



**SOUTHWEST MISSOURI COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**  
**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, October 15, 2024**  
**3:30 p.m.**  
**Roy Blunt Jordan Valley Innovation Center**

**Attendees:** Duane Lavery, Todd Wiesehan, Allen Kunkel, Steve Childers, and J. Howard Fisk

**Zoom Attendees:** Bill Monday, Jerry Harman, and Wayne Blades

**Staff:** Jason Ray, Jane Hood, and Courtney Pinkham

**Open Meeting** – Allen Kunkel

1. **Approval of October 15, 2024, Agenda** – Allen Kunkel

*Motion made by Todd Wiesehan and seconded by J. Howard Fisk to approve the October 15, 2024, Agenda. Motion carried.*

2. **Approval of August 13, 2024, Minutes** – Allen Kunkel

*Motion made by Duane Lavery and seconded by Todd Wiesehan to approve the August 13, 2024, Minutes. Motion carried.*

3. **Bank Transfers**– Jason Ray

N/A

4. **FY23 Audit**– Included in the meeting packet. Jason Ray

Jason stated that there were no findings or opinions. There was a comment on us using cash basis, we have already switched to accrual, which resolves that.

*Motion made by J. Howard Fisk and seconded by Jerry Harman to accept the audit. Motion carried.*

-Duane Lavery asked if EDA is concerned with SMCOG being intertwined with MSU.

-Jason responded that MSU has their own internal and external auditors. SMCOG auditor looks at SMCOG EDA program separately and make sure any justification for expenses being paid to MSU is proper. We declared to EDA and our auditor that Jason and Krissy both are employed by MSU and that we also do business with MSU. Allen stated that FORVIS does MSU's audit, and it is accessible online.

5. **OA State Regional Grant Program** – Jason Ray

Jason shared that the Office of Administration administers the State aid provided by the General Assembly to RPC's/COG's which helps provide funding.

*Motion made by Duane Lavery and seconded by J. Howard Fisk to authorize Jason Ray and Cindy Stephens to sign the grant application (agreement) and to designate the local match requirement (50%) of \$24,923.29 and provide the audit that was just approved. Motion carried.*

## **6. Professional Liability Insurance Updates** – Jason Ray

Jason discussed if we needed Professional Liability Insurance with other peers and our insurance carrier. They all recommended we do not need to add this coverage to our policy.

## **7. Staffing Update** – Jason Ray

Jason stated that Jane Hood's last day will be 11/15/2024. We are working on plans for a celebration of her retirement.

SMCOG has hired a new Fiscal & Administrative Manager, Morganza Byrd, who will start this Friday. Morganza has worked for MSU managing grants, and for SPS as an account coordinator, she has a variety of management, fiscal, and project management backgrounds, and all of her references came back positive. Krissy Dickens has continued on parttime with SMCOG to keep up with our fiscal records, and she will be training Morganza.

Jason also mentioned that due to changes in Federal Labor laws regarding exempt employees, he will need to reevaluate which staff stays exempt, or if some staff will need a salary increase to meet these guidelines.

-Steve Childers asked if there is funding to help with staffing. Discussion held regarding the new Leaders for Ozarks Regional Evolvement (LORE) organization.

-Jason responded that this is part of the reason SMCOG asked for the dues increase last year. The OA grant and indirect also help with administration and soft costs. The biggest gap in funding that occurs for SMCOG is when we are scoping new projects, the hours worked on this will not fall under most of our budgets.

## **8. Office Relocation Update** – Jason Ray

Jason reported that the SMCOG office will be moving to Blunt Hall around 4/1/2025. Our last day in our current space, Levy-Wolf is 11/15/2024, we will be moving temporarily to University College Hall. We will be sending out due invoices early this year so that we can also include a move update to our members. Jason has recently found out about additional costs for the move that we were not aware of, he will be working with the dean to see if they can provide funding to help cover these costs.

## **8. Program/Project Updates** – Jason Ray

-The Groves Comp Plans are wrapping up. Due to a lack of funding, we will not be making paper copies or hosting additional in-person meetings. We are starting on Comp Plans for Indian Point and Marionville.

-Aishwarya and Garrett are in DC for a training that SMCOG received funding for in order to write a Webster County Transit Plan Study.

-Jason will attend the NADO conference in DC next week. SMCOG is receiving an Impact Award for the project we did with the Springfield Chamber, the eFactory, Codefi, to help prop up Innovate SOMO through the Missouri Technology Corporation. It resulted in \$200,000 for the eFactory for Innovate SOMO.

-We are conducting several income surveys for communities to get the accurate LMI rate for grant eligibility.

-RLF, we have received several new prescreening forms, we will have a loan review committee meeting next Friday. We have received approval for our review team for the 2 Sisters Mill restaurant.

-We are working with Springfield CVB on a grant application through EDA for a new convention center feasibility study. EDA would like to see this project focusing on working with innovation and tech businesses. Allen Kunkel offered to write a letter on behalf of JVIC.

-Jason was in Monett for a meeting and met their new City Administrator, Jeff Hancock.

-Greene County commissioners asked for SMCOG to keep the James Rive Loop study on our radar.

## **8. Adjourn**