

**MINUTES
 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
 UPPER SAVANNAH COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
 DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
 430 HELIX ROAD
 GREENWOOD, SOUTH CAROLINA
 FEBRUARY 27, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Diane Anderson, Jackie Brown, John Calhoun, Jim Coleman, Frank Daniel, Ken Durham, Qwendolyn Etheredge, Charles Goodwin, Otis Grier Jr., Tiffani Ireland, Charles Jennings, Wes McAllister, Miliken Matthews, Matthew Miller, Sen. Floyd Nicholson, Willie Norman, David Sawyer, Ernie Segars, Brandon Smith, Don Smoak, Albert Talbert, Faye Thomas and David Tribble.

MEMBERS ABSENT: John Carter, Charlie Henry, Theo Lane, Sen. Shane Massey, Marian Miller, Roy Smith Jr., and Sen. Danny Verdin.

OUTGOING MEMBERS PRESENT: Edith Childs, Shirley Jenkins, Rep. Anne Parks.

OUTGOING MEMBERS ABSENT: Buddy Agan, Amelia Herlong, Melissa Spencer.

STAFF PRESENT: Patricia Hartung, Sam Leaman, Sandra Moore, Rick Green, Linda McAllister, Cason Wright, Willie Matthews, David Hays

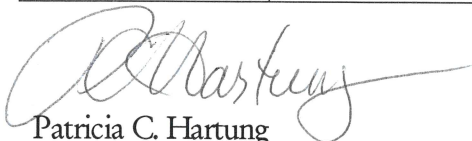
GUEST PRESENT: Pamela Christopher, Vice Chairman of the S.C. Highway Commission and Executive Director of the Anderson Area Chamber of Commerce.

Call to Order	<p>The meeting was held in person with the option to attend via conference call. Willie Norman gave the invocation and Chairman Albert Talbert called the meeting to order.</p> <p>The October 24, 2022, minutes were approved unanimously upon motion by Jim Coleman, seconded by Willie Norman.</p> <p>Executive Director Patricia C. Hartung recognized guest Pamela Christopher, Vice Chairman of the S.C. Highway Commission and Executive Director of the Anderson Area Chamber of Commerce. Christopher has agreed to be the speaker at the April 2023 USCOG Board meeting.</p> <p>Hartung said Upper Savannah has six outgoing Board members: Buddy Agan, Edith Childs, Amelia Herlong, Shirley Jenkins, Anne Parks and Melissa Spencer. Hartung presented plaques in “grateful recognition for dedicated service and personal contributions” to Childs, Jenkins and Parks. Spencer, Herlong and Agan were not present.</p> <p>Hartung introduced new Board members Charles Goodwin of Abbeville County, Tiffani Ireland of Edgefield County and Qwendolyn Etheredge from the Town of Ridge Spring.</p>
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<p>Guest Presentation South Carolina Demographics: Changes and Challenges</p>	<p>Frank Rainwater, Executive Director of the SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, gave presentation on South Carolina demographics past, present and future and how population trends affect the workforce and economics.</p> <p>Rainwater showed a graphic displaying population trends from 1970 when the population was younger. He showed that population trends in 2020 have changed, with the population aging and also more people moving into South Carolina. Rainwater said South Carolina has uneven growth, some parts that are growing and some that are not growing.</p> <p>Rainwater showed a population projection for 2030 with more people out of the workforce, aging people who will need healthcare and other services. The demand for workers will be more of a challenge in 2030, he said.</p> <p>Rainwater said by 2026, projections indicate that South Carolina will have more seniors 65 and over than people under 18. Therefore, more assisted living facilities, nursing homes and senior centers will likely be needed. He said the workforce will be growing, but not as much as the overall population. The senior population is growing twice as fast as the workforce due to people aging or retirees migrating into the state.</p> <p>He said the workforce dropped dramatically during the pandemic and grew back to normal by April 2022. He said employment is growing but not in all sectors. Government employment is below pre-pandemic levels and there are also fewer working in leisure and hospitality as well as construction, Rainwater said.</p> <p>Rainwater continued to display graphs relating to population and workforce. He said in 2000, 63 percent of the population was workforce age, but by 2030 that will be down to 58 percent. He said by 2030 there will be more people needing services but fewer that are workforce age.</p> <p>Several Board members made comments about the population and workforce trends in the Upper Savannah region.</p>
<p>Aging Program Update</p>	<p>Aging Director Linda McAllister gave Aging Program update, focusing on the Area Aging Plan Update.</p> <p>She said the Area Plan focuses on the next two years. Part of the Area Plan includes a community survey which shows that some of the top needs for seniors are yard work, minor home repairs, housekeeping, dental care and information about long-term care.</p> <p>As a result of the surveys, McAllister said the AAA is planning to have a long-term care workshop. The workshop to be held April 18 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Genetic Center Auditorium will include education about long-term care options whether in home or at a facility, how to pay for long-term care, and how to plan for long-term care. The workshop is geared toward seniors and their caregivers, and the general public is also invited.</p> <p>McAllister said USCOG staff is working on a resource directory to include on the Upper Savannah website, focusing on resources available to seniors in the region.</p>

	<p>She said part of the Area Plan is to provide education to seniors to help them live longer, including information on preventative care, nutrition and evidence-based exercise programs.</p> <p>She said many states have begun master plans for aging. The S.C. Department on Aging is in the beginning stages of a master plan, she said.</p> <p>McAllister said Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps are being used to show where seniors are being served and not being served, which will help the AAA provide better outreach to seniors in areas that are underserved.</p> <p>Board members made comments about helping seniors who need computer assistance, Telecare assistance, or are hard of hearing, and also helping seniors getting their affairs in order such as preparing wills. Board member Miliken Matthews said the Town of Saluda is planning a workshop on wills on March 18. McAllister said the long-term care workshop on April 18 is a starting point with more possible in the future because seniors and caregivers often don't know where to get help.</p>
<p>CARES ACT – CDBG-CV Program Update</p>	<p>Government Services Project Manager Cason Wright gave update on CARES Act CDBG-Coronavirus funded projects including public services and public facilities projects.</p> <p>Ongoing public services projects include home-delivered meals throughout the region and Saluda County public transit for medical and essential trips. Since March 1, 2022, 24,610 meals have been delivered to eligible seniors at a cost of \$153,812.50. Wright said she anticipates approximately another \$115,000 utilized for HDMs through the end of the project period in June 2023. The Saluda County public transit pilot project is utilizing the Edgefield County Senior Citizens Council's Peach Blossom Express resulting in 61 trips covering 120 miles since Oct. 27, 2022, for a total of \$1,657.62. The first public services project was for air purifiers in Laurens County School District 55 to combat the virus, which was completed in April 2022 at a cost of \$161,219.16.</p> <p>Both public facilities projects were completed in June 2022 totaling \$81,174, including HVAC upgrade and UVC air infiltration installation at the Abbeville Civic Center and UVC air filtration installation at the Abbeville Opera House.</p> <p>Wright said USCOG requested \$390,000 for home-delivered meals and \$50,000 for Saluda transit. Funds could be returned to the State if not all spent. She said Saluda transit might continue beyond the project date should Edgefield County Senior Citizens Council choose to continue the service, but would not be funded by the CDBG-CV program.</p>
<p>Draft Audit and CARES ACT Revolving Loan Fund Annual Certification</p>	<p>Assistant Director Sam Leaman notified the Board that a draft of the FY 2022 audit has been received and anticipates that the full audit will be available at the April Board meeting.</p> <p>Leaman presented the annual CARES Act Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Certification Resolution. The Economic Development Administration requires the RLF to meet the following standards: job cost ratio not to exceed \$20,000 per job, and private sector investment ratio equal to or greater than 2:1 (this standard has been temporarily waived). As of Dec. 31, 2022, the CARES Act RLF loans are creating/retaining one job</p>

	<p>for every \$7,116 loaned with a private sector investment ratio of 1:80 to 1. The resolution was approved unanimously upon motion by Jim Coleman, which was properly seconded.</p>
Director's Report	<p>Hartung informed the Board of a new SCDHEC \$1 million Brownfields Environmental Site Testing (BEST) Program. Catawba COG is administering the BEST program, allocating funding to each COG region in the State based on population. The Upper Savannah region will receive approximately \$74,000, according to USCOG Government Services Director Rick Green. The funding allows for environmental testing of brownfields sites that could be used for future development. The brownfields site with contamination or perceived contamination can be owned by a city, town or county, or by a private owner who agrees to an assessment. Green said the first phase of testing costs \$3,000 - \$3,500. Hartung said if the BEST program is successful, more DHEC money could become available for environmental assessments in the future.</p> <p>Hartung said the COGs will be assisting with the Broadband Equity Access Deployment (BEAD) Program by collecting surveys indicating where there are broadband internet availability shortages in each region, usually in rural areas. The BEAD Program is part of the \$48 billion federal Infrastructure Law which is earmarked to help fund broadband beginning in 2024.</p> <p>Hartung announced that the S.C. Association of Counties is requesting entries for the 2023 J. Mitchell Graham and Barrett Lawrimore Memorial awards for innovative projects completed by South Carolina's counties during the current or past fiscal year. The deadline for entry submissions is April 21, 2023, with presentations due May 15, 2023.</p> <p>Hartung updated the Board on councils of government appropriations in the State budget. She said the COGs recently met with the House Constitution Subcommittee and will meet with the Senate Subcommittee soon.</p> <p>Hartung introduced new USCOG Workforce Development Deputy Director Willie Matthews. She said Upper Savannah's workforce development staff will be collaborating with another workforce area for job seeker and employer services.</p> <p>Floyd Nicholson invited fellow Board members to a reception in honor of his public service Thursday, March 2, from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., at the Arts Center in Greenwood.</p>
Adjourn	<p>Being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.</p>



Patricia C. Hartung
Executive Director