

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
December 9, 2002
MAG Offices
302 North 1st Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Mayor Wendy Feldman-Kerr Queen Creek,
Chairman

Mayor Joan Shafer Surprise, Vice Chairman

* Mayor Keno Hawker, Mesa

Mayor Bill Arnold, Goodyear

Mayor Mary Manross, Scottsdale

Mayor Skip Rimsza, Phoenix

* Not present

Participated by videoconference or telephone conference call

1. Call to Order

The Executive Committee meeting was called to order by Chairman Wendy Feldman-Kerr at 12:20 p.m.

Chairman Feldman-Kerr recognized public comment from Blue Crowley, who stated that in the past, he has requested that Call to the Audience be on the Executive Committee agenda, which has not happened. He commented that he attributed the oversight to a printing error. Mr. Crowley commented that by not having a call to the audience item, MAG was in violation of open meeting laws. He stated that the multitude of committees create multi-layer government. Mr. Crowley stated that the fence for staff parking that is proposed for the new Human Services Campus is estimated to cost \$100,000. He stated that this money would be better spent for actual services to the homeless. Staff should be using alternative transportation, rather than driving in single occupant vehicles, anyway. Mr. Crowley expressed his support for the selection of Dennis Smith as Executive Director. He commented that Mr. Smith has done much for outreach to citizens, and has asked Mr. Crowley to sit at the table. Mr. Crowley stated that the public needs to be a part of the process in the Town Hall. When he sees that there has been no public input on the project, there needs to be outreach to all. Chairman Feldman-Kerr thanked Mr. Crowley for his comments.

2. Approval of the November 21, 2002 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Shafer moved to approve the November 21, 2002 Executive Committee meeting minutes. Mayor Manross seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Town Hall Update

Tom Remes stated that the concept for an annual regional town hall came out of the study of Governance. He stated that preliminary meetings have been held with organizations familiar with

the town hall concept, to better understand how to implement a successful town hall. Mr. Remes stated that Valerie Manning and Evelyn Casuga have shared their experience with town halls at these meetings. He noted that a diverse steering committee could guide the efforts. Mr. Remes stated that with the upcoming development of the Regional Transportation Plan, one idea was to tie the town hall into the TPC process. He mentioned that focus groups will be needed in the TPC process. Mr. Remes stated that March is being considered for the town hall, because that time frame would fit in with the TPC process. Chairman Feldman-Kerr thanked Mr. Remes and asked if there were questions.

Mayor Arnold asked if the town hall would be a one day event. Chairman Feldman-Kerr commented that this had not yet been decided. Mr. Remes commented that it is anticipated that this option would be discussed by the steering committee and the Regional Council. He noted that the thought was to have a one day event, with background material provided to participants prior to the town hall.

Chairman Feldman-Kerr stated that the topic would need to be identified, then the time required to accomplish the goals. Mr. Smith stated that the goal is to have a successful program the first year, which may be accomplished by starting small and having a tight program.

Mayor Arnold asked the target groups. Chairman Feldman-Kerr replied that the steering committee would provide direction on those that need to be targeted for the town hall. She stated that suggestions are welcome. Mayor Arnold commented that if input from the town hall is used in the RTP, experts will need to be brought in.

Mr. Smith stated that one idea for the Regional Council retreat in January was to bring in the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) staff to discuss the “Indicators of Sustainable Competitiveness” report. He mentioned that the thought was to focus the first town hall on transportation, and at a future town hall, another metro area similar to ours could be brought in.

Mayor Manross commented that it would be an opportune time to focus the town hall on transportation.

Mayor Rimsza commented that the biggest challenge facing the region is transportation, and the focus needs to remain on transportation.

Discussion took place on the town hall schedule time line. Mr. Smith commented that the TPC members’ input is needed. He noted that the item is on the December 11th Regional Council agenda. Chairman Feldman-Kerr asked Mr. Crowley if it was acceptable for his comments on town hall to be heard later, because the conference call from SANDAG had come through. Mr. Crowley replied that was acceptable.

8. Preliminary Discussion of “Indicators of Sustainable Competitiveness” Report

This agenda item was taken out of order.

Mr. Smith stated that at the November 21, 2002, the Executive Committee discussed the program for the Regional Council retreat in January 2003. He stated that one of the proposed items for the retreat was to have a representative from SANDAG discuss their recently released report titled, "Indicators of Sustainable Competitiveness." Mr. Smith stated that before placing this item on the Retreat agenda, the Executive Committee requested that a representative of SANDAG be contacted to provide additional information. Mr. Smith introduced Mr. Marney Cox, Chief Economist for SANDAG, who joined the meeting via audio conference call.

Mr. Cox provided background on the impetus to draft the report. He described the economic downturns during the 1990s that led to drafting the report. Mr. Cox commented that leaders became concerned about the quality of life, and a part of that was the replacement of high paying jobs with low paying jobs.

Mr. Cox stated that three areas were focused on: Economy, Environment, and Equity. The goal was to ensure they were in a balanced format. He stated that a process was undertaken to create tools and compare the area with 20 regions across the United States. The result of this process was the report, "Indicators of Sustainable Competitiveness."

Mr. Cox stated that the co-chairs of the 20-person committee involved in the process were the president of an economic development group and a mayor. Although the process was governmental, it was also private sector driven. Mr. Cox stated that the idea behind the report was to figure out San Diego's position in each area: 1) How are we doing? 2) Is it sustainable? He stated that the process showed that San Diego was in the middle. Mr. Cox stated that most importantly, it showed that their worst area was equity.

Mr. Cox stated that the objective of putting together the indicators was to work together in a collaborative effort and make needed changes. He stated that the SANDAG board gave direction to use these indicators in monitoring a regional comprehensive plan. To monitor progress, the board gave direction to use this tool to ensure all were headed in the same direction and were making progress. Chairman Feldman-Kerr asked if there were questions for Mr. Cox.

Mayor Manross asked how the process was begun by going into the communities to elicit interest and determine the stakeholders that needed to be a part of the process. Mr. Cox replied that SANDAG is similar to MAG in that they are governed by elected policy makers. He stated that staff makes the first cut to identify potential committee members, but the board approves the committee composition. Mr. Cox explained that the process had to with trends in the region.

Chairman Feldman-Kerr asked the next step in the process. Mr. Cox replied that it will be a two-step process. 1) The document will be updated annually. 2) The indicators in the index will be expanded. The focus will be mainly on the San Diego area to help ensure sufficient open space, balance of jobs, etc. Chairman Feldman-Kerr asked if all indicators would be updated. Mr. Cox replied that was correct. He explained that large databases continuously change, and issues in a region change over time, requiring updates. Mr. Cox also stated that SANDAG would make the annual databases available to other metro regions, such as Maricopa County.

Mayor Arnold asked about the size of the agencies composing SANDAG. Mr. Cox replied that SANDAG has small cities in addition to San Diego, and is a diverse area. Mr. Cox stated that the commonality with the Phoenix area is the job balance. He added that they have done a good job in maintaining a low unemployment rate. Mr. Cox explained that opportunities are needed where people can move up from entry level jobs to higher paying positions. He explained that response to the report has received, both locally and nationally. Locally, people like the idea of the three E's, and feel they are good indicators. Nationally, there has been interest expressed with the tool and requests to use the database.

Mr. Smith asked the resources used to put the report together. Mr. Cox explained that two economists and two interns worked on the project for eight months. Each of the two economists worked half time, equaling one full time. He added that the interns worked on the database gathering process. Mr. Smith asked the population of the MPO area. Mr. Cox replied that the area's population is approximately three million. Mr. Smith asked if the area was included in one county. Mr. Cox replied that was correct.

Mayor Arnold asked about the local funding sources. Mr. Cox responded that the area has a half cent sales tax for transportation purposes, such as local streets and freeways, that passed in 1988. He stated that it is anticipated that \$3 billion will be collected over the 20-year life of the tax. Mr. Cox added that reauthorization of the tax is anticipated for November 2004. He stated that self supporting mechanisms become even more important until cities can get back on track financially. Mr. Cox thanked the Executive Committee for the invitation to address them on the report. He offered his assistance if needed. Chairman Feldman-Kerr thanked Mr. Cox for his report.

Chairman Feldman-Kerr stated that the "Indicators of Sustainable Competitiveness" report was being discussed as a potential topic for the Regional Council retreat. Mr. Smith stated that it was suggested that the Chair of the San Diego committee could come to the retreat. He added that Dick Bowers had been asked to be the facilitator. Some other ideas for the retreat include discussion on the transportation election polling and the REMI model.

Mayor Manross stated that she brought a copy of the sustainability report that her city has been producing for the past four years. She added that their report has four target areas, and has been very useful to encourage regional partnership and their status as a community.

Mr. Smith commented on San Diego's affordable housing efforts and that they may be translated to efforts in the MAG region. Chairman Feldman-Kerr commented that agreement is needed on direction for the retreat, and a knowledge of staff time commitments. Mr. Smith commented that San Diego also receives funding from a toll facility.

Mayor Rimsza stated that the focus needed to remain on transportation. Vice Chair Shafer stated her agreement that the focus should be transportation. Chairman Feldman-Kerr stated that a common direction is needed for the future. Vice Chair Shafer expressed concern for added expense. Because we do not know what will happen, all resources need to be devoted to the transportation election. Chairman Feldman-Kerr stated that if all efforts are devoted to transportation, then all will come to a halt when the election is done. Mayor Rimsza stated that he was just suggesting that nothing new be undertaken.

Mayor Manross stated that a discussion on this topic at the retreat might be beneficial. Chairman Feldman-Kerr stated that it might provide direction for how we do business in the future. She added that it may not require any resources. Mayor Rimsza stated that he had visions of Valley Vision 2025 again. Vice Chair Shafer questioned the benefits San Diego received from the report, because she understood they are still in a bad situation.

Mayor Rimsza stated that a city is a service business. The focus should be on the core business and giving people what they want. Mayor Rimsza stated that the job for this organization is to get the sales tax extension passed. He added that he would not like to see that focus diluted.

Mr. Smith stated that the annual report would be a part of the regional development item that was on last month's Regional Council agenda. He added that the report would not be sizable and would be somewhat like the Urban Atlas done a couple of years ago. Mayor Rimsza commented that the Urban Atlas was a great tool. Mr. Smith noted that we would be reporting only on things in our database. Jack Tomasik stated that was correct, with maybe 10 percent additions of new datasets. He added that San Diego provides a database to other cities, and MAG could use it.

Chairman Feldman-Kerr commented on pulling all existing studies together whether done by MAG or other agencies. Vice Chair Shafer commented that she did not want this to dilute the focus on the election. She added that it was not evident how this would enhance our quality of life. Chairman Feldman-Kerr asked Mr. Tomasik to show how this would benefit the City of Surprise. Mr. Tomasik stated that the report could be organized along the lines of new physical development in the region, quality of life measures, economy, environment and equity, such as performance measures for school districts shown by municipality.

Mayor Rimsza stated that geographic size can make some cities' education statistics look bad. Local government is where the services have to happen, and the focus of cities is on core services. Mayor Rimsza stated that local government does not control the schools. He added that he liked the Urban Atlas approach. Mr. Smith stated that a draft report and table of contents could be developed by the Planners Stakeholders Group and brought to the Executive Committee for feedback.

Vice Chair Shafer asked how the public would benefit. Mr. Smith stated that the report might show areas that need a focus.

Mayor Manross stated that by working together, you can accomplish things. She commented that she did not see the report as a threat, as long as it would not dilute resources and put us in a box. Mayor Rimsza asked Mayor Manross how the Scottsdale document impacts decisions. Mayor Manross replied that commissions use it to measure progress. It provides a report card each year on how the city is doing. Mayor Rimsza stated that physical items were all right to report, but subjective items concerned him.

Chairman Feldman-Kerr commented that the report would educate others about what MAG does. Mayor Rimsza stated that education about the good that MAG does would not stop the newspapers from printing inflammatory headlines. He stated that they are in the business of selling papers, and

that type of headline gets attention. Mayor Rimsza stated that we cannot respond to the newspapers.

Mayor Manross stated that one of the reasons for the governance discussion was that we needed to send a message that MAG was changing to be a more effective organization. Mayor Rimsza stated that he was not suggesting that the paper cannot have impact on discussion, but was concerned about communities being labeled. Vice Chair Shafer commented that the schools in her city are not the best, but are trying to improve. She stated that she would not want her city to be compared to Scottsdale.

Chairman Feldman-Kerr stated that discussion on some of the issues in the San Diego report was brought up because of the commonality in size to the MAG region. If there is a document to compare with the San Diego report, it could show how we can compete as a region. Chairman Feldman-Kerr stated that if having this item on the retreat agenda pits us against the other, it would not be worth it. She added that transportation is a priority, but we also need agreement about direction. Chairman Feldman-Kerr commented that transportation is not the only thing that MAG does. Mr. Smith noted that Mayor Hawker had suggested the report concept. Mr. Tomasik stated that GPEC's focus is on monitoring the things they want to see accomplished in the region. Their philosophy is if it doesn't get measured, it doesn't get done. He stated that MAG could do the same, measure the things that are important for regional development, and monitor those. Mr. Tomasik mentioned that the Planners Stakeholders Group had, by consensus, developed a mission statement for Regional Development that emphasized physical development, with a focus on complete and accurate information, on analysis, and on encouraging joint planning. He stated that his previous example of education as a quality of life measure was off the top of his head, and that it does not make sense to measure cities on services they do not provide.

Mayor Arnold stated that GPEC provides answers to companies wishing to locate here. It is extremely important we do our part as regional planners. Mr. Smith assured members that staff are not interested in another Valley Vision 2025 report. Unless all agree this makes sense to do a report, it should not be considered at this time. Chairman Feldman-Kerr stated that she agreed after the retreat would be a better time to reconsider. Mayor Rimsza left the meeting.

Chairman Feldman-Kerr recognized public comment from Mr. Crowley, who brought up Mayor Rimsza's comments that core services are important. Mr. Crowley stated that there is no bus service on Roosevelt, which has been a part of the community since the 1930s. In reference to the acreage recently annexed by the City of Phoenix, he stated that sprawl happens when you annex. Mr. Crowley stated that you cannot do transportation planning unless you land use planning also. He commented on an article in The Arizona Republic about prime home sites in the East Valley expanding into Pinal County. Mr. Crowley stated that green belts are needed. He stated that he did not see where there will be cooperation, will it be in the document?

4. Outreach to MAG Member Agencies

This agenda item was not discussed.

5. Preliminary Discussion of the Development of the FY 2004 MAG Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget

Becky Kimbrough addressed the Committee on preliminary discussions for the development of the Work Program and annual budget. She stated that member agencies had requested an earlier start in developing the Work Program and budget, and a memorandum outlining the proposed process was at each place. In addition, an Executive Summary of the Work Program and Budget is being proposed, and the development of a Regional Council accomplishments report. Ms. Kimbrough stated that a draft work program and budget would be discussed by the Executive Committee in February 2003. She acknowledged the assistance of Peggy Carpenter, Scottsdale Intergovernmental Representative, on the summary. Ms. Kimbrough added that the summary will enable ease in reviewing the budget and will highlight changes from the previous year. She explained that MAG has been notified by ADOT of a 3.9 percent inflation factor that amounts to approximately \$20,000, which will be allocated to cities based on their 2002 populations. Mr. Smith stated that the higher growing jurisdictions will pay more.

Mayor Arnold asked if the allocation would apply to populations in the MAG region. Ms. Kimbrough replied that it would apply to the total population of MAG members.

Chairman Feldman-Kerr stated that the schedule looked good. She expressed that she appreciated that the document would show changes. Mr. Smith stated that segments of the work program and budget would be brought to the Committee over the next couple of months. Ms. Kimbrough added that the Regional Council would be provided a report in March before approval in May.

6. Executive Director's Recruitment Update

This agenda item was not discussed.

Mayor Arnold stated that the December meeting would probably be his last meeting as a Regional Council member. Chairman Feldman-Kerr stated that the Council would like to have his input at the Regional Council retreat.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary