

MINUTES

**FIVE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

WEDNESDAY, April 15, 2020

1:30 P.M.

ELECTRONIC MEETING VIA TELEPHONE CONFERENCE CALL

ANCHOR LOCATION:

**FIVE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
1070 W. 1600 SOUTH BLDG. B
ST. GEORGE, UTAH**

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Commissioner Paul Cozzens
Dale Brinkerhoff
Commissioner Mike Dalton
Carolyn White
Mayor Nolan Davis
Commissioner Jerry Taylor
Frank Houston
Commissioner LaMont Smith
Mayor Robert Houston
LaRene Cox
Commissioner Gil Almquist
Mayor John Bramall

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Heath Hansen
Scott Albrecht
Henrie Walton
Bryan Thiriot
Nathan Wiberg
Gary Zabriskie
Allison McCoy

MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Mayor Melanie Torgersen (excused)
Mayor Todd Robinson
Lisa Livingston

REPRESENTING

Iron County Commission Representative
Iron County School Board Representative
Beaver County Commission Representative
Beaver County School Board Representative
Beaver County Mayor Representative
Garfield County Commission Representative
Garfield County School Board Representative
Kane County Commission Representative
Kane County Mayor Representative
Washington County School Board Representative
Washington County Commission Representative
Washington County Mayor Representative

REPRESENTING

Senator Mike Lee
Senator Mitt Romney
Dixie State University
Five County A.O.G. Staff
Five County A.O.G. Staff
Five County A.O.G. Staff
Five County A.O.G. Staff

REPRESENTING

Garfield County Mayoral Representative
Iron County Mayoral Representative
Kane County School Board Representative

I. WELCOME BY COMMISSIONER PAUL COZZENS, CHAIR

Chairman Paul Cozzens opened the meeting slightly early at 1:34 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL VOTE TO DETERMINE IF A QUORUM IS PRESENT

A roll call vote determined that a quorum was present.

III. APPROVAL OF MARCH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Carolyn White moved to approve the draft March Steering Committee Meeting minutes with the changes recommended by Frank Houston via email which were to remove the word “excused” after his name as he was present at the March meeting. Commissioner Lamont Smith seconded the motion. The changes were incorporated into the final version and the minutes were approved unanimously via a roll call vote.

IV. FY 2020 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG), RATING AND RANKING (R&R), APPROVAL BY THE STEERING COMMITTEE, IN ITS ROLE AS THE REGION’S R&R COMMITTEE, OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION BASED UPON THE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED RATING CRITERIA (Nate Wiberg, Associate Planner, FCAOG)

Nathan Wiberg, Associate Planner on the Five County Association of Governments staff, reviewed the following information with the Steering Committee for the FY 20 Regional Rating and Ranking Project Prioritization.

Nate explained that all the submitted CDBG projects have been applied to the approved Rating and Ranking criteria. The first two projects were pre-approved and awarded to the FCAOG. They were \$50,000 for CDBG administration and \$45,000 for Community Planning and Technical Assistance. Additionally, Cedar City (on behalf of the Cedar City Housing Authority) was pre-approved to receive \$100,000 for the second year of a multi-year project to acquire multi-family housing.

The other projects were ranked as follows: 1) Cedar City Housing Authority, requested 200,000 for 2-3 low-income housing units, received \$300,000 2) Hildale City requested \$148,894 for sidewalk, curb, getter, and bike lane developments; awarded \$156,473 3) Washington City on behalf of the Dove Center asked for \$165,000 for Erin’s House improvements; they were awarded \$173,398 4) Kane County asked for \$93,283 to upgrade portions of the Kanab Center for ADA access. They received \$98,031.

Nate noted that if FCAOG receives the anticipated dollar amount, all projects will be fully funded. The remaining \$120,725 dollars FCAOG is projected to receive will be allocated to other projects in accordance with the Association’s policies.

Commissioner LaMont Smith made a motion to accept the Rating & Ranking as presented. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Jerry Taylor. The motion passed unanimously via roll call vote.

Nate then explained the next steps of the CDBG process. First, he will send letters to all applicants to inform them that their applications were successfully rated and ranked. Applicants will need to attend the Grantee Workshop on Wednesday May 27, 2020. Applicant will notice and hold a second public hearing prior to May 31, 2020. Applicant will finalize their CDBG applications by May 31, 2020. Further

guidance will be given to the applicants at the Grantee Workshop. Nate will be available to assist applicants in completing their final application in the State's WebGrants application system.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL CDBG FUNDING PUBLIC HEARING – DISCUSS POTENTIAL ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT INFECTIOUS DISEASE RESPONSE (Nate Wiberg)

Nate Wiberg explained that the purpose of this public hearing is to provide citizens with pertinent information about the Community Development Block Grant program and to allow for discussion of possible applications for CDBG funding authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act known as the CARES Act. These special CDBG-CV funds are to be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) in the Five County AOG region and to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19.

Five County AOG is eligible to apply to the Utah Department of Workforce Services for funding under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Small Cities Program, a federally funded program administered by the State of Utah, Housing and Community Development Division (HCD). Five County AOG is eligible to apply for CDBG funding authorized by the CARES Act. Provided Five County AOG meets the applicable program requirements.

The grant money must be spent on projects benefiting primarily low-and-moderate income persons. The Five County Region is expected to receive approximately \$487,566 and it is possible that additional money may be allocated to our region in the coming months. Eligible activities must prevent and respond to the spread of infectious diseases such as the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Many of these activities are available to view on the "Quick Guide to CDBG Eligible Activities to Support Infectious Disease Response" sheet, which was posted with this public hearing notice on the Utah Public hearing notice Website. Examples of eligible CDBG-CV activities include but are not limited to constructing a facility for testing, diagnosis, or treatment; Avoid job loss caused by business closures related to social distancing by providing short-term working capital assistance to small businesses to enable retention of jobs held by low- and moderate-income persons; Short-term rental assistance; and Provide equipment, supplies, and materials necessary to carry-out a public service.

The 2019 and 2020 State Annual Action Plans are under revision to add this CDBG-CV funding and the activities that will be carried out. All comments will be considered by the Five County Association of Government when determining the project to apply for.

Commissioner Cozzens declared the public meeting open and invited members of the public to share their comments. Mayor Bramall shared that he would like more nursing slots to open at Southern Utah University and Dixie State University. Commissioner Dalton said he would like to see most of the money to go to support existing businesses and business expansion. Commissioner Cozzens asked how much money will be distributed. Gary Zabriskie explained that a working meeting would be being held soon to discuss and determine the allocation process. The meeting will include the commissioners and mayors, but not the school board representatives as school districts are not eligible to receive CDBG funds. Nate noted that, per the law, allocation decisions could not be made during this public hearing and the purpose of the discussion was to hear from the public as to where they feel the money would be best spent.

Bryan Thiriot asked if there were any cities that were excluded in the region. Nate explained that St. George city is excluded from the program because of its population size. Also, 70% of this money must be used for low to moderate income individuals, cities, census tracts, etc.

Mayor Bramall supports focusing the money on 1) Garfield 2) Kane and 3) Beaver counties as they are the least populated. Commissioners Dalton, Taylor, and Smith agreed. He explained that larger areas have more programs and funding sources available to them for help. Additionally, the economy of his area is only 24% tourism-based where other area's tourism tax-base could be closer to 90% of their total income. Commissioner Smith would like the region's tourism offices and chambers of commerce involved.

Gary Zabriskie clarified that the funding cannot be used on something that is already being covered by the CARES Act (salaries, for example). Chairman Cozzens asked for further public input. Hearing none, he declared the public hearing closed. Gary will send out a Doodle Poll and identify a time for a working meeting on this issue. The Chair noted that a Zoom meeting would be the preferred medium for that working meeting.

VI. AREAWIDE CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW & ACTION (RECOMMENDATION) (Gary Zabriskie, CED Director, FCAOG)

Gary Zabriskie reviewed a proposed SITLA land sale in Kane County. One of the properties that is being proposed for sell contains the Kanab City well and the Best Friend's Animal Sanctuary's culinary well. Mayor Robert Houston of Kanab explained that there was a company that wanted to develop sand for fracking. The Best Friends Animal Sanctuary deterred the company from acquiring the property, which cost the area jobs. He feels the project should be opposed on principle. Commissioner Dalton made a point of clarification and asked if the lease included protection of the culinary well. He also asked if Kanab City could lose the lease for the culinary well. Mayor Houston shared he had asked that question and felt he did not get a very good answer. Commissioner Dalton expressed a strong view that the Steering Committee should make it very clear in their correspondence that Kanab City's watershed must be protected.

Kanab City is concerned about Best Friends owning the land. At a minimum, they feel the Steering Committee needs to demand SITLA protect Kanab's watershed. Commissioner Taylor and Mayor John Bramall voiced their agreement. Commissioner Smith stated that Kane County is in full support of Kanab City. Mayor Houston re-iterated that this review should be opposed. Gary shared that SITLA is required to weigh the Steering Committee's review in their decision-making process. Kanab City and Kane County will send their own letters opposing the measure in addition to the letter being sent by the Steering Committee. Gary suggested the city and county get their respective attorneys involved.

Mayor Houston made a motion that the Steering Committee send a letter to SITLA opposing the sell of the SITLA lands listed. The letter will include the points made by Commissioner Dalton and Mayor Bramall. Specifically, any action taken on that land must fully protect Kanab City's watershed and strive to create jobs for local citizens. Mayor Bramall seconded the motion. Commissioner Smith reiterated Kane County's support of Kanab City's motion. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote

VII. CONGRESSIONAL STAFF UPDATES

Heath Hansen provided an updated from Senator Mike Lee's office. He shared that PCPA funds were expected to run out by the end of the week. He said more funding was on the way. He asked the Steering Committee members to make him aware of any businesses in their area that may especially need assistance. Senator Lee sent a letter to Secretary Bernhart of the Department of the Interior asking him to reduce royalty requirements for the oil, gas, and mining industry at this time. He also signed onto a letter tasking the Small Business Administration and Department of the Treasury to ensure religious and faith-based entities are eligible for assistance. Senator Lee is also working to help charities and non-profits, specifically he is seeking an increase to the charitable giving tax cap. The Senator is open to any and all ideas. Heath invited Steering Committee members to reach out to him with any input.

Commissioner Cozzens asked if the senators could help in any way on the SITLA land issue discussed in agenda item VI. Heath said he was doubtful because SITLA is a state agency, but he will investigate options.

Scott Albrecht gave an update from Senator Mitt Romney's office. He addressed the Paycheck Protection Program as well. Senator Romney feels it is very important to maintain oversight of spending. They have been holding a lot of Zoom meetings with Chambers of Commerce, the Utah League of Cities and Towns, and the Utah Association of Counties amongst other entities to identify areas where they can be of help. Senator Romney continues to follow the Northern Corridor issue. He participated in a recent call where the issue was discussed and is watching federal agencies to ensure the project is not unjustly delayed.

VIII. STATE AGENCY UPDATES

None.

IX. SOUTHERN UTAH & DIXIE STATE UNIVERSITY UPDATES

Henrie Walton provided an update from Dixie State University. Spring semester is finishing up online. The summer semester will be online as well. Graduation has been postponed to December 2020. DSU is hopeful that the Governor's office will announce movement to phase 2 of their COVID-19 plan on May 1st. This will allow some of the university to resume work. Additionally, DSU is going to receive some funding from the CARES Act. Henrie believes DSU will receive about \$6 million dollars, the first portion of that will go directly to the students.

X. DISCUSSION OF LOCAL AFFAIRS

No issues were raised.

XV. ADJOURN

Commissioner Cozzens adjourned the meeting at 2:26 P.M.