

**APPROVED MINUTES OF
THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
10:00 A.M., FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2024
VIA ZOOM
SIERRA VISTA CITY HALL
1011 CORONADO DR. SIERRA VISTA, ARIZONA**

OFFICERS PRESENT: Gomez, David – Greenlee County (Chair) **(In-Person)**
Maldonado, Jorge – City of Nogales (Treasurer) **(Zoom)**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ahmann, Steve – Greenlee County Private Sector Representative **(Zoom)**
Barlow, Bill – City of Tombstone **(In-Person)**
Blake, Alex – Town of Duncan **(In-Person)**
Budd, David – Santa Cruz Private Sector Representative **(Zoom)**
David, Paul – Graham County **(Zoom)**
English, Ann – Cochise County **(In-Person)**
Floyd, Heather – Cochise County Private Sector Representative **(In-Person)**
Huish, Donald – City of Douglas **(In-Person)**
Lopez, Edmund – Graham County Private Sector Representative **(In-Person)**
Montoya, Luis – Town of Clifton **(Zoom)**
Nozie, Eugene – San Carlos Apache Tribe **(Zoom)**
Umphrey, Carolyn – City of Sierra Vista **(In-Person)**
Valle, Dan – Cochise County Private Sector Representative **(In-Person)**

STAFF PRESENT: Curtiss, Dina – Accounting Manager **(In-Person)**
Dennis, Keith – Executive Director **(In-Person)**
Miller, David – Community Coordinator **(In-Person)**
Vertrees, Chris – Transportation Program Manager **(In-Person)**

GUESTS: None

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Gomez called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. At the request of the Chair, members were asked to introduce themselves.

II. MEMBER ENTITIES' DISCUSSION

Chair Gomez called on **Supervisor Ann English** for an update on Cochise County. Ms. English provided an update on the Port of Entry in Douglas, reiterating that this project will also be updating the water infrastructure from the Port to Highway 80. **Chair Gomez** called on **Supervisor Paul David** for an update on Graham County. Mr. David announced that Graham County is currently working on several ADOT projects. **Chair Gomez** recognized **Councilman Luis Montoya** from the Town of Clifton. Mr. Montoya voiced several concerns is Town is having with ADOT. Mr. Montoya informed the Board that currently the Town of Clifton is experiencing many difficulties with Highway 191, and that it would be extremely inconvenient if this project was put on hold as it is the only road to Clifton. Mr. Montoya expressed gratitude for SEAGO finding and obtaining the Town of Clifton with additional grant funds.

III. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No members of the public were present.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

1. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of the November 17, 2023 Minutes

Chair Gomez called for a motion to approve the November 17, 2023 minutes.

MOTION: Ann English
SECOND: Heather Floyd
ACTION: Unanimous

2. Election of Officers

Keith Dennis presented to the Board the by-laws concerning the Election of Officers to the Executive Board. SEAGO's by-laws state a 4 County rotation of Officers, with Graham County due to be Chair this upcoming year. However, **Mayor Richard Ortega** will be stepping down from SEAGO's Executive Board and his replacement has yet to be voted on by Safford City Council. **Supervisor Ann English** inquired if there was another representative from Graham County on the Executive Board that would be eligible to become Chair rather than Mayor Ortega's replacement. Mr. Dennis confirmed that Graham County **Supervisor Paul David** was on the Board and eligible for the position. Mr. David declined to become Chair due to previous commitments. Mr. Dennis informed the Board that in this case the SEAGO by-laws do state that the 2nd Vice Chair would be able to assume the position of Chair. **Mayor Ken Budge** who is currently 2nd Vice Chair was contacted to see if he would be interested in choosing this option. Mr. Budge indicated that due to multiple professional and personal reasons that he would not be interested in becoming Chair. Mr. Dennis indicated to the Board that SEAGO's by-laws would also allow the current Chair to serve an additional term, essentially keeping in place the current position of Officers. **Supervisor David Gomez** stated that he would be willing to serve an additional term.

Chair Gomez called for a motion to approve the Election of Officers.

MOTION: Don Huish
SECOND: Carolyn Umphrey
ACTION: Unanimous

3. Discussion and possible action to approve Cochise County Private Sector Representatives to the Executive Board

Keith Dennis gave a brief overview of SEAGO's by-laws concerning Private Sector Representatives. Mr. Dennis stated that SEAGO is an Economic Development District, which requires one Private Sector Representative per County, and in the case of Cochise County with a population over 100,000 two representatives are required. **Ms. Heather Floyd**, who has served on the Board for one term, wishes to continue for a second term. **Mr. Dan Valle** who has served two terms on the Board has recommended **Mr. Mark Mermis** as his replacement on the Board. **Councilman Bill Barlow** commented that having the recommendation of a previous Board member greatly contributes to his decision of approving new members.

Chair Gomez called for a motion to appoint Mark Mermis as Cochise County Private Sector Representative.

MOTION: Ann English
SECOND: Bill Barlow
ACTION: Unanimous

V. 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 April 4, 2024 to discuss time sensitive, program related business.

B. Quarterly Finance Report

Dina Curtiss informed the Board that SEAGO has just completed two years of zero-finding audits and responded to questions. **Supervisor Ann English** asked if SEAGO was still using an outside CPA to assist with audits. Ms. Curtiss replied that SEAGO did not use an outside firm this year.

C. Community Development Report

Keith Dennis provided an update on Community Development and responded to questions.

D. SEAGO Economic Development District Report

Keith Dennis provided an update on Economic Development and responded to questions. **Supervisor Ann English** asked if it was possible to have an update from the Economic Advisory Council. **Cochise County PSR Heather Floyd** gave a brief update on the State's broadband initiative.

E. AAA Updates

Seana Riffle provided SEAGO AAA program updates and responded to questions. **Supervisor Ann English** asked if services were combined in the entire region. Ms. Riffle confirmed that all four counties have had services combined. **Supervisor Paul David** asked if SEAGO AAA has a sense if things are getting more challenging for seniors. Ms. Riffle commented that there are quite a few challenges for seniors and SEAGO is working on several options to help resolve these issues.

F. Transportation Program Updates

Chis Vertrees provided Transportation Program updates and responded to questions. **Tribal Councilman David Noize** inquired on what projects may be available for the San Carlos Apache Tribe. Mr. Vertrees referred to the RTAC priority list that is currently in budget session. **Supervisor Paul David** gave a brief overview on the current RTAC priority list. **Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn Umphrey** shared that the RTAC priority list has passed the House committee by a vote of 9 to 1.

VI. RTAC REPORT

Kevin Adam was not present.

VII. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS / CURRENT EVENTS

Keith Dennis shared with the Board SEAGO's Austerity Plan, which was adopted in 2014 in the event of a government shutdown. Mr. Dennis reassured the Board that if there was a shutdown SEAGO would be prepared if necessary.

Keith Dennis invited the Board to Open Meeting Law Training that SEAGO will be hosting at Cochise College (Benson campus) on March 28 from 10am – 12pm.

Keith Dennis notified the Board of a previous item that was due to come back before them had been cancelled. That item was for a Community Land Trust, which has since gone in another direction.

Keith Dennis encouraged the Board to take a copy of SEAGO's updated Policy and Principles brochure.

VIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Supervisor Ann English requested an Economic Advisory Council report.

Keith Dennis made the Board aware that SEAGO's auditing firm will be giving a presentation at the next Executive Board Meeting.

Keith Dennis will be preparing an update to the Board on SEAGO's strategic plan.

AAA nominations have in the past been selected during the May Executive Board Meeting.

Santa Cruz County IGA pertaining to office rental for SEAGO AAA.

Elgin Elementary contract for Davis-Bacon monitoring.

Supervisor Paul David requested an update on Rural Water issues.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. The Board may vote to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to A.R.S. 38.431.03 Subsection A.1. for purposes of discussion of a possible retirement gift and/or cash bonus for SEAGO's retired Executive Director Randy Heiss, to include discussion of a specific gift to be determined in appreciation for over 14 years of service and leadership.

Executive Board entered into Executive Session at 11:45 a.m.

X. RE-CONVENE PUBLIC SESSION

Executive Board re-convened at 12:19 p.m.

1. Discussion and possible action relating to a retirement gift and/or cash bonus for SEAGO's past Executive Director.

Tribal Councilman David Noize called for a motion that was seconded by **Mr. Stephen Ahman** to suspend the rules pertaining to modifying the agenda. **Chair Gomez** recognized **Cochise County PSR Heather Floyd's** multiple calls for point of order. **Ms. Floyd** reminded the Board that this was already an agenda item. Upon further discussion, it was recommended that SEAGO seek the advice of legal counsel.

No additional action was taken.

XI. ADJOURMENT

Chair Gomez adjourned the meeting at 12:45 p.m.