

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency LGAC Small Communities Advisory Subcommittee

Teleconference

(DRAFT) Meeting Summary

Thursday, July 14, 2011
11:00 am- 12:00 pm (CT)

The Meeting Summary that follows reflects what was conveyed during the course of the meeting which is summarized. The Subcommittee is not responsible for any potential inaccuracies that may appear in the meeting summary as a result of information conveyed. Moreover, the Subcommittee advises that additional information sources be consulted in cases where any concern may exist about statistics or any other information contained within the Meeting Summary.

Meeting Summary: Small Communities Advisory Subcommittee

July 14, 2011, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm CT

Draft Meeting Notes

Introductions & Meeting Minutes Approval

-Chair, Mayor Bob Dixon calls the meeting to order and moves to approve May's meeting minutes, the motion is approved.

Partnership for Sustainable Communities Draft Report:

-Mayor Dixon begins the conversation about the Sustainable Communities document by saying that whether its grants, low interest loans, economic competitiveness, or leveraging infrastructure – *Sustainability is most importantly to thrive, not simply survive*. The SCAS recommendation letter encourages this and supports the efforts of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities.

-Commissioner Cope states that small communities in many ways struggle now because of the loss of manufacturing jobs. The U.S. has become more based on a service oriented economy and that pushes out opportunities for the rural and small communities.

-Mayor Murrell states that 90% of Oklahoma is considered a small community. Small Business incubator programs may also be an option for the Partnership to consider because they really do help communities and their economies thrive. Loans for business through the federal government are still often too daunting to apply and get for many small businesses, the loan threshold is also often much too high for small businesses to compete for.

-Mayor Dixon adds that in order for small communities to thrive and remain sustainable they have to identify their strengths and encourage growth, while at the same time take pride in remaining a small, close knit community. Encouraging a revolving loan fund would also be useful so as to lessen the burden of environmental regulations on businesses. Kansas has regional economic development but often there is an issue of turf and "turf protection" (federal, state, local) that needs to be addressed.

-Cope makes note that the Partnership for Sustainable Communities Rural report should include information about local training and technical assistance through the universities – free or inexpensive research can also be carried out by these local universities – which can address one of the needs to work on keeping problem solving local and to determine a more specific local approach, rather than a one size fits all.

-Murrell agrees with Cope and Dixon and wants to see rural communities share more information, avoid turf wars and work together more effectively to maintain rural community vitality. There are many various types of resources, tools, and relevant research that can work with multitudes of communities, no need in reinventing the wheel. Small communities need to especially be aware in sharing tools for they are the most in need of conserving resources.

-Mayor Dixon appreciates the open discussion and dialog about the Partnership for Sustainable Communities Rural report and the SCAS letter which address the report. The letter is motioned to be approved for the Full Committee's consideration and is so moved by the SCAS members.

SCAS and LGAC Workgroup Efforts:

-Rural Communities E. O. Announcement from the White House is an important step in getting a more wide range discussion on rural and small community issues throughout the federal government.

Moving forward in providing recommendations -goals

-After some discussion about the Rural Communities Executive Order the SCAS group decides that this new initiative and effort from the White House is a good point of focus and discussion for the Subcommittee moving forward. **The DFO for SCAS should take a closer look at how EPA is involved with the Rural White House Council and report back to the Subcommittee. What can SCAS provide to EPA for assistance in being part of the Rural White House Council?**

-SCAS would like to call for a vote that the LGAC recommend to EPA that the White House Rural Council consider organizing a rural/small community's conference in the future.

LGAC workgroup updates were given by the various SCAS members with their perspectives.

-All SCAS members are encouraged to look over the upcoming LGAC letters or workgroup discussions on the table and consider giving input on the small community perspective.

SCAS Next Steps and Chicago Agenda:

-SCAS Subcommittee has an interest in meeting for dinner on July 13th, to discuss SCAS issues in greater detail, as well as share and get to know each other more.

-SCAS will provide preliminary comments to EPA based on their response to the draft Rural document. Those draft comments will likely be discussed and voted on by the full LGAC in Chicago.

-EPA and SCAS Subcommittee will work out the final details of the workgroup agenda time at the Chicago meeting after comments have been provided on the rural document.

Wrap-up and Next Steps

-Prepare for Reporting Out. Thank the other workgroups for their contributions and efforts. Give a brief on the letter. Recommend that Jackson request that the White House Rural Council consider a rural community conference.

Meeting Adjourns



We hereby certify that, to the best of our knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

Submitted by:

Signature Date
Paula Zampieri, EPA DFO

Signature Date
Mayor Robert Dixon, Chairman, SCAS

**Environmental Protection Agency
Local Government Advisory Committee
Small Community Advisory Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday, July 14, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm (CT)**

Participants

- Mayor Bob Dixon, Greensburg, KS
- Mayor Marilyn Murrell, Arcadia, OK
- Commissioner Robert Cope, SCAS,
Vice Chair, Lemhi County, ID

- Jeffrey Tiberi, Helena Montana
- Jack Bowles, EPA Director OIR
- Paula Zampieri, EPA DFO, OCIR