

**APPROVED MINUTES OF
THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
10:00 A.M., FRIDAY, MAY 17, 2024
VIA ZOOM
THATCHER TOWN HALL
3700 W MAIN ST. THATCHER, ARIZONA**

OFFICERS PRESENT: Budge, Ken – City of Bisbee (2nd Vice-Chair) **(Zoom)**
Gomez, David – Greenlee County (Chair) **(In-Person)**
Lopez, Arnold – City of Safford (1st Vice-Chair) **(In-Person)**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ahmann, Steve – Greenlee County Private Sector Representative **(Zoom)**
Blake, Alex – Town of Duncan **(In-Person)**
Budd, David – Santa Cruz Private Sector Representative **(Zoom)**
Bryce, Randy – Town of Thatcher **(In-Person)**
David, Paul – Graham County **(In-Person)**
English, Ann – Cochise County **(Zoom)**
Floyd, Heather – Cochise County Private Sector Representative **(In-Person)**
Lopez, Edmund – Graham County Private Sector Representative **(In-Person)**
Mermis, Mark – Cochise County Private Sector Representative **(In-Person)**
Umphrey, Carolyn – City of Sierra Vista **(Zoom)**

STAFF PRESENT: Curtiss, Dina – Accounting Manager **(In-Person)**
Dennis, Keith – Executive Director **(In-Person)**
Dumas, Robin – Economic Development Planner **(In-Person)**
Miller, David – Community Coordinator **(In-Person)**
Osborne, William – Community Development Program Manager **(In-Person)**
Vasquez, Celeste – AAA Director **(In-Person)**
Vertrees, Chris – Transportation Program Manager **(In-Person)**

GUESTS: Adam, Kevin – RTAC **(In-Person)**
Usevitch, Jim – Colby & Powell **(Zoom)**

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Gomez called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. At the request of the Chair, Community Coordinator David Miller read the names of the members attending in-person and Zoom.

II. MEMBER ENTITIES' DISCUSSION

Chair Gomez opened the floor for Member Entities discussion. **Supervisor Ann English** thanked SEAGO for being a valued partner with Cochise County on their commercial port project.

III. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No members of the public were present.

IV. COLBY & POWELL PRESENTATION

Jim Usevitch of Colby and Powell gave a presentation to the Board of SEAGO's FY2023 audit.

V. ACTION ITEMS

1. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of the February 23, 2024 Minutes

Chair Gomez called for a motion to approve the February 23, 2024 minutes.

MOTION: Paul David
SECOND: Heather Floyd
ACTION: Unanimous

2. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Items
 - a. Sustainability of Fund Balance (discussion only)
 - b. Discussion and possible action to approve the FY 2025 Assessment Schedule
 - c. Discussion and possible action to approve the propped FY 2025 SEAGO Budget

2.(a) Executive Director Keith Dennis described to the Executive Board the uses of fund balance in prior years, the amount of fund balance currently available, and provided a projection of how long uses of fund balance may be sustained. ***(This was an information item only and did not have need for a motion.)***

Supervisor Paul David inquired about the contingency amount set in the budget. Mr. Dennis answered that the amount would be voted on by the Executive Board while approving SEAGO's FY2025 budget. **Cochise County PSR Mark Mermis** asked if any of the fund balance included any differed revenue from the prior years. Dina Curtiss responded that it did not.

2.(b) Mr. Dennis provided the Executive Board SEAGO's FY2025 assessment schedule. Mr. Dennis was proud to report that there are no anticipated increases in the per capita amounts used to calculate the dues charged to SEAGO member entities.

Chair Gomez called for a motion to approve the FY2025 Assessment Schedule.

MOTION: Ann English
SECOND: Heather Floyd
ACTION: Unanimous

2.(c) Mr. Dennis then gave an overview of the proposed FY2025 budget worksheet that provided details of each program's budget, and offered to answer any questions.

Chair Gomez called for a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2025 SEAGO Budget.

MOTION: Paul David
SECOND: Mark Mermis
ACTION: Unanimous

3. Discussion and possible action to approve to authorize the Executive Director to publish a request for proposals, evaluate proposals received, and enter into a contract with a qualified consultant for Graham County Housing Feasibility Study as requested by staff

Community Development Program Manager Will Osborne provided an overview of the need for a Housing Feasibility Study for Graham County. Mr. Osborne stated that in February SEAGO applied for a United Way of Graham and Greenlee Counties Cycle 1-2024 grant for an actionable Graham County Housing Feasibility Study. The purpose of the study is to increase economic stability by providing a foundation for directed efforts to increase housing development and affordability to support workforce retention and growth in Graham County. Mr. Osborne offered to answer any questions.

Chair Gomez called for a motion to approve authorization for the Executive Director to enter into a contact with a qualified consultant for Graham County Housing Feasibility Study as requested by staff.

MOTION: Ann English
SECOND: Heather Floyd
ACTION: Unanimous

4. Discussion and possible action to approve Fiscal Year 2025 AAA Provisional Subaward Recommendations

This item was removed from "Action Items." This item is not ready for a motion, and will be included in the May 30th joint Administrative-Executive Committee meeting.

5. Discussion and possible action to approve one-time retirement bonus to former SEAGO Executive Director Randy Heiss

Executive Director Dennis reminded the Board that this agenda item was discussed at the February 23rd meeting, and at the direction of the Board SEAGO staff obtained a legal opinion on this matter. Mr. Dennis presented to the board the opinion of both SEAGO's attorney and auditor. **Supervisor Ann English** stated that she agreed with the advice of legal counsel. **Cochise County PSR Mark Mermis** asked if there may be alternatives to a cash payment. Keith Dennis answered that there may be possibilities, but not through SEAGO funds. **Chair Gomez** commented that he was for the idea of a cash bonus as long as it was legal to do so, and that early indications were that it would be legal.

Chair Gomez called for a motion. **Mr. David** moved to follow legal advice and not approve a gift to former Executive Director Randy Heiss.

MOTION: Paul David
SECOND: Ed Lopez
ACTION: Unanimous

VI. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. Future Meeting Dates

Keith Dennis referenced the future dates of both the Administrative Council and Executive Board meetings. Mr. Dennis also informed the Board that there will be a combined Administrative Council and Executive Board Committee meeting May 30, 2024 to discuss time sensitive, program related business.

B. Quarterly Finance Report

Dina Curtiss provided the Quarterly Finance Report and responded to questions.

C. Community Development Report

William Osborne provided an update on Community Development and responded to questions.

D. SEAGO Economic Development District Report

Robin Dumas provided an update on Economic Development and responded to questions.

E. AAA Updates

Celeste Vasquez provided SEAGO AAA program updates and responded to questions.

F. Transportation Program Updates

Chis Vertrees provided Transportation Program updates and responded to questions.

VII. RTAC REPORT

Kevin Adam provided the RTAC report and responded to questions.

VIII. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS / CURRENT EVENTS

Mayor Ken Budge arrived after Member Entities Discussion. Mr. Budge wanted to make the Board aware of two bills (20-23 & 20-60) are up for State Senate votes.

Mr. Dennis recognized and thanked the newest members of the Executive Board, Mark Mermis and Arnold Lopez.

Mr. Dennis thanked Town of Thatcher Mayor Bryce for hosting the Executive Board meeting, and praised Dina Curtiss and Chris Vertrees for assisting in his transition to Executive Director.

IX. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Keith Dennis informed the Board that SEAGO will be providing updates to the Board on CDBG program-related items, SEAGO's procurement policy, HR personnel policy and strategic plan updates.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Gomez adjourned the meeting at 11:49 a.m.