

SEAGO Executive Board Meeting  
Fri, Feb 20, 2026

#### Summary:

The meeting convened to conduct SEAGO executive business and address membership, finance, program, and transportation matters. After introductions and the Pledge of Allegiance, the board reviewed membership issues and advisory council vacancies, moved consent agenda items, appointed Gary Clark for Douglas, reappointed Susan Lang for Patagonia, and approved Brent Morris as a two-year private-sector representative for Graham County. Calendar and outreach items were set, including an April 2 Executive Committee meeting to finalize the ADOT TIP and a March 10 Graham County presentation; a community survey closes March 2 and a CDBG public meeting is scheduled March 9 in Safford.

Financial and program reports included an external audit presented by Jim Usevitch that produced an unqualified opinion, timely federal filing, and a modest \$896 surplus. Julie Donnan outlined Southwest Fair Housing services and agreed to connect with local partners. Administrative approvals included renewal of a pavement assessment contract with a base license plus 100 miles, a TIP amendment request, and continuation of an EDA partnership planning grant with unchanged matching assessments. Community Development updates covered CDBG project pipelines, Brownfields assessment planning, WIFA and labor-compliance activity, colonia eligibility guidance, and a near-final Grant County housing feasibility study. The meeting also addressed economic development reorganization and CEDS update steps, Area Agency on Aging contract activity and events, new policy brochure for legislative advocacy, an employee longevity recognition program, transportation project advocacy, intercity bus coordination concerns, and upcoming staffing and budget items. The meeting adjourned with thanks and follow-up planning.

#### Chapters & Topics:

##### Opening, Pledge, and Host Acknowledgements

The meeting began with greetings, acknowledgements to the host, and the Pledge of Allegiance. Participants confirmed audio connections and prepared for introductions.

\* The meeting opened with introductions and the Pledge of Allegiance

##### Introductions and Member Entity Discussion

Attendees introduced themselves and exchanged brief remarks about audio quality and participant names. The group discussed regional outreach and SEAGO's planned visit to Graham County to explain SEAGO activities to citizens.

##### Member Issues and Call to the Public

The board solicited member-entity issues and noted outreach to educate local citizens; there was no substantive public input, and the meeting moved to presentations.

\* The board discussed outreach and education efforts to inform Graham County residents about SEAGO services

##### Auditor Presentation and Results

Auditor Jim Usevitch gave a broad overview of the audit, reporting an organized process, an unqualified opinion, no single-audit findings for major federal programs, timely submission to the Federal Clearinghouse, and a year-end surplus of \$896.

- \* Auditor Jim Usevitch reported an unqualified audit opinion on SEAGO's financial statements
- \* The single-audit found no findings for federally funded programs
- \* The audit was submitted to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse within the required timeframe
- \* SEAGO recorded a small operating surplus of \$896 for the fiscal year

#### Fair Housing Presentation and Local Outreach Discussion

Julie Donnan of Southwest Fair Housing described free education, testing, and complaint services, noted statewide travel by staff for workshops, and discussed opportunities to recruit testers. Local officials asked about engagement in Douglas and Nogales; SEAGO staff and Donnan agreed to share contact information and coordinate outreach for Fair Housing Month and related CDBG activity.

- \* Southwest Fair Housing (Julie Donnan) offers free education, testing, and outreach across Arizona
- \* Julie Donnan and SEAGO will coordinate fair housing outreach in member communities, including Douglas and Santa Cruz County

#### Consent Agenda and Advisory Council Appointments

The board moved and passed the consent agenda, reviewed advisory council vacancies, and approved motions to appoint Gary Clark for Douglas and reappoint Susan Lang for Patagonia; staff will bring related applications to the next meeting.

- \* Motions carried to appoint Gary Clark for the City of Douglas vacancy and reappoint Susan Lang for Patagonia

#### Regional Road Payment Assessment Mention

The group briefly referenced the regional road payment assessment, noting multiple communities submitted internal maintenance plans and the assessment's use in supporting grant applications.

#### Pavement Assessment Options and Recommendation

The team reviewed four renewal options for the pavement assessment contract and explained the rationale for selecting a base license with an added 100 miles to update recently repaved or improved streets. The Technical Advisory Committee recommended maintaining portal access while pausing collection for a year, and the administrative council approved the negotiated renewal including storage and the 100-mile add-on.

- \* The board approved renewing the road pavement assessment contract at a base license level plus an add-on of 100 miles to maintain current data coverage.

#### Funding Request and Motion for Pavement Assessment Renewal

Staff presented a funding request totaling just over \$42,000 and sought approval of a paper assessment project and TIP amendment language. A board member moved to recommend approval of the renewal and TIP amendment; the motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.

- \* A motion to recommend renewal of the pavement assessment project and the related TIP amendment (SEGLE 2026-2030 amendment #5) was made, seconded, and passed.

#### EDA Partnership Planning Assistance Grant Approval

The board reviewed Resolution 2601 to renew the EDA partnership planning assistance grant for \$225,000 federal with required local match funding, noting that assessments will remain unchanged over the three-year period. Members emphasized that the grant supports developing comprehensive economic development strategies and that board commitment is required for the match.

\* The Executive Board approved pursuing an EDA partnership planning assistance grant with federal funds of \$225,000 and matching assessments totaling \$106,071 over three years, with assessments unchanged.

#### Appointment of Graham County Private Sector Representative

The requirement for private sector representatives by county was discussed and Brent Morris was recommended based on relevant utilities and trades experience. Administrative committee approval was unanimous and the board approved Morris for a two-year term.

\* Brent Morris was recommended and approved to serve a two-year term as Graham County Private Sector Representative on the Executive Board.

#### Future Meetings, Outreach, and SEGAL Presentations

Upcoming meetings were scheduled, highlighting the Executive Board meeting on May 22 and the mandatory Executive Committee meeting on April 2 to prepare the ADOT TIP for a 45-day public comment window and July 1 delivery. Staff offered to present SEGAL program information at county events, noting a March 10 Graham County presentation and invitations for similar presentations in other counties.

\* The Executive Committee must meet on April 2 to finalize the ADOT work plan and draft TIP for the required 45-day public comment period and submission to ADOT by July 1.

#### Finance, Audit, and Operational App Updates

The finance report covered revenue and expenditures through December 31, 2025, and noted completion of the annual audit with a link provided in the packet. Staff provided operational updates on apps—the live fleet tracking app, the transit training registration app, a planned transit asset management upgrade, the AAA mobile app redevelopment, website analytics, and the active CEDS SWOT survey—inviting participation.

\* Staff reported the annual audit was completed and a link to the audit was included in the packet.

\* Staff announced multiple operational app initiatives, including a live fleet tracking app, a transit training registration app, and a planned transit asset management system upgrade later in the year.

\* The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy SWOT survey is live and staff encouraged participation.

#### Community Development Program updates and staffing

The team reviewed Community Development Program activities including the Grant County Housing Feasibility Study final review and necessary compliance filings. They reported Brownfields Assessment Grant closeout activity and intent to apply for a larger second-round grant across member communities. WIFA project work and upcoming labor-standards compliance and payroll certification reviews were outlined, and the program noted ongoing interviews to hire a community coordinator to support Fair Labor Standards Act tasks.

\* The Grant County Housing Feasibility Study is in final review before publication and required compliance filings.

\* SEAGO plans to apply for a second, larger Brownfields Assessment Grant in collaboration with member communities across four counties.

\* WIFA projects include Sweet Springs mobile-home park water improvements and two City of Douglas projects (Well 18 phase 2; Highway 80 extension) with pre-construction briefings and labor standards reviews scheduled.

#### WIFA projects and project locations

Detailed WIFA projects were described: Sweet Springs Mobile Home Park water-system improvements in St. David with a pre-construction briefing and subsequent labor-standards compliance activities, and City of Douglas

projects including Well 18 phase 2 and the Highway 80 extension with anticipated construction timing discussed.

#### Transition to CDBG program updates and FY2026 funding

The meeting transitioned to Community Development Block Grant updates, confirming FY2026 funding from the Arizona Department of Housing and beginning regional-account outreach and public participation planning. The presenter explained the regional-account allocation method and referenced additional competitive CDBG opportunities, including Colonia and State Special Projects.

\* FY2026 CDBG funding from the Arizona Department of Housing is confirmed and regional-account outreach is underway.

#### Regional allocations and outreach schedule

The team announced anticipated regional-account allocations for Clifton, Patagonia City, Nogales, and Safford and scheduled in-person outreach, including a Safford meeting on March 9 and additional visits to Clifton, Nogales, and Huachuca City with a March 21 Saturday session to maximize participation.

\* Regional-account allocations were highlighted for Clifton (~\$100,000), Patagonia City (~\$515,000), Nogales (~\$440,000), and Safford (~\$291,000).

\* Public outreach schedules include a Safford meeting on March 9 and a Saturday session on March 21 for Huachuca City, emphasizing public participation requirements for project nomination.

#### Project statuses across jurisdictions

Multiple project updates were provided: Clifton senior center (ADA and generator) approved and awaiting environmental completion; Graham County fairgrounds ADA moving to bid; Santa Cruz County projects completing environmental review; Tombstone food bank awaiting cultural resource survey and environmental review; Bisbee senior center delayed by materials but expected to start construction; Thatcher sidewalks in publication; Pima contract amendment for relocated project; Nogales Camino del Sol phase two and Benson Lyons Park entering closeout.

\* Several projects are moving to environmental review, bidding, construction, or closeout, including Clifton senior center, Graham County fairgrounds, Tombstone food bank survey, Bisbee senior center, and Nogales Camino del Sol phase two.

#### Colonia funding, fairgrounds need, and Nogales closeout coordination

The meeting emphasized Colonia-targeted CDBG funding possibilities and encouraged communities to apply, noting competitive limits and public participation requirements. Participants raised fairgrounds parking and accessibility concerns in Graham and Cochise counties and discussed potential funding routes, including state special projects and congressional allocations. Closeout coordination for Nogales Camino del Sol was discussed, with staff promising to forward emails and follow up to secure remaining reimbursements.

\* Colonia-designated projects are eligible for larger, competitive Colonia CDBG funds, but require completed environmental reviews and documented engineering/design work before application.

#### Colonia background, resources, and Safford presentation planning

The presenter offered historical context on colonias, referenced guidance materials and books to explain their emergence, and committed to sharing resource links. SEAGO confirmed it will include several slides on colonias at the Safford presentation on March 9 and invited communities to document engineering and environmental review work in advance of Colonia funding announcements.

#### City & Item Transition to Economic Development

Participants noted issues to bring to the City of Stafford Mayor and Council and transitioned to agenda item F, the Segal Economic Development district update. The chair identified Mr. Bettschies and introduced Kevin Fowler as the Economic Development Program signatory for Segal as of January 17.

\* Segal has signed on and will recruit and realign economic and community development staff, with a proposed organizational structure to present in May.

#### Staffing and Organizational Realignment for Economic Development

The team described imminent recruitment and a planned organizational realignment to integrate economic development with community development, with an updated organization structure to be presented at the next meeting in May. There was consensus that resource sharing between economic and community development should improve operations.

#### Coordination Request and Strategic Concerns (Supervisor Gomez)

Supervisor Kathleen Gomez requested Executive Board coordination of multiple regional economic plans and raised concerns about transportation, truck routing, rail restoration, and over-reliance on data centers or large solar farms as economic strategies. She emphasized the need for diversified economic development approaches to avoid negative fiscal outcomes for counties.

\* Supervisor Gomez requested Executive Board coordination of overlapping economic plans across jurisdictions to maximize limited resources.

#### Response: Coordination Groups and SEDS Process

The team agreed with Gomez and stated they will initiate county economic coordination groups once the new economic development planner is hired and funded through the PDA grant. The committee reviewed the SEDS/CEDS update process, noted it will identify two to three priority projects per community, and announced county-based virtual ranking meetings in mid-March and a survey closing March 2 seeking wider community input.

\* The team will form county-level economic coordination groups once a new economic development planner is hired and funded via the PDA grant.

\* The SEDS update will capture two to three priority projects per community and will include county-based virtual ranking meetings in mid-March.

\* The SEDS survey was launched in early January, has ~170 responses, will close March 2, and attendees were asked to expand distribution to reach ~200 responses.

#### Brownfields Coalition Grant Strategy

The team summarized Brownfields work: a prior \$500,000 assessment grant is nearly exhausted, and they applied for a \$1.5M coalition grant using a consultant recommendation to limit primary partners to three counties with Greenland County as lead while all jurisdictions remain secondary partners.

\* The Brownfields coalition application targets \$1.5M with up to four primary partners and Greenland County acting as the lead jurisdiction.

#### AAA Area Program Updates (Celeste)

Celeste provided Area Agency on Aging updates including an ongoing contract compliance review with Arizona DES, record-breaking Medicare Open Enrollment results that increased by 88% over last year, and outreach/partnership issues with the Comiendo Fresco project driven by the partner's requirement to refer clients to a single clinic. She also reported intake call trends, a new long-term care ombudsman volunteer in

Brown County, planned World Elder Awareness Month events across counties, and a request for volunteers for caregiver support groups.

\* The Area Agency on Aging reported a contract compliance review with Arizona DES, record Medicare Open Enrollment results (up 88% year-over-year), and potential withdrawal from the Comiendo Fresco grant if referral restrictions remain.

#### Social remarks and transition to policy principles

Participants exchanged brief social comments about outreach and social media before transitioning to agenda item H, the Segal Policy Principles update. A conference room participant introduced the policy principles brochure and distributed copies for legislators and staff use.

\* SEAGO finalized a brochure of policy principles for staff to use as approved talking points with the legislature.

\* The brochure frees staff to advocate for included principles without returning to the board for approval.

#### Policy principles brochure details and acknowledgements

The team thanked staff (Heather and Jennifer) for producing the brochure and described its intended use as a handout for legislators to communicate SEAGO positions on multiple items.

#### Employee recognition update

The group reviewed strategic goal progress on employee recognition, decided to begin by recognizing longevity given institutional knowledge value, presented the initial list of staff to be recognized, and noted that recognition would occur immediately ("by air today") as a first step.

\* SEAGO is launching an employee longevity recognition program and has identified the first group of staff to be recognized.

#### Transportation program and SMART program updates

Staff summarized the approved technology project list (page 56 of the packet) and explained that projects are now in legislators' hands for selection; members were urged to contact their legislators to secure support. The Arizona SMART program was highlighted for contributing over \$20 million to pre-application work and delivering an approximately 85% success rate, while funds are nearly depleted.

\* A prioritized list of transportation tech projects was approved and submitted for legislative consideration.

\* Local officials are responsible for contacting their district legislators to secure funding for projects on the list.

\* The Arizona SMART program has enabled over \$20 million in project development support and an approximately 85% grant success rate, but its funds are nearly exhausted.

#### Staff announcements and local events

Staff shared brief personnel acknowledgements and invited members to local events, including an international boxing event on March 21 and recurring wrestling events used for sports tourism and marketing, with tickets and flyers to be distributed.

\* Organizers invited members to a March 21 boxing event and noted recurring wrestling events as part of sports tourism efforts.

#### Closing remarks and participation offers

Participants offered to serve in additional roles and some remote attendees excused themselves due to travel. Kathleen Gomez announced she was in Washington, D.C., had to leave for meetings, and thanked the group before departing. The team acknowledged her and other traveling members while continuing agenda business.

#### Transportation services and coordination discussion

The group discussed countywide intercity bus services, emphasizing coordination between cities and counties, heavy ridership originating from Naco, and the challenge of long drives to serve that area. Participants raised reimbursement and funding concerns for transportation investments and agreed it should be a future agenda item.

\* The team identified intercity bus services and coordination as a future agenda subject due to high demand from Naco riders.

\* Naco is a major origin for riders, representing about one-third of riders on the route discussed.

#### Follow-up actions on transportation (meeting, cost analysis, suppliers)

The team scheduled a meeting the next week to advance benefits for the county, planned a cost analysis, and committed to contacting suppliers for further discussions about transportation service costs and delivery. Staff support and Melody's assistance were acknowledged as helpful to progress these items.

\* The group plans a meeting next week to secure county benefits, conduct a cost analysis, and consult suppliers regarding transportation services.

#### Agenda items, hosting, and administrative topics

Members confirmed proceeding with future agenda planning, noted Graham County as the next meeting host, and identified upcoming agenda items including officer elections, the FY27 budget process, and organizational realignment. The group also discussed procedural timing for officer transitions and resume requirements for certain positions.

\* Graham County will host the next regional meeting and staff will initiate outreach to confirm sponsorship and logistics.

\* FY27 budget documents and an organizational realignment will be presented at a future meeting.

#### Santa Cruz representative recruitment and personnel notes

The Santa Cruz public-sector representative indicated she will step down due to pregnancy, and the group agreed to start recruiting a replacement; recommendations were solicited from members including the mayor. Candidates and resumes will be considered for the open seat.

\* Santa Cruz's public-sector representative has resigned due to pregnancy, and the group will recruit a replacement.

#### Adjournment and informal closing remarks

Members expressed gratitude to leadership and staff, confirmed adjournment, noted quorum challenges due to travel, and concluded with informal conversation and brief additional remarks about water issues and other closing comments.

\* Participants formally adjourned the meeting and expressed gratitude to staff and officers for support during the term.

#### Action Items:

\* Sherry (Southwest Fair Housing staff) will contact Will Osborne to coordinate fair housing presentations and outreach during the CDBG cycle and Fair Housing Month

\* Julie Donnan will distribute her contact information to the SEAGO group for follow-up and local coordination

\* Conference room participant (staff) will bring the advisory council applications to the next meeting

- \* Conference room participant(s) will finalize and submit the negotiated pavement assessment renewal paperwork and associated funding documents for the base license and 100-mile add-on.
- \* Executive Committee members will attend and finalize the ADOT work plan and draft TIP at the April 2 Executive Committee meeting to meet the 45-day public comment schedule and July 1 delivery to ADOT.
- \* Conference room staff will schedule and deliver SEGAL program presentations to interested counties, including the March 10 Graham County presentation at 10:00-12:00 and outreach to Cochise, Greenlee, Santa Cruz, and Douglas as requested.
- \* Staff will promote participation in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy SWOT survey to board members and stakeholders.
- \* Conference room participant will notify Kathleen Gomez by email when meetings are scheduled about the Highway 80 extension outreach.
- \* SEAGO (Community Development staff) will include detailed colonia information (slides and resources) at the Safford public meeting on March 9.
- \* Conference room participant will forward the Nogales closeout-related emails to the city contact to help resolve outstanding invoices and enable reimbursement requests.
- \* Conference room participant will send the recommended Colonia background book links and resources to attendees who requested them.
- \* The economic development team will present a proposed updated organizational structure in May.
- \* Executive Board will arrange a meeting to discuss coordination of overlapping regional economic plans (request by Supervisor Kathleen Gomez).
- \* The new economic development planner (once hired) will initiate county-level economic coordination groups as included in the PDA grant plan.
- \* The team will schedule and hold county-based virtual SEDS project-ranking meetings in mid-March.
- \* Meeting participants and jurisdictions will distribute the SEDS/SEDS survey and encourage community responses before the March 2 closing date.
- \* Segal will proceed with the Brownfields coalition application framework with Greenland County acting as lead and primary partners limited for conciseness.
- \* Celeste will meet with the Arizona Community Health Worker Office CEO to resolve Comiendo Fresco referral requirements and decide whether to remain in the grant.
- \* Celeste will provide contact information for the nearly-trained volunteer to Mr. Morris and coordinate follow-up.
- \* Conference room participant(s) will recognize the listed staff for longevity as part of the new employee recognition program (recognition planned "by air today").
- \* Conference room participants will contact their district legislators to request support for transportation projects on SEAGO's tech project list.
- \* Conference room participants will encourage legislators to support the Arizona SMART program and reference it when discussing R-TAC projects.
- \* Conference room participant(s) organizing the March 21 event will send the event flyer and ticket link to interested members online.
- \* A conference room participant will meet with the signed official to discuss how counties and cities provide transportation across jurisdictions
- \* Conference room staff will conduct a cost analysis and reach out to suppliers following next week's meeting about transportation benefits to the county
- \* A conference room participant will reach out to Graham County to arrange hosting and sponsorship for the next meeting

\* Conference room staff will initiate recruitment for a Santa Cruz public-sector representative to replace the staff member who announced she will step down

Key Questions:

- \* Where is Southwest Fair Housing located and who conducts the workshops?
- \* Has Southwest Fair Housing conducted outreach in Nogales/Santa Cruz County?
- \* Why is the Cochise County housing office in Douglas being considered for closure and can county and local leaders coordinate to assess community use of that office?
- \* Where is Well 18 located?
- \* What is the required preparation for competing for Colonia CDBG funds and what should local sponsors document?
- \* Can SEAGO bring more information about colonias to the Safford outreach?
- \* Could the Executive Board convene to align overlapping economic plans across jurisdictions?
- \* Will the Brownfields coalition application process answer earlier questions about primary partners?
- \* Can I reach out to the new long-term care ombudsman volunteer and obtain contact information?
- \* May I pursue the future agenda?

Notepad:

- \* No notes