

**MINUTES OF
THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MEETING
9 A.M., THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2021
IN-PERSON AND VIA ZOOM
COCHISE COLLEGE BENSON
1025 HWY 80, BENSON, ARIZONA**

OFFICERS PRESENT: Blaschke, Caleb – City of Willcox (Chair) (zoom)
Vivian, Vicki – City of Benson (Vice-Chair) (in-person)
Matt McLachlan – City of Sierra Vista (Secretary) (zoom)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Batty, Vernon – Town of Pima (in-person)
Brown, Heath – Town of Thatcher (in-person)
Coxworth, Dan – Cochise County (zoom)
Harvey, Suzanne – Town of Huachuca City (in-person)
Pauken, Steve – City of Bisbee (zoom)
Perez, Rudy – Town of Clifton – (zoom)
Rapier, Derek – Greenlee County (zoom)
Welker, Dustin – Graham County (zoom)

STAFF PRESENT: Curtiss, Dina – Accounting Manager (zoom)
Bronson, Susan – CDBG Senior Planner (in-person)
Glenn, Heather – Administrative Assistant (in-person)
Hartman, Melissa - CDBG Senior Planner (in-person)
Heiss, Randy – Executive Director (in-person)
Merideth, John – GIS Analyst (zoom)
Peterson, Stephen – Economic Recovery Coordinator (in-person)
Porter, Maria – Economic Development Program Manager (in-person)
Vertrees, Chris – Transportation Program Administrator (in-person)
Villa, Laura – AAA Program Director (zoom)

GUESTS: Adam, Kevin – RTAC (in-person)

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Blaschke called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

II. MEMBER ENTITIES' DISCUSSION

Derek Rapier, Greenlee County, advised they are still working on how to best use the ARPA funds. **Dustin Welker**, Graham County, announced they are working on a CDBG project with Keith Dennis and are very grateful for Keith's assistance. **Heath Brown**, Thatcher, advised their CDBG project is going well. **Vernon Batty**, Pima, was introduced by Randy Heiss as the new Town Manager for Pima. Vernon said that he was glad to be in attendance. **Caleb Blaschke**, Willcox, shared that their City got destroyed by the census numbers, and as a result, they have had to survey the neighborhoods in order to get funding for projects. They had 300 fewer households recorded than the last census and they are in the middle of CDBG projects and having to prove the low-moderate income benefit. They are working with Senators Kelly and Sinema to get the problem rectified. Willcox is trying to craft a letter on behalf of all the smaller cities in the rural areas and may reach out to some of the Administrative Council members for inclusion to express their concern to the senators. **Matt McLachlan**, Sierra Vista, advised they are halfway through a major streetscape construction project in the City's west end on Fry Blvd. They have been working with Dan Coxworth to retrofit the west

end streetscape to create a Main Street environment to try to reduce the high commercial vacancy rate in the area. They are also working with the County's EPA brownfield consultant to expand their redevelopment area on the west end. They are planning monthly gatherings of social service providers and nonprofits at the Goodwill to make services more available and convenient for people in need. **Suzanne Harvey**, Huachuca City, said they have also lost funding due to the census and they are working on how to rectify it. She announced they have started up the parks CDBG project, and that they are looking for the best way to spend their ARPA money. **Dan Coxworth**, Cochise County, advised they are applying for a new brownfields grant during the next funding cycle, as they have almost exhausted the full amount originally received 2 years ago. The current coalition consists of Sierra Vista, Douglas and Bisbee and will be expanding to include Benson and Willcox. **Steve Pauken**, Bisbee, shared that their purchase of the Hillcrest Apartment building has been completed and they are looking to work with a developer to create affordable housing units. They are creating a prospectus with SEAGO staff assistance for a public bidding process to occur after the first of the year. Bisbee's census revenue was also impacted negatively. He stated that the City Clerks Association is trying to organize something to get powers that be to take another look at the census count. **Vickie Vivian**, Benson, shared that Benson gained 300 from the 2020 Census. She advised that they budgeted \$3.2 million for a new city hall building. The remodel estimate for the 3600 square foot temporary building was budgeted at \$350,000; however, it has now grown to \$900,000 so the City is looking to see what work they can do themselves. Meanwhile, they are gearing up for the holidays.

III. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No one from the public was present.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

1. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of the August 5, 2021 Minutes

Chair Blaschke asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Derek Rapier made the motion; second by Steve Pauken.

MOTION: Derek Rapier
SECOND: Steve Pauken
ACTION: Unanimous

2. Discussion and possible action to recommend approval of Resolution No. 2021-06 urging state and federal elected leaders to stabilize, equalize and modernize transportation funding sources.

Randy Heiss explained that SEAGO usually brings a Resolution to protect HURF funds every year. There was a surplus of state revenue this year, so he recrafted the resolution to focus more on the current needs and threats to enhance revenue streams by stabilizing (by indexing the fuel tax to inflation), equalizing (by implementing a user fee for alternative fuel vehicles) and modernizing State and Federal funding mechanisms (by increasing fuel tax rates, implementing transportation sales taxes, or moving to vehicle miles travelled fees) while economic conditions are conducive to doing so.

Heath Brown stated he supports the recommended changes and made a motion to recommend approval of Resolution 2021-06 to the Executive Board; second by Vickie Vivian.

MOTION: Heath Brown
SECOND: Vickie Vivian
ACTION: Unanimous

3. Discussion and possible action to recommend approval of the Calendar Year 2022 SEAGO Policy Principles

Randy Heiss stated that November is usually the time of year to begin gearing up for legislative session for the upcoming year. SEAGO likes to have something in writing to empower staff in supporting (or opposing) legislation, policies or various initiatives at the state and federal level that impact delivery of SEAGO programs and/or our effectiveness in serving member entities and their constituents. The document can also be used by our member entities and elected officials as talking points when speaking to policy makers relating to these positions. Policy developments and emerging needs have resulted in some minor updates to the document, which he highlighted. If changes are approved, he will update the tri-fold brochure.

Vickie Vivian made a motion to recommend that the Executive Board approve the SEAGO Policy Principles for Calendar Year 2022 presented by staff; second by Suzanne Harvey.

MOTION: Vickie Vivian
SECOND: Suzanne Harvey
ACTION: Unanimous

4. Discussion and possible action to recommend approval of the 2021 CDBG Regional Account applications

Senior Planning Specialist Susan Bronson stated she is filling in for Keith who is on vacation. She reviewed the various project applications that were submitted by the entities noted in the memo.

Steve Pauken made a motion to recommend approval of the 2021 CDBG project applications to the Executive Board; second by Derek Rapier.

MOTION: Steve Pauken
SECOND: Derek Rapier
ACTION: Unanimous

V. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Future Meeting Dates

Randy advised that he sends out meeting calendar invites a year in advance so that it can be put on your calendars to avoid scheduling conflicts. The next Administrative Council meeting is February 10th, 2022. He reminded the officers that there is a Joint Committees meeting scheduled for December 2nd.

B. Strategic Plan Retreat Discussion

Randy explained that our current strategic plan was adopted in May 2020 and became effective in June 2020. He stated we try to update the plan every two years. Rather than provide a progress report for each item in the plan, he focused on the progress renovating the AAA office space. The current status is in bold in the memo. He advised that SEAGO has spent all carryover funds allotted by ADES and they have submitted a second carryover request to complete the project this year. Increased costs and limited contractor availability have resulted in higher than projected costs. He stated we will be moving employees into the building one desk at a time. The moving will be done mainly by Randy, inmate labor and staff assistance and needs to be done before the lease expires at the end of June.

Randy explained that holding the Strategic Plan retreat includes a lot of front-end work. Once held, there is post-event work that needs to be done to create an updated plan. If the retreat is held in February 2022, Randy is concerned we may not meet the June 30, 2022 deadline to move out of the current AAA offices. Randy's preference is to defer the retreat until February 2023. He asked for any questions, objections or comments about deferring the retreat. Randy also pointed out that in past retreats, the group has gotten bogged down with wordsmithing mission and vision statements and the two overarching goals of the Plan. He suggested that be left to do in year 5 rather than every 2 years. He asked everyone to keep that in mind for the next retreat.

He also suggested that he would like to bring staff together for a retreat and do some front end work ahead of the member entity retreat. He feels this will help guide the discussion when the February 2023 retreat is held. Derek Rapier stated that any time we can consolidate or combine efforts to be more efficient has his support.

C. Quarterly Finance Report

Dina Curtiss provided an update on SEAGO finances and responded to questions.

D. Community Development Report

Susan Bronson provided an update on Community Development Programs and responded to questions. Melissa Hartman provided background and an update on the SEAGO CARES Homeowner Assistance Program which started in May 2020. She shared that 68 applications have been received; 34 qualified for funding. Applicants came from Sierra Vista-15, Safford-10, Bisbee-5; Douglas-10; Huachuca City-3. She advised there are 5 clients who have received assistance for more than one month. Total expenditures to date are \$57,498.27. She and Keith have been on 3 radio interviews and advised that utility companies have been very valuable partners in this program. At least half of the applicants heard about the program through utility companies. SEAGO Cares has also done radio spots on the San Carlos Apache Tribe. She distributed a success story that has been used in print marketing and online. Randy shared that the program has helped families remain in their homes and avoid homelessness. He asked members to help get the word out.

E. SEAGO Economic Development District Report

Maria Porter announced that her last day with SEAGO is November 5th (tomorrow). She thanked Randy and the members for their assistance and support and advised that SEAGO has been a very empowering work environment. She introduced Stephen Peterson, who would be moving into her position as Economic Development Program Manager. Stephen provided an update on Economic Development and responded to questions.

Randy stated that Maria's leaving was the result of the great resignation. While she had all the flexibility needed to do her job, SEAGO could not provide employer paid family health coverage. He was disappointed to see her go, but realized that Stephen was a great alternative and is well on top of the program as he has been working with Maria for some time now.

F. AAA Updates

Laura Villa provided an update on AAA Programs and responded to questions.

G. Transportation Program Updates

Chris Vertrees provided an update on Transportation Programs and responded to questions.

VI. RTAC REPORT

Kevin Adam provided an update and responded to questions.

VII. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS / CURRENT EVENTS

Maria Porter mentioned that Keith will handle Continuum of Care until an alternative is identified. Randy reported that ADEQ announced in early September that they not going to fund the designated planning agencies for FY 2022 but reversed that decision after numerous complaints. He had a meeting last week with ADEQ and pushed them to commit funding for fiscal years 2023 and 2024 without success. If funding is not committed, SEAGO may wish to de-designate ourselves as a designated planning agency for water quality management, in which case it would fall to the counties. Randy announced that Keith and Stephen need support with Keith taking on the Continuum of Care (COC) and Stephen now left to manage the Economic Development program initiatives underway. This has created a need for a Coordinator position that would support CBDG COC and Economic Development and he will bring a proposal forward in February. Policy positions include addressing the mileage reimbursement rate which has been in place since 2006. The Joint Legislative Committee makes these decisions. He doesn't think it will be a major financial impact.

VIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Randy reminded everyone that any time an Administrative Council member gets an idea, contact Heather or Randy to have it put on the agenda. Expected agenda items coming up include reappointment of Dan Valle, Cochise County Private Sector Representative; and a classification plan update to add a Community Coordinator position.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Blaschke adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.