

**MINUTES OF
THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MEETING
9:00 A.M., THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2023
VIA ZOOM
COCHISE COLLEGE BENSON
1025 HWY 80, BENSON, ARIZONA**

OFFICERS PRESENT: Coxworth, Dan – Treasurer, Cochise County **(In-Person)**
Rapier, Derek – Secretary, Greenlee County **(Zoom)**
Robinson, Ronald – Chair, Patagonia **(In-Person)**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Batty, Vernon – Town of Pima **(Zoom)**
Bigman, Barney – San Carlos Apache Tribe **(Zoom)**
Fulton, Stephanie – Town of Huachuca City **(In-Person)**
Hinton, Terry – Town of Duncan **(Zoom)**
McLachlan, Matt – City of Sierra Vista **(Zoom)**
Pauken, Steve – City of Bisbee **(In-Person)**
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)**
Dumas, Robin – Senior Planning Specialist **(In-Person)**
Gibbons, Carrie – SEAGO AAA **(Zoom)**
Heiss, Randy – Executive Director **(In-Person)**
Merideth, John – GIS Analyst **(Zoom)**
Miller, David – Community Coordinator **(In-Person)**
Vertrees, Chris – Transportation Program Administrator **(In-Person)**

GUESTS: Kelly Hyman – Synergy Home Care **(In-Person)**
Michael Hyman – Synergy Home Care **(In-Person)**
Luis Pedroza – City of Douglas **(Zoom)**

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Robinson called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. At the request of Chair Robinson, participants on Zoom were first followed by In-person attendees.

II. MEMBER ENTITIES' DISCUSSION

Chair Robinson called on **Dustin Welker** for an update on Graham County. Mr. Welker reported the County recently completed their CDGB project at the fairgrounds. Improvements included rubberizing the playground floor and adding ADA sidewalks and water fountains. Graham County will also be starting a Housing Study soon. **Chair Robinson** called on **Terry Hinton** for an update on the Town of Duncan. Mr. Hinton reported that the Town is starting the bid process for CDBG projects. **Chair Robinson** called on **Vicki Vivian** for an update on the City of Benson. Ms. Vivian reported that the city will be hiring a Deputy City Manager. She reported two projects for early 2024 – An annexation effort to begin in January and a splash pad ground breaking for February. The City also held their Zombie Run over Halloween Weekend. **Chair Robinson** called on **Jesus Valdez** for an update on Santa Cruz County. Mr. Valdez reported the County was awarded an approval contract to repair the roof on the historic courthouse. The County is also working on an 3.2 million dollar AZ SMART Grant for I-19 improvements. **Chair Robinson** called on **Ana**

Urquijo for an update on the City of Douglas. Ms. Urquijo reported that a new project will be starting within the month on the Commercial Port of Entry. The City also completed their project(s) at the Airport- including ADA improvements and an Aviation History exhibit. The City is also preparing a Downtown Revitalization plan. **Chair Robinson** called on **Barney Bigman** for an update on the San Carlos Apache Tribe. Mr. Bigman reported that the Tribe is looking forward to approval in the spring for their Transportation Safety Plan. They are also currently working with ADOT on a passing lane on HWY 70. **Chair Robinson** called on **Derek Rapier** for an update on Greenlee County. Mr. Rapier reported the County is developing designs to revamp their fairgrounds and playground. They are also working on water storage capacity for road projects. **Chair Robinson** called on **Vernon Batty** for an update on the Town of Pima. Mr. Batty reported that later this month the Town will be working with ADOT on an AZ SMART grant to widen a 1.5 mile section of Main Street. **Chair Robinson** called on **Steve Pauken** for an update on the City of Bisbee. Mr. Pauken reported that the Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation program in the Saginaw area is back on track. The City has also accepted a bid for the rebuilding of City Hall. The City is also using two separate grants in the amount of 4 million dollars to create a multiuse path that will start at the Queen Mine Tour and go around the Lavender Pit. **Chair Robinson** called on **Dan Coxworth** for an update on Cochise County. Mr. Coxworth reported that Planning and Zoning have been working on many Solar Projects, mainly in the Wilcox area. The County plans to use this round of CDBG funding for Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation. The County was also awarded a Brownfields revolving loan program, where residential or commercial properties are able to apply for a low interest loan due to asbestos, lead based paint and ground contamination cleanup. **Chair Robinson** called on **Stephanie Fulton** for an update on the Town of Huachuca City. Ms. Fulton reported Skyline Dr. improvements are scheduled to begin soon. She also mentioned the Skyline pathway project which will connect housing and apartments on Skyline Drive to the park and school creating safer walking areas. The Town is conducting a Transit Study because the Town has not had one since before the pandemic and it is hoped that the study will facilitate improvements to Highway 90 in the Town. **Ms. Fulton** further reported that the walking path in Leffingwell Park improved with the last CDBG was recently fog-sealed. The Town is currently looking into further grant options to complete improvements to the basketball and tennis courts, including at Hyde Park. CDBG could not be used for Hyde Park because it is in a floodplain. However, the city has set money aside and looking into further grant options to refurbish bathrooms, water fountains and perhaps playground equipment. The town recently had their Creepy Candy Cruise over Halloween and closed by inviting the community to the Town's Holiday Parade. **Chairperson Robinson** reported that the Town of Patagonia was facing challenges when it comes to Affordable Housing. The town is currently working with an individual of 6 acres of property that could possibly be used to build duplexes. **Chair Robinson** also mentioned that Keith with SEAGO included Patagonia on a proposal to the State Housing Trust Fund. **Chair Robinson** called on **Matt McLachlan** for an update on the City of Sierra Vista. Mr. McLachlan reported the City is in the Public Involvement stage of making updates to the General Plan. The City is working on an update to their CDBG plan to identify future projects over the next five years. Matt reported on a capital project where the City has been working with a local coalition on ending homelessness. The Better Work program was launched recently, paying homeless individuals minimum wage to pick up trash on public lands. The program has been a success.

III. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Kelly Hyman of Synergy Home Care introduced herself and gave an overview of the services the company offers. She mentioned services are provided in all of Cochise County and that she is excited to help fill the needs of the communities.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

1. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of the August 3, 2023 minutes

Chair Robinson called for a motion to approve the August 3, 2023 minutes.

MOTION: Steve Pauken
SECOND: Dan Coxworth
ACTION: Unanimous

2. Discussion and possible action to recommend approval of the proposed Calendar Year 2024 SEAGO Policy Principles

Executive director Randy Heiss gave an overview of the proposed Calendar Year 2024 SEAGO Policy Principles. Mr. Heiss stated that once again SEAGO updated our policy principles document for each program for the next calendar year. This is a tool that's used to empower SEAGO staff to support or oppose policies, issues or legislation, at the state and federal level that could SEAGO's effectiveness in serving it's Member Entities. Members circulate these as SEAGO's and its Member Entities official on these issues. There have been some minor updates to the principles this year. Mr. Heiss briefly discussed a few bullet points under each Program's section, and offered to answer any questions.

Chair Robinson called for a motion to recommend approval of the Calendar Year 2024 SEAGO Policy Principles to the Executive Board.

MOTION: Vicki Vivian
SECOND: Derek Rapiere
ACTION: Unanimous

3. Discussion and possible action to recommend approval of Resolution No. 2023-03 urging state elected leaders to modernize transportation funding sources and opposing diversions of HURF to the State General Fund

Mr. Heiss discussed SEAGO's position on Resolution No. 2023-03 urging the Governor and Legislature to modernize Arizona's transportation funding sources and declaring opposition to diversions out of HURF and into the State General Fund above the \$20 million authorized by statute. He once again spoke to the State's budget deficit which brings more challenges when it comes to Arizona's fuel tax.

Chair Robinson called for a motion to recommend approval of Resolution No. 2023-03 to the Executive Board.

MOTION: Dan Coxworth
SECOND: Steve Pauken
ACTION: Unanimous

4. Discussion and possible action to recommend approval of the SEAGO Classification and Compensation Plan update

Mr. Heiss gave an overview and stated he was pleased with the work of HR KNOW, the consultants hired by SEAGO to identify new salary ranges and classifications for SEAGO employees. Randy highlighted the new salary starting rates, midpoints and maximums making SEAGO more competitive in the job market. Randy also stated the classifications weren't as far behind as compensation was. Randy also reminded the council that the Executive Director salary is set by the Executive Board. Dan Coxworth asked for more information on HR KNOW. Randy responded that they are a consulting firm out of Tucson. Matt McLachlan asked if SEAGO staff salaries were grant funded. Randy responded that some are, and that the amount of salary can depend on the state and federal funding for a particular program.

Chair Robinson called for a motion to recommend approval of the SEAGO Classification and Compensation Plan update to the Executive Board.

MOTION: Steve Pauken
SECOND: Stephanie Fulton
ACTION: Unanimous

5. Discussion and possible action to recommend approval of the 2023 CDBG Regional Account Applications

Community Development Program Manager Keith Dennis gave a brief overview of this year's application process and provided an overview of CDBG applications to the Arizona Department of Housing. SEAGO Bylaws require approval of fees and assessments on Member Entities - including CDBG contracts and this is the purpose of this item.

Chair Robinson called for a motion to recommend the approval of the 2023 CDBG Regional Account Applications to the Executive Board.

MOTION: **Stephanie Fulton**
SECOND: **Dan Coxworth**
ACTION: Unanimous

6. Discussion and possible action to recommend that the Executive Board authorize staff to solicit proposals for a consultant to assist in developing the Rural Energy for America Program Technical Assistance Grant (REAP TAG).

Mr. Dennis introduced a new partnership with the USDA in the field of economic development.

The REAP program benefits and technologies are considered by USDA to be significantly under-utilized in Arizona and in the SEAGO Region. SEAGO applied for and is scheduled to be awarded a \$150,000 REAP Technical Assistance Grant before the end of this calendar year. The purpose of the REAP TAG is to help SEAGO assist farmers, ranchers and rural small businesses take advantage of underutilized energy efficiency technologies such as solar panels and wind turbines. In addition, energy efficient heating and cooling systems, lighting and insulation, and energy efficiency upgrades for irrigation systems are eligible activities. Forty percent of the overall cost for these improvements is given back to these businesses as a rebate once complete.

Stephanie Fulton asked if this program was only for private business. Robin responded at this time the program is for small business and agriculture and is targeting projects under \$50,000.

Dan Coxworth asked if the grant was for training only. Mr. Dennis responded the grant is partly for program development but mostly for staffing. However, the USDA has allocated in excess of a billion dollars to the REAP program nationwide.

Steve Pauken commented that the City of Bisbee in the past has had trouble with USDA and warns of the challenges of working with them.

Chair Robinson called for a motion to recommend approval to authorize staff to solicit proposals for a consultant to assist in developing the REAP Program to the Executive Board.

MOTION: **Vicki Vivian**
SECOND: **Steve Pauken**
ACTION: Unanimous

V. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. Future Meeting Dates

Randy Heiss mentioned that this was the last Administrative Council meeting of the year and his last as Executive Director. The next scheduled Administrative Council Meeting is scheduled for February 8th, 2024. There is also a combined Administrative and Executive Committee Meeting scheduled for November 30th,

2023. He asked that the officers mark their calendars and if there is no time sensitive, program related business, the meeting will be cancelled.

B. Strategic Plan Progress Report

Randy Heiss outlined the attachment within the packet of SEAGOs implementation and outcomes of strategic goals and responded to questions.

C. Quarterly Finance Report

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

D. Community Development Report

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

E. SEAGO Economic Development District Report

Keith Dennis mentioned a request for proposals for the REAP/TAG grants was nearing publications and responded to questions.

F. AAA Updates

Carrie Gibbons provided SEAGO AAA updates and responded to questions.

G. Transportation Program Updates

Chris Vertrees provided and 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 thanked the Administrative Council for all of their hard work and dedication over his last 14 years with SEAGO. Many council members gave their well wishes to Randy and wished him luck in retirement.

Keith Dennis announced that he will be in Cleveland, Ohio next week at a NADO conference for Executive Director training.

VIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Randy deferred to Keith Dennis the incoming Executive Director. Keith stated he is finalizing these items and they will be communicated in the near future.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Robinson called for adjournment of the meeting at 11:07 a.m.