

MINUTES
STEEL RIVERS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
October 3, 2024

The SRCOG Board of Directors Meeting was called to order at 6:00pm on September 5, 2024 by Board Vice President, Anthony Colecchi.

Council Present

Braddock Hills: Tom Evans Jack Brown
Clairton: Eric Hatchett
Dravosburg: _____
Duquesne: Elaine Washington
Elizabeth: _____
Forward: Amy Cline
Glassport: Anthony Colecchi
Homestead: Duane Schulte
Liberty: _____

Lincoln: _____
McKeesport: _____
Munhall: Reenie Fry
Port Vue: Debbie Thomas Ken Hresko
S. Versailles: Roy Lawson
Versailles: _____
W. Elizabeth: _____
W. Homestead: Barb Ferson
Whitaker: Al Race
White Oak: _____

Welcoming Remarks

N/A

Public Comments

N/A

Guest Speakers

Trisha Gadson and Kelleigh Boland – Jefferson Regional Foundation

An introduced the guest speakers. JRF was established in 2013 as a grant making entity as part of an agreement between Jefferson Hospital and AHN. South Hills and Mon Valley communities are all included. Their vision is they work alongside of the people and improve the well-being of those who are being served by Jefferson Hospital. They do grants, community engagement, and help with other resources. There are 26 municipalities and 12 school districts within their footprint.

The Mon Valley Clean Air Fund should not be confused with Allegheny County Clean Air Fund. The MV Clean Air Fund is the result of a fire that happened in 2018 at the Clairton Plant. The funds resulting from the settlement were directed to this fund. That settlement identified 22 communities in the valley that were affected. 16 of the communities were in the JRF footprint. All 22 communities are listed on their website. Funds are specified for Public Health and Air Quality Improvement. Funds cannot be used for advocacy or lobbying. Applications will be available in January 2025 for the March 2025 cycle. If you are not part of the 22 communities, you are not able to apply. Municipalities are encouraged to come to one of the listening sessions to get more information and to share their thoughts, concerns, and ideas about what they feel their municipality needs.

Minutes

A **motion** was made by Debbie Thomas and seconded by Duane Schulte to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of September 5, 2024. All in favor. Motion carried.

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Treasurer's Report: A. Lewis

Draft Audit Presentation – Chris Robertson, CPA

We are in the final stretch of the audit. Everything appears to be in order, there are no disagreements of postings. Draft packet provided to members today at meeting.

A **motion** was made by Duane Schulte and seconded by Jack Brown to accept the Audit pending final approval by An, All in favor. Motion carried.

A **motion** was made by Jack Brown and seconded by Roy Lawson to approve the Cash Statement for September 2024, and the List of Bills as dated. All in favor. Motion carried.

A Profit and Loss Budget vs. Actual report was provided to members. RAD reports were provided to members.

Vice President's Report: Anthony Colecchi

N/A

Solicitor's Report: Falco Muscante

A **motion** was made by Eric Hatchett and seconded by Roy Lawson to approve Resolution #12/2024R authorizing SRCOG to enter into a contract with Jet Jack for CMA Sewer Repair, CD 49-3.12.8, in the amount of \$229,445.00

A **motion** was made by Elaine Washington and seconded by Eric Hatchett to approve Resolution #13/2024R authorizing SRCOG to apply for a 2024 GEDTF grant on behalf of the Borough of Braddock Hills in the amount of \$197,376.00 for Street Resurfacing.

A **motion** was made by Amy Cline and seconded by Debbie Thomas to approve Resolution #14/2024R authorizing SRCOG to apply for a 2024 GEDTF grant on behalf of Versailles Borough in the amount of \$500,000.00 for Sewer Rehabilitation.

A **motion** was made by Tom Evans and seconded by Duane Schulte to approve Resolution #15/2024\$ authorizing SRCOG to apply for a 2024 GEDTF grant on behalf of Whitaker Borough in the amount of \$500,000.00 for Public Works Facility Phase 2

A **motion** was made by Debbie Thomas and seconded by Roy Lawson to approve Resolution #16/2024R authorizing SRCOG to apply for a 2024 GEDTF grant on behalf of Clairton Municipal Authority in the amount of \$500,000.00 for Glick Run Sanitary Sewer Repair.

A **motion** was made by Tom Evans and seconded by Elaine Washington to approve Resolution #18/2024R authorizing SRCOG to apply for CDBG funds for all member municipalities for a combined total of \$3,147,531.00.

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A **motion** was made by Elaine Washington and seconded by Roy Lawson to approve Resolution #19/2024R authorizing SRCOG to apply for Act 152 Blight Removal funds on behalf of all member municipalities for a combined total of \$2,297,096.00.

A **motion** was made by Debbie Thomas and seconded by Amy Cline to RENAME Resolution #7/2024R, appearing on the June 6, 2024 Board Meeting Agenda. New name shall be Resolution #8/2024R.

A **motion** was made by Amy Cline and seconded by Debbie Thomas to RENAME Resolution #7/2024R, appearing on the September 5, 2024 Board Meeting Agenda. New name shall be #9/2024R.

A **motion** was made by Duane Schulte and seconded by Eric Hatchett to RENAME Resolution #9/2024R, appearing on the September 5, 2024 Board Meeting Agenda. New name shall be #17/2024R.

Director's Report: An Lewis

Proposed changes to asbestos and demolition permit fees from ACHD
Schedule of fees not included in packet but passed out to members during meeting.
There are substantial increases across the board and there are new fees for asbestos containing materials. The end result will be that the demo costs will be higher. An stated that Amanda Settelmaier from TCVCOG sent a letter to Health Dept. asking what is covered by the fees, is there an impact, etc. These fees are on the radar of the county officials. If you have thoughts or opinions about this, please reach out to the county officials. These proposed changes were not widely distributed but were part of a board of health meeting this summer.

Community and Economic Development Program (An Lewis/Alan Sisco)

Program Planning grants:

We don't have the money yet, but we have the agreement.

Hillman Foundations: \$25,000 (received)

Heinz Endowments: \$40,000 (pending/agreement received)

Engagement of Ira Goldstein and Karen Black for planning activities (tentative 11/1)

Ira is a national expert, has done a lot in Pittsburgh, and is currently working with S. Innamorato. Karen Black was previously retained to help establish the Waterfront Maintenance Fund Agreement. She and Ira are excellent candidates to help us write a business plan. Their schedule may be clear in November, so we can make time to help kick that off.

Implementation Grants:

Energy Foundation: \$100,000 (pending/application submitted)

Alan spoke on this grant. The Energy Found was introduced to us through other connections with the Whole Home Repair. We submitted a proposal and found out that we are moving to the next step. And it sounds as if they are close to making a decision. We are going to use these funds to support activities

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that we are already doing, such as meetings and activities involving our members to get them prepared to learn about and apply for funds that are or may be available to them. We want to find out how we can engage with the communities to learn what they need and how we help them get it.

Project/Project Planning Grants:

Alan has been actively working with Amanda's team.

USDOT Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program Grant Request

Helps reconnect residents to jobs, healthcare, etc. These communities were selected because they are ready for this. We are looking forward to helping more communities with the grants and funds that we are raising.

Planning activities around the Rt. 130 corridor - Braddock, North Braddock, East Pittsburgh, Turtle Creek, and Wilmerding (TCVCOG Prime Applicant)

Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund program (application due 11/14)

An spoke on this. This program is for low-interest or no-interest loans. We have less than a month to pull this together, but if anyone is interested, let An know asap.

The applicant demonstrates: a vision for the cleanup, reuse and redevelopment of brownfield sites and a strategy for leveraging resources to help accomplish the vision; the environmental, social, health and economic needs and benefits of the target area(s); strong community engagement; reasonable costs, eligible tasks, and appropriate use of grant funding; the capacity for managing and successfully implementing the cooperative agreement; and other factors

Fair Housing

An sent out an email to board members about the housing proposal. There may be housing money flowing and available. This proposal addresses zoning, publicly owned assets, and retaining properties scattered throughout the county that are good investments for new affordable housing projects. This is a competitive application. If anyone wants to go, the info is in the email.

CURE MV Program Update (Alan Sisco)

Evaluation of CURE was not good. Some areas were doing well, but overall staffing changes had to be made. The changes included 4 team members and 1 member of management. We received a clear message from the evaluation about what needs to be improved. Now, with Natalya taking the reins, Alan is confident that they can get on track and move in the right direction.

Duane asked if the manager position is still open. An and Alan stated that the position is open, and described what kind of person would be a good fit for this position.

First Commonwealth Bank investment accounts

Kristin and An have been discussing investment accounts with FCB. The Waterfront Maintenance Fund has been holding balances. It doesn't make sense to hold in non-interest bearing accounts. Falco stated that the board would have to approve An to open new accounts and the bank may request a resolution.

A motion was made by Tom Evans and seconded by Reenie Fry to authorize An to open interest-bearing accounts on behalf of the COG and Tammy to be a signer.

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Duane suggested looking at other financial institutions, such as Union Savings Bank, to get higher interest returns. Reenie agreed with Duane that USB may be able to offer us better interest.

Amazon Prime Business Accounts (Penny Donaldson)

Discussed the benefits of having access to more benefits, discounts, and better service by sharing under the SRCOG Amazon Prime Account.

Community Development Report: Jenny Kwiatek

A list of grants is included in board packet. If anyone has questions, comments, or concerns, please reach out to Jenny.

Jenny created a SRCOG newsletter to help keep everyone informed about what is going on. This is also included in the board packet. Please reach out to Jenny if you would like to see certain things in the newsletter. This will help keep us connected in between board meetings. Upcoming grant application dates will be included in the newsletter.

Meeting Schedule

The next meeting will be held on November 7, 2024 at the Human Service Center.

Meeting Date	Location
October 3, 2024	SRCOG - Human Service Center
November 7, 2024	SRCOG - Human Service Center
December 5, 2024	SRCOG - Human Service Center / Holiday Celebration

Community Reports/Discussion

Homestead – Duane said that there are 6 areas within 1-2 blocks of the HSC building with broken bottles on the streets and sidewalks. This is a hazard to the kids who walk to and from school and people like him who walk their dogs around here. Maybe we should look into what some other places do regarding charging a bottle fee to help encourage recycling or returning the bottles.

Falco says there may be open-container laws that may apply.

Whitaker - Michelle would like to know if the municipalities could use a public safety grant to pay law enforcement to address this.

An and Anthony do not know of any programs currently that would pay for that.

Adjournment

A **motion** was made by Debbie Thomas and seconded by Duane Schulte to adjourn the meeting at 8:08pm. All in favor. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Penny Donaldson

An Lewis, Executive Director