

**HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING  
JULY 20, 2020  
MINUTES**

The Executive Board of the High Country Council of Governments met July 20, 2020, 7:00pm, virtually via Zoom. The following members were present at the meeting: Robert L. Johnson, Brenda Lyerly, Gary D. Blevins, Johnny Riddle, Todd McNeill, Andrew Soots, Doug Matheson, Theresa Coletta, Dennis Aldridge, Rocky Buchanan, Tom Hartman, Rennie Brantz, Larry Fontaine, Paul Robinson Jr., and Valerie Jaynes. The following staff and guests were present at the meeting: Julie Wiggins, Jeff Hedrick, Keith Deveraux, Nicole Hiegl, Julie Page and Victoria Potter.

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Chairwoman Jaynes welcomed everyone to the Zoom meeting. Chairwoman Jaynes called on Robert L. Johnson to lead the invocation. Chairwoman Jaynes then led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting did not have a quorum, so attorney Jeff Hedrick explained that once there is a quorum at the next meeting, the quorum can ratify the action items from this meeting.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

Chairwoman Jaynes discussed two revisions to the June 2020 minutes that were brought to the clerk's attention. Brenda Lyerly made a motion to approve the Executive Board minutes with the revisions presented for June 2020. Robert L. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**Financial Highlights**

Finance Officer, Julie Page presented the Financial Highlights as of July 17, 2020 (Attachment A). Because we are at the end of the fiscal year there are still some revenues Mrs. Page will book and a few expenses HCCOG will accrue back. Mrs. Page stated that no other discrepancies are anticipated. Mrs. Page is still waiting to hear from the auditors about scheduling the on-site visit. Mrs. Page explained that year-end closing activities are progressing, and that she and Julie Wiggins have been working with department heads on this process. The FY2021 budget has now been entered into Smartfusion. Mrs. Page also discussed the minimum fund balance policy. Mrs. Page and Ms. Wiggins are working with the auditors on this and hope to present the amendment for consideration at the August 2020 meeting. Johnny Riddle asked if posting the new revenues would make our fund balance go above 16.19%. Mrs. Page said that it could make the fund balance go up, but until we go through all the audit review this is just a projection.

Rennie Brantz made a motion to approve Financial Highlights as of July 17, 2020. Robert L. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**AREA AGENCY ON AGING UPDATES**

Nicole Hiegl, Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Director discussed new funding coming in from the COVID-19 Pandemic and that the AAA is working with providers on these two new funding streams. Mrs. Hiegl explained that there is quite a bit of flexibility with the CARES Act funds. Mrs. Hiegl announced that the Lifespan Respite Grant will continue for another year with new creativity and ideas to provide respite in a fair and consistent way. Mrs. Hiegl is looking to hire a new, temporary position with some of the CARES Act funding. This position will be 50% focused

on helping with the Family Caregiver Support Program and 50% administrative duties. This new position will also help expand a program to support grandparents raising grandchildren in the region. Funding is limited so the position will likely only last for a year's time. Mrs. Hiegl also discussed recent projects. The AAA has partnered with Appalachian State University including: supporting cognitive health, a potential caregiver college, music therapy programs, and inter-generational programming. Board members commended Mrs. Hiegl on her work and report.

### **WORKFORCE UPDATES**

Keith Deveraux, Workforce Development Board (WDB) Director presented his report (Attachment B). Mr. Deveraux highlighted that Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services are still being provided remotely and virtually at this time. The WDB is happy to have the extra funds from the USDOL National Emergency Grant to serve dislocated workers in the High Country. NCWorks Centers plan to reopen August 3-7 for employees only and beginning on October 10th will be open to the public by appointment only, with safety precautions in place. Mr. Deveraux also mentioned that NCWorks Career Centers will be getting new building signage from a recent rebranding effort. Mr. Deveraux then reviewed unemployment rates throughout the region versus state and federal rates as of May 2020. Mr. Deveraux also presented Unemployment Insurance Claims from March-May 2020. Board members commended Mr. Deveraux on his work and report.

### **REPORT FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Julie Wiggins, Executive Director discussed the discrepancy between the quorum definition listed in the charter versus the bylaws. The charter (the overarching governance) defines quorum as 60% of the full board and the bylaws define quorum as 50% of the full board. The charter also states that there will be a maximum of 15 members on the Executive Board, while we have a 27-member board. Ms. Wiggins also explained that the two documents use three different terms to refer to what we currently call the Executive Board. The three terms are Council Board, Executive Committee, and Executive Board and they have all been interpreted to reference the Executive Board. The Advisory Committee recommends that HCCOG define quorum as 50%. The Advisory Committee also recommends that Ms. Wiggins and COG staff revise the charter and bring it back to them as a draft to review before the Executive Board votes on amending the charter. Ms. Wiggins explained that to amend the charter, there must be a 60% quorum as already defined and then at least two-thirds of that quorum must vote in favor. The proposed amendment would be included in writing prior to a scheduled vote and it would be made clear that an amendment to the charter is to be considered. Ms. Wiggins also discussed the Annual Banquet and Awards Ceremony. After some research and discussion, the Advisory Committee recommends that HCCOG postpone the Annual Banquet and Awards Ceremony until spring 2021. Ms. Wiggins mentioned that Phil Trew was out of town this week but that he wanted her to relay these messages: the CEDS update will begin this fall, the RPO met in June and approved the budget and road construction delays are expected, GIS is working to renew and update contracts with local governments, he is waiting to hear back from the state on how they plan to

spend the CDBG COVID-19 money, and in the meantime they are working with three towns on CDBG grant applications. Ms. Wiggins also noted that HCCOG is here to support our members and their entities with pandemic relief. Ms. Wiggins echoed Mrs. Hiegl's discussion about hiring a new position for the AAA. After the initial momentum of this position, the AAA will be able to keep these new programs going despite knowing this position is temporary. Ms. Wiggins also mentioned that she is now in a work group tasked with considering the development of a 501(c)(3) for the statewide association of COGs for the purpose of creating a single contracting entity for some of the work administered through the and Area Agencies on Aging. Ms. Wiggins anticipates having the first budget amendment for FY2021 in August after adjustments in COVID-19 funding comes through, this will likely be a net gain overall.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no other comments or business, Robert L. Johnson made a motion to adjourn. Rennie Brantz seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm.

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Chairwoman, Valerie Jaynes

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Clerk to the Board, Victoria Potter

Date 08-17-2020