

**MINUTES OF  
THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MEETING  
9:00 A.M., THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 2023  
VIA ZOOM  
COCHISE COLLEGE BENSON  
1025 HWY 80, BENSON, ARIZONA**

OFFICERS PRESENT: Brown, Heath – Vice-Chair, Thatcher **(In-Person)**  
Rapier, Derek – Secretary, Greenlee County **(Zoom)**  
Robinson, Ronald – Chair, Patagonia **(In-Person)**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Batty, Vernon – Town of Pima **(Zoom)**  
Bermudez, Roy – City of Nogales **(Zoom)**  
Bigman, Barney – San Carlos Apache Tribe **(Zoom)**  
Fulton, Stephanie – Town of Huachuca City **(In-Person)**  
Hinton, Terry – Town of Duncan **(Zoom)**  
Pregler, Jeff – City of Sierra Vista **(Zoom)**  
Urquijo, Ana – City of Douglas **(Zoom)**  
Valdez, Jesus – Santa Cruz County **(Zoom)**  
Vivian, Vicki – City of Benson **(Zoom)**  
Welker, Dustin – Graham County **(Zoom)**

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

GUESTS: John Kissinger – City of Nogales **(Zoom)**  
Carrie Gibbons – SEAGO Area Agency on Aging **(In-Person)**

## **I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Robinson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. At the request of the Chair, Randy Heiss read the names of those physically present and those attending electronically into the record.

## **II. MEMBER ENTITIES' DISCUSSION**

Chair Robinson called on **Vickie Vivian** for an update on the City of Benson. Vicki reported the City recently received a \$1.5 million grant for the police department to help cover the costs of officers, equipment, and patrol cars over the next three years. They are still moving still forward on \$1.2 million that the City is investing into their parks. She also reported that they are almost done with their new City Hall. Chair Robinson called on **Stephanie Fulton** for an update on the Town of Huachuca City. Stephanie reported that the park that was recently upgraded with the CDBG funds has been a huge success - especially the walking path. They also received a contract to provide shuttle services to Fort Huachuca and can now create a new position for a transportation supervisor and seek grants to purchase new and upgraded buses. Chair Robinson called on **Jeff Pregler** for an update on the City of Sierra Vista. Jeff reported the City had applied for a number of grants to expand their network of multi-use paths and improve walkability around Sierra Vista. Chair Robinson called on **Heath Brown** for an update on the Town of Thatcher. Heath reported they had received the legislative appropriation to complete the Church Street reconstruction project and he was pleased to note the program was working well. He also reported that

they continue to work on their 14 acre sports complex funded through various grant opportunities. Chair Robinson called on **Dustin Welker** for an update on Graham County. Dustin reported the County also received legislative appropriations for the Tally Wash project and also the Norton Road and Ray Lane intersection improvements. He also mentioned that they are finishing up their CDBG project today with the installation of rubber tiles over the playground area and gave a huge thank you to Keith Dennis and Robin Dumas for their support. Chair Robinson called on **Terry Hinton** for an update on the Town of Duncan. Terry reported that the Town was awarded a Smart Grant and are now in the process of getting the IGA so that they can start designing plans for roadway and drainage improvements. Chair Robinson called on **Derek Rapier** for an update on Greenlee County. Derek mentioned that the County has partnered with Duncan to install an extension of their sewer system to accommodate the County fairgrounds. And with the completion of SEAGO's broadband study, they are now actively looking for partners and funding to expand broadband throughout the county. Chair Robinson called on **Roy Bermudez** for an update on the City of Nogales. John Kissinger stepped in for Roy and reported that they are moving forward with their CDBG allocation this year, combining that funding with money from WIFA to make water improvements in a colonias neighborhood. He also reported that they had received a grant from Arizona Commerce Authority which will be combined with HURF and overweight load money to rebuild Industrial Park Drive. Chair Robinson called on **Jesus Valdez** for an update on Santa Cruz County. Jesus reported they are beginning the design for the Ephriam Canyon flood control basin that will remove residences on Western Avenue from the floodplain. He also reported that they had just received an \$8.6 million state appropriation for interchange improvements on I-19 Exit 12 and Exit 17 and are working with the state to see if they can leverage some additional grant opportunities. Chair Robinson called on **Barney Bigman** for an update on the San Carlos Apache Tribe. Barney reported that the Tribe is moving forward with an FAA grant to improve their airport taxiway lighting and will begin design next year and construction the following. They are also hoping to have the final stage of the Tribal transportation safety plan completed in the spring of 2024. **Chair Robinson** reported that the Town of Patagonia is finishing up their Richardson Park improvements with the installation of new playground equipment for 5 - 12 year olds plus curbing separating the park to allow the smaller kids to have their own area and equipment to play on. The funding for the project was furnished by South32-Hermosa. He also reported the Town had received a \$1.5 million appropriation from the legislature to finish out the McKeown Avenue project and he thanked Chris Vertrees for his assistance with the application. And finally, Chair Robinson called on **Ana Urquijo** for an update on the City of Douglas. Ana reported that they are continuing to work on all things related to the new commercial port of entry. They are in the final stages of the donation acceptance agreement to donate the 80 acres of land to GSA for the Port of Entry project and have just approved the 60% design for all of the utility infrastructure to the site. Another big item is downtown revitalization and they are working with many stakeholders and agencies to get support for that.

### III. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No one from the public requested to speak.

### IV. ACTION ITEMS

1. Consent Agenda
  - a. Approval of the February 9, 2023 minutes

Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the May 5, 2023 minutes.

**MOTION:**     **Derek Rapier**  
**SECOND:**    **Heath Brown**  
**ACTION:**     Unanimous

- b. Nomination to the Advisory Council on Aging

Laura Villa explained that the Advisory Council on Aging had nominated Mr. Ricardo Martinez to represent the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County on the ACOA at their meeting on July 20<sup>th</sup> and presented a brief bio of Mr. Martinez' qualifications. Chair Robinson called for a motion to recommend the appointment of Mr. Martinez to fill the vacant seat for unincorporated Santa Cruz County on the Advisory Council on Aging.

**MOTION:** Heath Brown  
**SECOND:** Vicki Vivian  
**ACTION:** Unanimous

2. Discussion and possible action to recommend approval of the SEAGO Five-Year Strategic Plan FY 2024 – FY 2028

Randy Heiss reminded members that a strategic planning retreat facilitated by Melanie Greene was held at the Cochise College Benson Center February 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of 2023. He explained that this year's strategic planning process included a more in depth approach that would allow SEAGO staff to offer an inside perspective of new and existing program opportunities to implement the restated and simplified strategic goals identified by the Board and Council at the February 2020 retreat.

This richer and more robust process began with a full day staff retreat June 17, 2022. At the staff retreat, all SEAGO staff from each program participated in discussions and exercises designed to strengthen awareness of organizational inter-departmental functions; solidify departmental projects, priorities, and resource needs; provide perspective among and between departments on member entity and community impact; and structure a matrix of short and long-term program objectives in support of the organization and member communities.

On Day One of the February 2023 retreat, tables for each County were set up with members sitting at their respective table to discuss what efforts could benefit from SEAGO guidance and/or support. Members were tasked with prioritizing and recording these projects, programs, and/or support services. Before adjourning on Day One, members also discussed organizational priorities including Executive Director transition options and recommendations; public perception of SEAGO; technical assistance and local project support; and priorities for short and long terms.

Day Two's format began in the morning and included a review of priorities from the staff's point of view, the projects they were working on and projects they foresaw being implemented within the next five years. A brief review of the Staff retreat process in June of 2022 was provided and presentations on departmental objectives and tactics were then made by each department. Board and Council members were then asked to join the Program Managers at tables by program based on their interests. Each table was tasked to integrate Board, Council, and Program priorities into a cohesive list of priorities for each program.

Program Managers then presented revised objectives and priorities that integrated Board and Council priorities determined on Day One. In the months following the retreat, staff worked to fine tune the matrix of integrated objectives and tactics developed by retreat participants and draft the agency's Five-Year Strategic Plan for FY 2024 – FY 2028. The final draft of the Plan was distributed to SEAGO Program Managers on June 27<sup>th</sup> for their review. After staff review, the Plan was distributed to the Administrative Council and Executive Board on July 5<sup>th</sup> for review and comment and at the time of the meeting, no comments had been received.

Randy then went on to explain how the Strategic Plan was organized and provided Section IV of the Plan as an easy to read overview of the Plan's strategic goals, and integrated objectives and strategies/tactics without the granular detail of the tasks, activities, partners, timeframes, resources and outcome measures included in Appendix B, which represents the Strategic Plan implementation matrix. He then offered to answer any questions. Chair Robinson called for a motion to recommend approval of the SEAGO Five-Year Strategic Plan FY2024 – FY2028 to the Executive Board.

**MOTION:** Ana Urquijo  
**SECOND:** Derek Rapier  
**ACTION:** Unanimous

3. Discussion and possible action to recommend approval of Resolution No. 2023-02 relating to SEAGO's Title VI Plan

Chris Vertrees stated that SEAGO is required to develop a local Title VI Plan. The purpose of the plan is to describe how SEAGO intends to ensure that underserved individuals are provided meaningful opportunities to become involved in the transportation planning process within the SEAGO region. He prepared a Resolution for consideration which, if adopted, will provide immediate evidence of the Executive Board's approval of SEAGO's Title VI Implementation and Public Participation Plan. Chris offered to answer any questions. Chair Robinson called for a motion to recommend approval of Resolution No. 2023-02 to the Executive Board.

**MOTION:** Heath Brown  
**SECOND:** Vicki Vivian  
**ACTION:** Unanimous

4. Discussion and possible action to recommend approval of the 2023-2024 Regional Transportation Coordination Plan

Chris Vertrees gave a synopsis of the requirements of the Regional Transportation Coordination Plan, its history, and how having Executive Board approval of the document would allow SEAGO and its transit providers to be more competitive when seeking funding opportunities. He then offered to answer any questions. Chair Robinson called for a motion to recommend approval of the SEAGO 2023-2024 Regional Transportation Coordination Plan to the Executive Board.

**MOTION:** Ana Urquijo  
**SECOND:** Dustin Welker  
**ACTION:** Unanimous

5. Discussion and possible action to recommend that the Executive Board authorize staff to solicit proposals for a consultant to assist in rebuilding the Housing Program

Keith Dennis gave a brief overview of the history of the SEAGO Housing Program and the facilities that had been built when SEAGO enjoyed status as a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO). He stated that the direction to rebuild the Housing Program came as a response to the need for housing expressed by SEAGO members in the Strategic Planning process. He clarified that Community Development wished to employ best practices in rebuilding the program and to ensure that the right funding opportunities are pursued and capacity is developed in order to ensure efficient and effective program operation. The costs of a consultant are expected to exceed the \$20,000 procurement threshold requiring Executive Board approval before going to bid. Keith offered to answer any questions. Heath Brown asked if there was a funding source that would be used to pay for the consultant. Keith responded that the former Housing Program had left a substantial amount of earnings in SEAGO's fund balance that could be used to rebuild the Housing Program.

Chair Robinson moved to recommend that the Executive Board authorize staff to publish a request for proposals, evaluate proposals received, and enter into a contract with a qualified consultant for Housing Program development as requested by staff. Chair Robinson called for a second to the motion.

**MOTION:** Ron Robinson  
**SECOND:** Stephanie Fulton  
**ACTION:** Unanimous

6. Discussion and possible action to recommend that the Executive Board authorize staff to solicit proposals for a consultant to implement the EPA Brownfields grant

Keith Dennis announced that SEAGO had been awarded a Brownfields Assessment grant from the Environmental Protection agency. He explained the grant will fund environmental cleanup and redevelopment studies for suitable sites in Graham, Greenlee and Santa Cruz Counties. Implementation of the program will require highly technical work in environmental studies and the procurement of a Qualified Environmental Professional is necessary. It's also anticipated that the costs of engaging such a consultant will exceed the procurement threshold of \$20,000 requiring Executive Board approval before going to bid and the costs of the QEP will be funded through the grant. Keith then offered to answer any questions.

Chair Robinson called for a motion to recommend that the Executive Board authorize staff to publish a request for proposals, evaluate proposals received, and enter into a contract with a Qualified Environmental Professional to implement the Brownfield Assessment Grant, as requested by staff.

**MOTION:** Vicki Vivian  
**SECOND:** Ana Urquijo  
**ACTION:** Unanimous

## V. INFORMATION ITEMS

### A. Future Meeting Dates

Randy Heiss mentioned that the next meeting of the Administrative Council will be held November 2, 2023. He also mentioned that there would be a need for the Administrative – Executive Committees to meet October 5<sup>th</sup> telephonically to conduct program related, time sensitive business between regular meetings of the Administrative Council and Executive Board. He asked the officers to please hold the date open in their calendars.

### B. Quarterly Finance Report

Dina Curtis reported that issues with SEAGO's accounting software had prevented her from producing the quarterly revenue and expenditure report March 31<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>. She promised to email the report to the Administrative Council as soon as the issue is resolved.

### C. Community Development Report

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

### D. SEAGO Economic Development District Report

Stephen Peterson was absent and Keith Dennis provided an update on Economic Development and responded to questions.

### E. AAA Updates

Laura Villa provided an update on AAA programs and responded to questions.

### F. Transportation Program Updates

Chris Vertrees provided an update on Transportation Programs and responded to questions.

## VI. RTAC REPORT

Kevin Adam was unavailable due to a scheduling conflict and did not attend the meeting.

## VII. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS / CURRENT EVENTS

Randy Heiss reported that the first draft of the compensation study performed by HR Know consulting had shown several of the Program Manager positions pay well under the minimum market salary, while most of the entry and mid-level positions are more in line with market conditions. He also reported that the recruitment effort for the Executive Director position had failed due to an uncompetitive compensation level. He stated that the job had been reposted at a salary level of \$85,000 - \$115,000 and that the position closes August 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

### **VIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Randy stated that the next Administrative Council agenda may include approval of CDBG regional account applications, updating SEAGO's Policy Principles, possible Housing Program considerations, additional EPA Brownfields activities, and other program business as needed.

### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Robinson called for adjournment of the meeting at 10:46 a.m.