

South Central Assembly
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
May 21, 2008
Library, Penn State Harrisburg

Officers:

- [p] Jo Ellen Litz
- [e] Steven Peterson
- [] Glenn Snyder
- [e] Raymond Klein
- [p] Sherri Zimmerman
- [p] Nancy Besch

- [p] Boyd Wolff
- [p] Lori Yeich ***
- [] Merrill Yohe
- [] Bob Ziobrowski

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Others Attending:

- * Josh Karns
- ** Ed Nielson
- *** Mike Piakowski
- Ann Simonetti
- Craig Zumbrun (Executive Director)
- Stephen Scanlon (Staff)

Members

- [] Robert Anspach
- [e] Mark Berg
- [] Daniel Betancourt
- [t] Harrison Bink
- [p] Gail D'Angelo
- [] Michael Fesen
- [] Mauree Gingrich
- [] Richard Gray
- [] Francis B Haas, Esq.
- [] Irving Hand
- [p] Roger T. Karsnitz, Sr.
- [p] George Klaus¹
- [p] Julie Lalo^{2*}
- [] Joe McCarthy
- [] Skip Memmi
- [] Russ Montgomery
- [t] Penny Myers
- [] Susan Parry³
- [p] Stephen Powell
- [p] Stephen Reed^{**}
- [] George Rettew
- [e] Christopher Reiley
- [p] Rusty Shunk
- [t] Steve Snell
- [] Ted Streeter
- [] Michael Sturla
- [e] Rose Marie Swanger
- [] William Troxell

Attendance Key: e - excused absence (prior contact) p - present t - telephone
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1 Ex Officio USDA
2 Ex Officio 10,000 Friends of PA
3 Ex Officio RC&D

May 21, 2008

Call to Order

The board president called the meeting to order at 3:05.

Introductions were made. Three members participated through a conference telephone connection. New attendees were:

Josh Karns who indicated that he will be representing Julie Lalo of 10,000 Friends.

Mike Piakowski indicated that he is participating for Lori Yeich of DCNR.

Ed Nielson indicated that he will be in regular attendance for Mayor Stephen Reed.

Ann Simonetti, Marysville Council President, indicated a desire to learn more about the Assembly as she contemplates accepting a nomination to the board.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Zumbrun reported that the Pennsylvania Housing Alliance sponsored Affordable Housing Trust Fund is making progress in the legislature.

Bench Mark Solutions Inc. has expressed interest in regional applications of an energy purchase consortium that would include brokered services. It has immediate potential for income. Both Harrisburg and York have had good experiences with Bench Mark. He noted that Mr. Nielson would have more to say on the topic later in the meeting.

The ad for executive director placed on the Assembly web site and in the Patriot News has drawn at least eight responses to date. The Executive Committee will need to come up with a plan to begin the interview process.

Discussion:

Ms. Zimmerman represented the Assembly in a meeting with Bench Mark on how an energy consortium could work and how it currently works in Harrisburg. Bench Mark only makes money if the city makes money. The Assembly could work under the sponsorship of Harrisburg. Bench Mark would provide the following services: negotiations for price, audits and bill processing, and energy management recommendations. It was recommended by Bench Mark that Mr. Klein's RFP needed to be reworked.

Mr. Nielson, who manages Harrisburg's contract with Bench Mark would need to figure out the parameters to include the Assembly.

Ms. Litz stated that there is a need for energy audits for small organizations.

Mr. Nielson noted that there needs to be some level of volume for it to work financially so midsized businesses might be a limit.

Ms. Litz asked if services could include just an audit, and what might that price be?

Mr. Nielson did not know.

Ms. Zimmerman and Mr. Karns volunteered to serve on a task force to investigate these possibilities. Mr. Nielson recused himself noting a conflict of interest.

Ms. Lutz suggested highlighting services such as energy audits that are different from what is offered by others so as not to seem competitive.

Mr. Zumbrim cautioned the board that there is a stipulation that information regarding Bench Mark is confidential.

Mr. Nielson recommended that the Assembly look into Central Penn Energy Consortium among others as well.

A media services opportunity exists. It would be similar to the brokered energy program and include telecommunications audits. It would be an opportunity for governments and nonprofits to save money. It is something to keep in mind to follow on the energy project.

Mr. Nielson indicated that Harrisburg is making a citywide audit through Johnson Controls. He will pass info on to Mr. Zumbun.

Approval of the minutes of March 19, 2008

Mr. Scanlon noted two minor errors needing correction.
Mr. Snell motioned to approve then minutes as corrected. Seconded by Mr. Bink.
No further discussion.
Unanimous approval.

County Commissioners Report

Ms. Litz announced that there is now an Executive Summary of Lebanon County Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Besch announced that Barbara Cross is the newly appointed county commissioner for Cumberland County. Ms. Besch is hoping to interest her in participating with the Assembly.

Ms. Litz addressed the board stating that she wants the Assembly to be vital in the region. It is a nonprofit that can make a difference. There needs to be a signature project or two. She is excited about the energy proposal after initial hesitancy. Please – all – be willing to have people help you to work your ideas through. This needs to be an atmosphere of encouragement, not one of naysayers.

Executive Committee

The committee will be working on applications for the executive director position.

Nominating Committee

Ms. Besch related a discussion with Barbara Groce. Ms. Groce submitted her board resignation since she no longer represented Sovereign Bank. However, she remains interested in serving and would accept a nomination to a new board term. Forthwith, Ms. Besch speaking for the committee

Nominated Barbara Groce for a three-year term beginning January 2008.

Seconded by Mr. Wolf. Further discussion: none. Unanimous approval.

Ms. Besch

Nominated Ken Miller to the three year term beginning January 2008.

Mr. Miller is Vice President of Government Banking, Sovereign Bank. He has 20-years banking experience and serves on the Business Advisory Board for his School District among other civic involvements.

Mr. Shunk seconded the motion. No further discussion. Unanimous approval.

Ms. Besch noted that Ms. Simonetti, Marysville Council President, Capital Region COG member and Perry County COG member is present to observe the board. Her name is to be added to the board distribution list.

Resignations:

Ms. Besch read a letter from Doug Price indicating his desire to resign from Assembly Board membership and Health and Human Services chairmanship. Mr. Price is beginning new employment in Chambersburg where he will be running a L.I.F.E. center.

Ms. Besch read a letter from James Turner indicating his desire to resign from Assembly Board membership citing his inability to provide active participation.

Ms. Besch made a

Motion to accept the resignations of Misters Price and Turner with regret.
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Seconded by Mr. Snell. No further discussion. Unanimous Approval.

Finance Report

Mr. Scanlon reported that the banking information is with the accountant who inadvertently left on vacation without returning it and the financial statements. Nevertheless, in round numbers he reported that with the recent receipt of the \$33,000 KOZ grant check via the City of Harrisburg (the Assembly subcontracts the work from Harrisburg) and a recent deposit of \$500 in membership fees the Assembly operating account is as follows:

Funds available in May: \$34,000

Expenses May \$21,900 (Includes back staff salaries and summit expenses)

Balance: \$12,600

Paid membership is between 15 and 20 to date

Agriculture Committee

Mr. Wolf reported that land continues to be preserved in perpetuity. And he noted that reducing nitrogen and phosphorus run-off from non-point sources [e.g. farms] is a bane to effective Chesapeake Bay cleanup.

Ms. Litz announced that she is now on the Farmland Preservation Board. Her first meeting was at Mr. Wolf's former farm.

Mr. Snell commented that the Adams/York Smart Growth initiative is nearing completion of its handbook for municipalities.

Housing, Predatory Lending and Community Development Committee

Mr. Klaus reported that the joined committee is planning to meet in late June. Independent of that, several counties are active in conducting affordable housing meetings. York County is planning and Cumberland County is also planning a fall event. Adams County will hold an event for lenders and realtors in later in May.

Ms. Litz asked how can more counties have these.

Mr. Klaus opined that this committee could provide leadership.

Ms. D'Angelo requested an accounting of the Predatory Lending finances. [These will be provided once the accounting is received at the office.] Mr. Scanlon believed this to be in the \$6,700 ballpark.

Special Task Force on the Chesapeake Bay

Mr. Zumbrun noted that the task force recommendation to the state was not acted on by the Assembly Board. The simple recommendations addressed those issues that contribute to the problem but have not been part of the solution. He stated that we will need to resurrect that report. He reflected that we need to find a way to address the recommendations to municipalities that are worried about expenses. We need to serve municipalities that don't trust the Assembly.

Ms. Simonetti stated about the 1972 Clean Water Act water sources north of Chesapeake Bay could not impact the bay. In 2005 Maryland identified their cap loads. These are the point sources, which are regulated by permits to ensure compliance. Since 2007, nitrogen and

phosphorus are part of that report. Repermitting is done on a five year cycle. However, the Clean Water Act did not address nonpoint sources, (Animal feeding operations can be regulated but not most farms.) Municipalities are feeling defensive because their infrastructures are aged. And there are not sufficient funds to adapt. VA and MD initiated a flush tax to provide dollars to upgrade systems.

Transportation Committee

Has not met.

Mr. Zumbun identified the leasing of the Turnpike initiative as the current big news.

He noted that the committee needs someone with a passion to lead it. He is unsure if Felicia Dell intends to be involved.

Modern transit partnership

Mr. Karns commented that the Pennsylvania Community Choices Initiative links new funding to good land use planning following the Keystone Principals. There is some hesitant interest from MPOs and RPOs. (They are concerned that the initiative will draw funds away.) The initiative may be included in 2009/10 budget.

Ms. Litz indicated that the Corridor 2 study is to be completed in late June. The Lebanon County Chamber of Commerce will hold an event to release the study.

Ms. Besch reported that Walter Lyon [former board member] is addressing support for the Corridor One concept to avoid Norfolk Southern's increasing rail freight on the West Shore. Norfolk Southern wants Modern Transit Partnership to provide \$7 million to build improvements above grade. It is encouraging everyone to work with everybody to preserve the railroad's Susquehanna River bridge. NS want an at grade track that would negate the need for the Susquehanna River bridge. Mr. Lyons is educating municipalities in order that they not support the railroad's wish to build at grade.

Ms. Besch also reported that the Modern Transportation Partnership is running a renaming contest for Corridor One. Approximately 1,000 entries were shrunk down to 15. MTP is getting positive name recognition through the contest.

Old Business

2008 Summit Report

Mr. Klaus stated a target date of June 1 for a draft summit report.

He is putting together a rebudget because summit expenditures were not spent by the categories presented in the budget. That will determine how much of the original \$25,000 DCED grant will actually be earned.

Fred Reddig (Gov Center for Local Gov't) expressed enthusiasm for working with the Assembly. He also offered an admonition: don't step on toes of existing service providers.

There seems to be an interest in DCED as an alternative to working with some municipal associations that many not be getting along well.

Mr. Klaus further reported the possibility of working with the Delaware Valley Insurance Trust (DVIT), a nonprofit, still exists. It is very interested in moving its service area west. The Capital Region Insurance Trust, (CRIT), a for profit, may be completion.

Ms. Litz questioned: do we want to get involved in competition?

Mr. Klaus expressed yes; municipalities want cheaper service.

Mr. Snell shared Ms. Litz concern about competition.

Ms. Litz asked how many companies are in the regional pool.

Mr. Klaus responded that there are a lot of insurance providers; municipalities can go with whom they want. We don't owe anyone anything. Everyone has an interest in insurance.

Ms. Litz requested a one page summary from Mr. Klaus and recommends waiting until national election to make any decision

Mr Klaus agreed to get further information on DVIT and CRIT for comparison.

Emeritus Board status

No report.

Membership compliance issues

Mr. Scanlon reported that there was little response from the board meeting notice that went out four weeks ago. The notice was followed by a description of membership requirements as discussed in the March board meeting and in the bylaws. An invitation to respond with questions/concerns was included. Mr. Turner offered the only response, his resignation.

A draft letter and record of members out of membership compliance was prepared but has not been acted upon. Mr. Scanlon suggested that there may be no need to send individual letters of inquiry as much the same information was related in the meeting invitation message. The information was also appended to the meeting reminder message sent out a week prior to this meeting.

No action was taken. Ms. D'Angelo, Ms Zimmerman and Mr. Scanlon work on the issue. Mr. Scanlon will prepare a report on current membership.

New Business

Mr. Zumbun reported that Fred Reddig (Governor's Center) is open to working on regional initiatives with the Assembly. He is interested in getting a new executive director who will be able to manage services with the capability to carry on intergovernmental projects.

Mr. Zumbun suggested minimum parameters for a new executive director. He recommended regular office hours for three days per week of four consecutive hours. He also recommended telephone initial interviews to pare down the applicant pool.

Ms. Litz suggested any schedule needs flexibility for meetings etc.

Ms. Litz offered her cell phone number: 644-4698.

Mr. Scanlon indicated he will update the board member contact list, last updated six months ago.

Mr. Klaus indicated that USDA-RD has both loan and grant funds available, especially business loan guarantees for expansions and refinancing.

Motion to adjourn

by Ms. Zimmerman, seconded by Mr. Powell. Unanimous approval.

The **next meeting** of the South Central Assembly Board will be **July 16 at Penn State Harrisburg's library gallery**. A telephone conference call in number will be made available near to the meeting date.