

**Draft MINUTES OF
THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
10 A.M., FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2021
IN-PERSON AND VIA ZOOM
THE WILD HORSE RESTAURANT
309 MCKEOWN, PATAGONIA, ARIZONA**

OFFICERS PRESENT: Garino, Arturo – City of Nogales (1st Vice-Chair)(In-Person)
Gomez, David – Greenlee County (2nd Vice-Chair) (Zoom)
Ortega, Richard – City of Safford (Treasurer) (In-Person)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ahmann, Stephen – PSR, Greenlee County (Zoom)
Barlow, Bill – Councilmember, Town of Tombstone (In-Person)
Budge, Ken – Mayor, City of Bisbee (Zoom)
Budd, David – PSR, Santa Cruz County (Zoom)
David, Paul – Supervisor, Graham County (Zoom)
English, Ann – Supervisor, Cochise County (Zoom)
Gray, Rachel – Mayor Pro Tem, City of Sierra Vista (Zoom)
Lopez, Ed – PSR, Graham County (Zoom)
Montoya, Luis – Mayor, Town of Clifton (Zoom)
Smith, Ashley – Vice Mayor, Town of Thatcher (Zoom)
Stabile, Michael – Vice Mayor, Town of Patagonia (In-Person)
Thurman, Anne – Mayor, Town of Duncan (Zoom)
Valle, Dan – PSR, Cochise County (Zoom)

STAFF PRESENT: Curtiss, Dina – Accounting Manager (Zoom)
Dennis, Keith – Community Development Program Manager (Zoom)
Glenn, Heather – Administrative Assistant (In-Person)
Heiss, Randy – Executive Director (In-Person)
Merideth, John – GIS Analyst (Zoom)
Peterson, Stephen – Economic Development Program Manager (Zoom)
Vertrees, Chris – Transportation Program Administrator (In-Person)
Villa, Laura – AAA Program Director (In-Person)

GUESTS: Adam, Kevin – RTAC (Zoom)

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS

Vice Chair Garino called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Vice Mayor Michael Stabile from the Town of Patagonia welcomed the group.

II. MEMBER ENTITIES' DISCUSSION

Supervisor Ann English thanked SEAGO for supporting the southeastern area of Arizona and stated that in part, because of SEAGO's efforts, funding has come through for the new port of entry in Douglas. **Vice Mayor Richard Ortega** advised that Safford created a "Field of Honor" on Veterans Day where residents purchased flags and displayed them in front of City Hall. **Mayor Arturo Garino** advised they did the same in Nogales. **Supervisor Paul David** wished Happy Holidays to everyone and shared that Graham County is going to apply for broadband grant. The grant deadline is 12/10/2021 and the grant draft is well underway. **Randy Heiss** gave regrets from **Chair Mike Laws** who is ill and could not attend.

III. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No one from the public was present.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

1. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of the August 21, 2021 Minutes

Vice Chair Garino asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Vice Mayor Richard Ortega made the motion; second by Mayor Luis Montoya.

MOTION: Vice Mayor Richard Ortega
SECOND: Luis Montoya
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 forward a Resolution to protect HURF funds every year. There was a surplus of state revenue this year that minimizes the threat of those funds being used for other purposes so he recrafted this year's Resolution to focus more on the current need 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.

Cochise County Supervisor English suggested that we recognize that the State of Arizona is receiving a great deal of federal money from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). She's concerned the State will siphon off the lion's share and won't share it with other entities that have shovel ready projects. She suggested we let them know that we have expectations that we will receive a share and utilize the federal highway funds that are coming our way. Randy and Supervisor English agreed to speak further to develop wording. Mayor Luis Montoya thanked Supervisor English for bringing the issue up. He wants to make sure that the powers that be know we expect to receive funds and have projects that are ready to be implemented and that our region receives whatever we are fairly entitled to. Supervisor English stated that she doesn't want to go through project by project with the State Legislature and that the funds be distributed through SEAGO programming. Mayor Montoya concurred. Graham County Supervisor Paul David said it would be nice if there was a meeting where the legislature asked for guidance, stating that the State five year plan has nothing in it for Greenlee County; Cochise County hasn't received much; and Graham County has seen very little. Greenlee County Supervisor David Gomez concurred with all that has been said and that everything that has been said should be taken very seriously. Bisbee Mayor Ken Budge also concurs. Randy Heiss advised he will work on some language and will send it out to the Board with a deadline for feedback. If he doesn't hear from someone, he will assume they are good with what has been drafted.

Supervisor English made a motion to recommend approval of Resolution 2021-06 with an addendum as discussed for southeast Arizona to receive their portion of the ARPA funds; second by Vice Mayor Richard Ortega.

MOTION: Supervisor Ann English
SECOND: Vice Mayor Richard Ortega
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.

Vice Mayor Richard Ortega made a motion to recommend approval the SEAGO Policy Principles for Calendar Year 2022 presented by staff; second by Supervisor Ann English.

MOTION: Vice Mayor Richard Ortega
SECOND: Supervisor Ann English
ACTION: Unanimous

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

Keith Dennis reviewed the various project applications that were submitted by the entities noted in the memo.

Supervisor Ann English made a motion to recommend approval of the 2021 CDBG project applications; second by Mayor Luis Montoya.

MOTION: Supervisor Ann English
SECOND: Mayor Luis Montoya
ACTION: Unanimous

V. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Future Meeting Dates

Randy advised that he sends out calendar invites a year in advance so that it can be put on Board members' calendars so conflicts can be avoided. The next Executive Board meeting is February 25th, 2022 in Cochise County. He also 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. 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 in 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 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.

Mayor Montoya stated he supports deferring the strategic plan retreat. David Budd, Supervisor Ann English, and Supervisor David Gomez all concur. Supervisor English stated the current plan is working. Supervisor Paul

David agrees with the discussion, stating he would much rather have staff engaged in work that needs to be completed rather than being distracted. Randy stated he will plan on February 2023 for 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.

Supervisor English suggested that as part of the front-end work for the retreat and to keep Board members engaged, that they be provided updates on what up-front work staff is doing until the member retreat is held. Luis Montoya suggested that outreach be done to bring newer members up to date on what the retreat is and what is expected outcome.

C. Quarterly Finance Report

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

D. Community Development Report

Keith Dennis provided an update on Community Development Programs including the SEAGO Cares Homeowners Assistance Program, reporting that the program started in May 2020. There have been 68 applications received and of those, 34 qualified for funding. He provided a breakdown on where applicants came from: Sierra Vista-15, Safford-10, Bisbee-5; Douglas-10; Huachuca City-3. There are 5 clients who have received assistance for more than one month. Total expenditures to date are \$57,498.27. He and Program Coordinator Melissa Hartman have been on 3 radio interviews and he advised that the utility companies have been very valuable partners in this program, which is where at least half of the applicants heard about the program. He also shared that radio spots were also purchased on the San Carlos Apache Tribe station, KYAY, and that a success story was developed that has been used in print marketing. Randy shared that the program has helped families remain in their homes and avoid homelessness. He asked members to help get the word out. Mayor Montoya thanked Keith for getting the word out and he encouraged members to utilize the resources being provided. He stated that they have posted the information on their website and Facebook page.

E. SEAGO Economic Development District Report

Stephen Peterson provided an update on Economic Development and responded to questions.

Randy stated that former Economic Program Manager, Maria Porter's departure 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 has been working in economic development.

Richard Ortega stated he wishes there was a way to get the San Carlos Tribe more involved. They are the greatest asset we have and we need to take care of them. David Budd, Santa Cruz County, asked Stephen when they could expect broadband improvements to their area. Stephen answered that it depends on the level of partnership/relationship with the internet providers.

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

Randy advised that because of Maria Porter's leaving, 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 Community 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.

VIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Randy reminded everyone that any time an Executive Board member gets an idea for an agenda item, 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

Vice Chair Garino called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mayor Garino made the motion to adjourn the meeting; Vice Mayor Ortega seconded.

MOTION: Mayor Arturo Garino
SECOND: Vice Mayor Richard Ortega
ACTION: Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.