

Meeting Minutes
Sustainable Communities Planning Grant
Meeting of the Coordinating Committee of the Consortium
Wednesday July 26, 2011 10 a.m. to Noon
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor

MEMBERS OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE IN ATTENDANCE:

David Crossley, Houston Tomorrow
Ron Drachenberg, Fort Bend County
Joanne Ducharme, Montgomery County
DC Dunham, Bay City Development Corporation
Emiliano Herrera, III, Neighborhood Centers, Inc.
Victoria Herrin, Houston Wilderness
Mike Kramer, City of Houston
Christy Lambright, Harris County
Sherry McKibben, City of Huntsville
Curtis McMinn, United Way of Greater Houston
Donna Rybiski, Center for Houston's Future
Jeff Taebel, Houston-Galveston Area Council
Amanda Timm, Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Joe Webb, Blueprint Houston
Amy Webb, Houston Advanced Research Center
Charles Wemple, Gulf Coast Economic Development District
Maggie Yancy, Greater Houston Builders Association

Also in attendance (based upon sign-in sheet available at the meeting)

Robert Belew, Center for Collaboration; Amy Boyers, Houston-Galveston Area Council; Jared Briggs, Harris County; Antoine Bryant, Outreach Strategists; Randall Butler, Center for Collaboration; Toni Candis, Harris County; Allison Carr, Houston-Galveston Area Council; Richard Cron, Houston Wilderness; Meredith Dang, Houston-Galveston Area Council; Garrett Dolan, Rice University; Magda Herrera, Local Initiatives Support Corporation; Autumn Hoze, America Speaks; Sungmin Lee, City of Houston; Karen Marshall, METRO; Cheryl Mergo, Houston-Galveston Area Council; Gina Mitteco, Houston-Galveston Area Council; Martha Murphree, Blueprint Houston; Kelly Opot, Harris County; Diana Ponce De Leon, City of Houston; Allen Richey, Houston Wilderness; Andrea Tantillo, Houston-Galveston Area Council; and Geri Wells, Center for Collaboration.

1. Regular Business – Call to Order

Chuck Wemple, Coordinating Committee Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

2. Certify Quorum

At least 51% of the member entities were represented, constituting a quorum.

3. Public Comment

No public comments were provided.

4. Approval of June 29, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Action: Motion made by Joanne Ducharme, seconded by Sherry McKibben, to approve the meeting minutes as presented.

The Coordinating Committee approved the minutes.

5. Public Engagement Consultant Selection Process

Jeff Taebel gave an update on the status of AmericaSpeaks formal appeal of the H-GAC Board of Director's decision to approve negotiating a contract with the second-ranked firm, AECOM. Via telephone conference, AmericaSpeaks met with Jeff as the Director of the department that completed the procurement as the first step in the process to protest. The findings of the initial meeting were referred to the H-GAC Chief Financial Officer, as per the agency's three-part appeal process. The CFO has transmitted the findings to AmericaSpeaks. They may file a request to have a hearing with her. H-GAC has asked that they make that request by August 1, 2011, in anticipation of any resulting action being placed on the August H-GAC Board of Director's agenda.

Members of the Coordinating Committee delegation met with H-GAC Board officers prior to the July Board meeting and made a presentation to the the H-GAC Board during its regular July meeting . Delegation members were Joe Webb, Amanda Timm and DC Dunham. The delegation presented an overview of the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development, including the role of the Coordinating Committee and additional information about the selection process for the Public Engagement Consultant.

Discussion:

The H-GAC Board was appreciative of the presentation, however, they have numerous agenda items each month, so Coordinating Committee members could consider scheduling meetings, either formal or informal, with Board members prior to any meetings that will include agenda items addressing the grant.

Scheduling follow up for some elected officials may raise concerns as they may already have formal briefing processes from their staff and/or from representatives on the Coordinating Committee.

Coordinating Committee members could review the list of H-GAC Board members to determine if there are any Board members whose jurisdictions do not have representation on the Coordinating Committee and if any relationships can be built with those Board members by Committee members. Amanda Timm offered to review the list.

6. Governmental Advisory Committee

As per the grant application and Coordinating Committee bylaws, the H-GAC Board will be asked to empanel a Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) to serve as a liaison between the Coordinating Committee and the elected bodies which will be asked to approve and implement the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. The GAC will not be a voting or decision-making body, but will offer recommendations and help garner support from their communities and constituents.

The Coordinating Committee was asked to consider using language in the bylaws as the charge to the H-GAC Board to appoint the GAC.

From bylaws: Advisory Committee provides guidance to the Coordinating Committee about the likelihood of political support for the Plan. The Governmental Advisory Committee will provide advice about the products and strategies developed by the Coordinating Committee throughout the planning process. The Governmental Advisory Committee shall evaluate products of the Coordinating Committee through the livability principles developed by HUD and its federal partners and their local practicality.

Discussion:

The the bylaws indicate the GAC will act in an advisory capacity.

Members of the GAC will be elected officials and have limited amount of time. They may want to assign alternates or members of their staff to represent them at meetings and bring them information. We will keep the GAC educated at certain points throughout the process so that they will be advocates to the process.

Keeping the GAC informed will require a coordinated and cohesive effort on the part of the Coordinating Committee.

The recommendation from staff did not indicate the GAC would be a sub-committee of H-GAC's Board. However, elected officials from the 13-county region already travel to H-GAC once per month as members of the H-GAC Board. GAC members could be made up of H-GAC Board members and could meet before or after the Board meeting each quarter or as needed.

Each county could ask their communications staff to participate as part of the GAC and be trusted to communicate information accurately both to and from elected officials. A 13-county plan should have a representative from each county.

H-GAC's Board may not be reflective of the actual demographic make up of the 13-county region.

Communications staff will be involved through stakeholder engagement throughout the process. It may be better to have limited time with a few elected officials rather than a big group that may have a lot of staff and may not have that facetime with the elected official. Elected officials offer a good litmus test for what proposals will be supported by broader governing bodies and constituents.

The GAC would meet quarterly at major milestones in the project, such as when there is a draft set of metrics, draft scenarios, draft implementation strategies and a draft plan.

The GAC will give the Coordinating Committee recommendations of what can be included in the Plan that can actually be accomplished.

Once you are appointed, you are appointed until your elected term has ended. At that time the jurisdiction could appoint a new member. Language in the bylaws already addresses changes to

Coordinating Committee membership. That same language could be used for GAC membership replacements.

H-GAC staff will prepare GAC composition considerations to send out via e-mail to Coordinating Committee members for consideration.

Action: David Crossley made a motion to use the language background paper distributed prior to the meeting, replacing “political support” to “jurisdictional support,” as the charge to give to the H-GAC Board to appoint the Governmental Advisory Committee. Joe Webb seconded the motion. The motion was amended to add language to indicate that the charge may evolve as the project progresses.

The Coordinating Committee approved the motion.

7. Workgroup Kickoff

Jeff Taebel provided a draft presentation to be delivered at the Regional Transect and Technical Advisory groups kick off meeting. H-GAC staff provided additional information about the schedule of events and Coordinating Committee roles, including facilitation.

Coordinating Committee members provided suggestions on the content of the presentation and requested that it be made available online.

8. Interactive Exercise: Defining Sustainability

Emiliano Herrera III led break out groups in an exercise to try to define what sustainability means for the region.

9. Updates

Matching Leverage Forms

The matching leverage forms will be due on the 20th of the month following the end of each quarter.

Preferred Sustainability Status for Non-Eligible Grants

H-GAC recommends providing letters of support upon request instead of Preferred Sustainability Status for entities applying for grants that aren't eligible to receive bonus points for Preferred Sustainability Status. H-GAC will add a list of eligible grant programs to the web page with the Preferred Sustainability Form.

10. Other Business

None.

11. Announcements

None.

12. Next Meeting Dates

Tuesday, August 23, 2011, 10:00 AM
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

Tuesday, September 27, 2011, 10 AM
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

Tuesday, October 25, 2011, 10 AM
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

13. Adjourn

Action: The meeting adjourned at 12:20 PM

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

Please contact Meredith Dang, H-GAC
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