

MINUTES OF THE 7 DECEMBER 2021
SCCOG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Via Zoom

Present: Fred Allyn, III, Keith Hedrick, Danielle Chesebrough, Jim Rivers
Staff: James Butler, Amanda Kennedy

Chairman Allyn opened the meeting at 8:34 a.m.

1. Update on Funding for Hiring of Regional Recovery Coordinator

The Executive Director reported that as of today, 6 SCCOG member municipalities have sent in their Voluntary SCCOG Assessment using ARPA funding, for a total of \$40,000. This leaves 16 possible other contributions toward this position and a potential additional \$94,500. He said that he still has not advertised the position and is now contemplating contracting someone part-time or using in-house staff to provide this service. He said he also has been contacted by the seCTer Executive Director Paul Whitescarver about coordination with/sharing seCTer's Recovery Coordinator which is being funded by an EDA grant.

2. Update on SCCOG CEO Support Program

The Executive Director reported that SCCOG Orientation Manuals have been provided to the new CEOs; that the mentor-mentee component has been initiated; and that the educational series for new CEOs will soon be scheduled.

3. FY 2020 – 2021 Audit

The Executive Director presented the Executive Committee with the Balance Sheet of Governmental Funds and the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances. These show the SCCOG Reserve Fund at a healthy \$713,621, an increase of \$106,233 this year. Jason Cote, from the SCCOG's Auditing firm of Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan, has informed the Executive Director while the audit is not yet complete, he anticipates it will be another clean opinion with no findings or comments.

MOTION: To recommend SCCOG acceptance of the FY 2020-2021 SCCOG Audit if received before the SCCOG meeting Hedrick, Chesebrough). So voted unanimously.

4. Proposed FY 2023 Operating Budget

The Executive Committee reviewed the proposed budget provided by the Executive Director. The Executive Director presented the following report on the proposed budget to the Executive Committee.

The proposed budget is contained in Table 1. It is based on revenues known at this time, which as the SCCOG's experience has been is not always what is available 18 months from now at the end of the fiscal year being budgeted for. That being said, it is my best projection of where the

SCCOG's finances will be next fiscal year. Potential sources of revenue not included at this time are any grants we choose to apply for during the year but after the budget is adopted, and possible future DEMHS grants. These revenues and associated expenditures can be included in amended budgets if they were to materialize.

The SCCOG revenue picture this year continues to be stable, due in large part to OPM Regional Services Grant (RSG), which OPM increased to \$380,463 next fiscal year. The SCCOG's largest source of SCCOG revenue, the CTDOT Planning grant, will slightly increase to \$564,491. In addition, SCCOG again will have available FY 2019 Carryover PL funds, of which I have budgeted \$137,000 in this year's budget.

A large source of revenue last budget year was from Technical Assistance contracts, totaling more than \$180,000. The proposed budget does show revenue from Technical Assistance contracts (see Table 2) increasing significantly to \$298,000 to reflect the retention of a Regional Zoning Enforcement Official who will serve three or four SCCOG member municipalities.

Another significant source is the SCCOG members' municipal dues which for the past ten years has resulted in \$157,688 in funding. This year, due to the release of the 2020 Census figures, that amount will decrease by \$3,853 to \$153,835, due to a small decrease in the region's population. The SCCOG last increased its dues rate per capita in FY 2012-13 (which was the first time in six years) and no increase is proposed this year due to the fact that our funding from other sources is sufficient to cover the small decrease due to loss of population. The budget also contemplates that the second-year voluntary assessment of SCCOG towns using ARPA funding to support a Regional Recovery Coordinator will generate an additional \$100,000.

The FY 2021 budget is again balanced without proposing to use funds from the SCCOG Reserve Fund for the ninth year in a row. For FY 2023, the budget shows \$97,821 in unallocated funds which can be returned to Reserve if not needed. Table 4 shows the status of and use of/return to the Reserve Fund over the past twenty-one years. There is now \$713,621 in the Reserve Fund according to the just completed draft of the Annual Audit, and by my calculations we have approximately \$231,000 available for discretionary use (after subtracting funds budgeted for this year's operations which is zero this year, plus two months cash flow, a reserve for emergencies, and a reserve for accrued vacation, and a reserve for 25% of sick time accrued/sick leave buyback).

On the expenditure side, there are no or only slight increases in most of the line items, many of which we have been holding the line on the last few years. For the first time in a long time, the budget does show \$50,000 as an expenditure in the Capital Fund, which would allow the undertaking of some needed major repairs to the SCCOG's property and office including reconstruction of the entry driveway and remediation of a moisture issue in the office. The budget continues under Subcontractors/Consultants in showing funds for part-time planner services to Lisbon and Sprague. A part-time Building Official will continue serve Preston and Ledyard, and as previously mentioned, we will soon begin providing Zoning Enforcement Official service in several towns and that service is expected to be carried into the budget being considered for action. All the cost of these services will be borne by the respective Town, so it will have no impact on the SCCOG budget, with the exception of the Regional Zoning

Enforcement Official service, for which the SCCOG will only charge the subscribing town the fringe portion of the BF&O cost, as agreed to at last month's SCCOG meeting.

As was shown in the last seven budgets, I have again included funding (\$23,500) for the retention of a DEMHS financial consultant, which allows us to contract with the former WINCOG Executive Director to manage these grants since the SCCOG serves as the Region 4 REPT fiscal agent. Last year at budget time staff was awarded a 3.0% salary increase and then salaries were adjusted retroactively based on a salary study completed this past fall. This year I recommend that staff receive a 2.5% salary increase, due to several factors including sufficient anticipated funds, the fact that we have assembled and wish to retain a team of top-notch staff, which applied for, received, and successfully managed consultants working on numerous grants, as well as completing the rest of the adopted work program and resultant clean audits. In addition, I am recommending that Planner II Justin LaFountain, who recently earned his AICP certification, be promoted to Planner III on July 1st and that his proposed salary be reflective of that promotion. Proposed staff salaries are shown in Table 3 and reflect my retirement to half-time service and Amanda Kennedy's promotion to Executive Director, the hiring of a Regional Zoning Enforcement Official, as well as a Regional Recovery Coordinator contingent upon receipt of adequate voluntary assessment ARPA funds from SCCOG member towns. Table 6 presents the proposed Schedule of Municipal Contributions, based on 2020 Census figures, at \$0.55 per capita. As mentioned above, this is the same per capita contribution which has been requested of SCCOG member municipalities since FY 2013, but due to the revised 2020 Census figures, most SCCOG member municipalities will see a decrease in their SCCOG dues this year.

The Executive Committee discussed the budget, and the Executive Director's recommendations for staff salary increases.

MOTION: To recommend that the SCCOG approve of the FY 2023 Operating Budget totaling \$1,796,868 in expenditures, \$97,821 unallocated/Return to Reserve, for a grand total of \$1,894,689, and which includes among its revenue sources municipal dues derived from a \$0.55 per capita contribution which is the same per capita rate as the previous fiscal year (Hedrick, Chesebrough). So voted unanimously.

5. Proposed FY 2023 Work Program

The Executive Director explained that the proposed work program was reflective of the anticipated funding sources.

MOTION: To recommend that the SCCOG adopt the FY 2023 Work Program (Hedrick, Rivers). So voted unanimously.

6. Proposed 2022 Schedule of SCCOG Meetings

The Chairman noted that the proposed schedule shows the November Executive Committee meeting being held on the 8th to avoid Election Day on November 1st; he said that Election Day is actually the 8th so the meeting should be scheduled for November 1st.

MOTION: To recommend to the SCCOG the adoption of the 2022 Schedule of Meetings with the correction of the November Executive Committee meeting date to November 1 (Chesebrough, Hedrick). So voted unanimously.

7. Bank Authorizing Resolution No. 21-8

MOTION: To recommend to the SCCOG the adoption of Resolution No. 21-8, Bank Authorizing Resolution (Hedrick, Chesebrough). So voted unanimously.

8. FY 2021 Annual Report

The Executive Director explained that the full SCCOG had previously been presented the Annual Report now required by OPM, and that staff has taken this information and presented it in a shorter summary document that the SCCOG can adopt at the Annual Meeting.

MOTION: To recommend the adoption of the FY 2021 Annual Report Hedrick, Rivers). So voted unanimously.

9. Other

The Executive Director stated that he had just received the grant paperwork form OPM for this year's Regional Services Grant, and he asked the Executive Committee to make a recommendation to the SCCOG on Resolution No. 21-9, Relating to A Regional Services Grant, authorizing acceptance of that grant.

MOTION: To recommend to the SCCOG the adoption of Resolution No. 21-9, Relating to a Regional Services Grant (Rivers, Chesebrough). So voted unanimously.

The Executive Director stated that the Nominating Committee has recommended a slate of officers to the full board.

The Executive Director reported on a possible collaboration with the Avalonia Land Trust to prepare a region-wide conservation plan. The Executive Committee expressed their support for the creation of such a plan.

The Executive Committee confirmed they still wished for the SCCOG members to meet in person on December 15th.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

James S. Butler, Executive Director