amendment #4
- XI. Presentations/Recognition -
A. Kathleen Godwin Cole Award Ceremony - Kathe Harris, Chair-Senior Volunteer Services Advisory Council shared that this is her favorite meeting of the year as it provides the opportunity to honor our region's outstanding volunteers. She provided a brief background on the Kathleen Godwin Cole award and shared that today's nominee, G'Anne Sparks, represents all of the volunteers that serve the four-county region. Ms. Harris introduced Kathy Kyle, Coordinator with the Blue Ridge Literacy Council who supervises Ms. Sparks volunteer activities with the literacy group. Ms. Kyle shared some of G'Anne Sparks background with Council and Ms. Sparks graciously accepted her award.

B. Older Americans Month Proclamation - Gene Knoefel addressed Council in the absence of Charles Dickens, regarding the proclamation for Older Americans Month. He shared that this year is the 50th anniversary of the Older Americans Act which provides funding for programs which help older americans age in place. He shared that there are several events going on in the region in honor of Older Americans Month. The Successful Aging Conference will be held on May 12th at the Kimmel Arena/UNCA. Marshall and Quebec (Transylvania County) Senior Centers will be collecting items all month. According to the last census data over half of the area's residents are aging adults. He shared that there are many services available to serve older adults.

C. Clean Cities: Building Partnerships to Cut Petroleum Use in Transportation - Mr. Goosmann shared that he recalled giving Bill Eaker, Senior Environmental Planner, a retirement plaque some time back and he remarked that Mr. Eaker is still going strong.

Mr. Eaker shared with Council that he serves as the Coordinator for the Clean Cities Initiative and he introduced Chris Dobbins (retiree from the City of Asheville), who volunteers with the initiative by acting as the fleet coordinator. Mr. Eaker provided a brief history of the initiative which evolved from the regional Clean Air Campaign which was initially launched in 1998. By 2004, LOS was approached about having the Asheville Metropolitan Area certified as a "Clean City". The Clean Vehicles Coalition (CVC) was created from that initiative and the purpose of the coalition is to encourage energy independence. Mr. Eaker shared that it took eight years to work toward the clean city designation. By July of 2012, the US Department of Energy (DOE) designated the LOS Clean Vehicles Coalition as the 85th designated Clean Cities Coalition in the Nation. Clean Cities Coalitions are comprised of stakeholders including public and private fleet managers, alternative fuel providers, vehicle manufacturers and conversion companies, air quality officials and other interested parties. The goal of the US DOE Clean Cities Program is US Energy Independence through the use of alternative-fueled and advanced technology vehicles and other measures. Mr. Eaker

shared a clip from the Motor Week Show (http://www.motorweek.org/features/green_motoring/) He also shared a video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCYnQol-pco>) about four alternative- fueled vehicles used by the City of Asheville. Mr. Eaker advised that municipalities interested in the CVC initiative could contact him. More information about the CVC can be found on the coalition's website: www.cleanvehiclescoalition.org

Dottie Sherrill shared that she just purchased a new hybrid Prius.

XII. Old Business -

A. Election of Executive Committee & Officers - No action taken.

Mr. Hembree advised Council that this business item would be provided for information only and that the slate of Officers would be presented at the next meeting of the Council.

XIII. New Business -

A. Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program - No action taken.

Mr. Hembree shared that the By-laws do allow for the Executive Committee to take action between meetings which will be done to facilitate the business of the Council.

B. DENR Support Funding for WRP - No action taken.

Terry Albrecht, Director- Waste Reduction Partners (WRP) shared that WRP has two business items on today's agenda. He informed Council that WRP utilizes the services of retired engineers to conduct the energy assessments. To date, over \$70 million in cost savings have been realized by the businesses that WRP has worked with. The DENR support funding would provide stipends to the volunteer engineers that conduct the energy assessments and will also provide staff support.

Mark burrows shared how valuable the services of WRP have been to businesses in the region.

C. USDA -Rural Energy for America Program: WRP Energy Audit Support - No action taken.

Mr. Albrecht shared that this is another grant opportunity request from WRP for additional funds to keep energy assessment services ongoing for the area's farmers. Nearly 50 energy audits were conducted during the first round of grant funding with substantial cost efficiencies gained by the farmers as a result.

XIV. Executive Director's Report -

A. Strategic Plan - S.W.O.T. Analysis Priorities

Mr. Hembree shared that the S.W.O.T. analysis was completed during the Leadership retreat held back in January. He requested that Council complete a survey which will help to determine the priorities that LOS should pursue. When the link to the survey is provided that instrument will also include a blank comment section for members to provide ideas not already addressed. The results of the survey will provide the top three priorities for LOS to focus on over the next couple of years.

B. NEMT Call Center Update - The Call Center is in the former GIS office and it went live on April 1st.

Currently, the center is handling about 300 call per day. Mr. Hembree expressed appreciation and gratitude to Ms. Anderson, Ms. Zuyeva and Christina Giles for their outstanding efforts to bring the NEMT contract to fruition. He shared that this type of pay-for-service contract definitely expands the range of services that LOS can offer.

Ms. Anderson shared that NEMT is providing services to about 2,500 clients at any given time for Buncombe County. She also informed Council that the call center is providing an ongoing learning process (HIPPA/confidentiality and how call centers are operated) for staff.

Mr. Hembree mentioned that Council and guests could pick up an LOS directory at the reception desk. Mr. Hembree shared what some of the benefits of the NEMT contract are to LOS and the county: Buncombe County was realizing a 50% reimbursement rate on services when operating the NEMT services in-house; by contracting with LOS to provide the call center services, the county is reimbursed at a rate of 100%. This

allows LOS a much more stable revenue stream on the contract and the county wins since their reimbursement rate is doubled by contracting out the service.

Discussion occurred regarding the level of interest in providing this type of service to other counties in the LOS region. It was shared that staff is still trying to determine the level of revenue (which will come from Indirect Costs). Potential revenue will be better known down the road and within the next six months.

Mr. Hembree shared that there was a proposal made at the Henderson County Commissioners' meeting to withdraw membership from LOSRC. He shared that the agency addressed the issue by preparing/presenting a return on investment report to the Commissioners in Henderson County. Every member jurisdiction will now be getting that report as a result of the outreach made to the county. Mr. Hembree also shared that for every dollar put in the return on investment is \$1.98. He shared also that LOS is going to develop a standard form showing specifically the different activities and realized return on investments- target date to get those out is sometime in July 2015.

XV. Important Dates -

Mr. Goosmann announced that the next Council meeting is May 27th. He requested that Council members encourage colleagues to attend the next meeting. Work on getting vacancies filled will be a high priority.

XVI. Adjournment - Mr. Goosmann adjourned the meeting.