



Southern California Association of Governments
Remote Participation Only
March 31, 2021

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
EXECUTIVE/ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (EAC)
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021**

THE FOLLOWING MINUTES IS A SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE/ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (EAC). A VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDING OF THE ACTUAL MEETING IS AVAILABLE AT: <http://scag.iqm2.com/Citizens/>

The Executive/Administration Committee (EAC) of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) held its special meeting telephonically and electronically, given public health directives limiting public gatherings due to the threat of COVID-19 and in compliance with the Governor’s Executive Order N-29-20. A quorum was present.

Members Present

Hon. Rex Richardson, President	<i>Long Beach</i>	District 29
Hon. Clint Lorimore, 1st Vice President	<i>Eastvale</i>	District 4
Hon. Jan Harnik, 2nd Vice President		RCTC
Hon. Alan D. Wapner, Imm. Past President		SBCTA
Hon. Frank Yokoyama, Vice Chair, CEHD	<i>Cerritos</i>	District 23
Hon. David Pollock, Chair, EEC	<i>Moorpark</i>	District 46
Hon. Deborah Robertson, Vice Chair, EEC	<i>Rialto</i>	District 8
Hon. Cheryl Viegas-Walker, Chair, TC	<i>El Centro</i>	District 1
Hon. Art Brown	<i>Buena Park</i>	District 21
Hon. Jose Luis Solache, Chair, LCMC	<i>Lynwood</i>	District 26
Hon. Peggy Huang, Vice Chair, LCMC		TCA
Hon. Margaret Finlay, President’s Appt.	<i>Duarte</i>	District 35
Hon. Kim Nguyen, President’s Appt.	<i>Garden Grove</i>	District 18
Hon. Carmen Ramirez, President’s Appt.		Ventura County
Hon. Andrew Masiel, Sr.	<i>Pechanga Dev. Corp.</i>	TGRP Representative
Mr. Randall Lewis, Ex-officio	<i>Lewis Group of Companies</i>	Business Representative

Members Not Present

Hon. Jorge Marquez, Chair, CEHD	<i>Covina</i>	District 33
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Staff Present

Kome Ajise, Executive Director



Darin Chidsey, Chief Operating Officer
Debbie Dillon, Chief Strategy Officer
Cindy Giraldo, Chief Financial Officer
Sarah Jepson, Director of Planning
Art Yoon, Director of Policy and Public Affairs
Julie Shroyer, Chief Information Officer
Ruben Duran, Board Counsel
Michael Houston, Chief Counsel, Director of Legal Services
Peter Waggoner, Office of Regional Council Support
Maggie Aguilar, Office of Regional Council Support

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable Rex Richardson called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. and asked Margaret Finlay, Duarte, District 35, to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Given the public health directives limiting gatherings due to COVID-19, President Richardson announced the meeting was being held telephonically and electronically in compliance with the Governor’s Executive Orders.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

President Richardson opened the Public Comment Period and outlined instructions for public comments.

SCAG staff stated that there was one written public comment received by email before the deadline of 5pm of Tuesday, March 2, 2021 which was transmitted to members and posted to SCAG’s website.

SCAG staff confirmed that there was one verbal public comment speaker by raised hand and acknowledged Warren Whiteakre. Mr. Whiteakre from the Orange County Transportation Authority, commented on agenda Item 2, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSAA) Inter-County Apportionments, and requested that action be delayed for one month.

Seeing no further public comment speakers, President Richardson closed the Public Comment Period.

REVIEW AND PRIORITIZE AGENDA ITEMS

There was no prioritization of agenda items.

ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Approval of the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Draft Comprehensive Budget

Executive Director Ajise reported that the framework for developing the FY 2021-22 Comprehensive Budget was SCAG's Strategic Plan that focuses on SCAG's vision and priorities and improves the organization and its operations. He indicated SCAG was required by federal and state law to develop the Overall Work Program (OWP) each year, and after the 30-day public comment period, the Final OWP would be submitted to the Regional Council for final approval on May 6. Additionally, the General Fund Budget and the Membership Assessment would also be forwarded to the General Assembly for approval on May 6. He further explained that the proposed budget met SCAG's primary responsibility requirements and furthers the implementation of the long-range Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Connect SoCal. He stated the proposed budget includes funding to address immediate impacts of the COVID-19 and public health crisis and provides funding for identified priorities in three specific areas like the Overarching Pandemic Recovery, for Local Technical Assistance Resources, and for Regional Studies and Programs.

Chief Financial Officer Cindy Giraldo presented the draft comprehensive budget for fiscal year 2022, and stated it was a culmination of months of planning and analysis completed by all of SCAG's divisions and facilitated by finance. She indicated that in collaboration with the member agencies, SCAG actively pursues opportunities to create long term positive impact for our region. She reported the proposed budget was \$147.8 billion, a 54% growth over the prior year. She explained that the largest portion of that growth was from partnerships with local transit operators where SCAG will administer pass through payments as well as local match commitments in support of grant funded projects. In addition, SCAG would be administering the Last Mile Freight Program to help goods movement providers invest in clean truck and infrastructure technology. She added that they were still in the middle of pursuing additional grant opportunities for the benefit of our region and currently had six grant applications outstanding, and if successful, when they return to the Regional Council in May, may find that budget had an additional \$38.8 million. With respect to salaries, she reported that total salaries and benefit costs amounted to \$31.8 million for a \$2.3 million increase over prior year and indicated that most of this increase was to account for increasing CalPERS liability and pension costs. She also reported that three new positions had been included in the budget. She further explained that annual staff merit-based increases, as well as the continuation of the vacation cashout pilot program had also been included in the budget and that SCAG was proposing to suspend all merit pay increases for executive and management employees. In conclusion, she clarified that the general fund revenues included membership fees of \$1.9 million which was based on dues collected through January of this year.

Supervisor Carmen Ramirez, Ventura County, requested additional information on the pension liability.

Ms. Giraldo reported that SCAG was making progress with the pension liability payment. She indicated that CalPERS had implemented some significant changes over the past 10 years to the pension program, essentially requiring agencies or member agencies to pay down that unfunded liability over a 20-year period. She explained that SCAG was at about 66% funded for pension liability and had an unfunded pension liability of about \$46 million.

Councilmember Cheryl Viegas-Walker, El Centro, District 1, expressed concern over the vacation cashout pilot program and stated she had seen a decline in the use of vacation hours per employee from 81 hours in fiscal year 2020 to 62.74 hours in fiscal year 2021. She thought that employees needed to use their vacation time and wanted a culture that celebrates work-life balance. She indicated that she would prefer not to continue the vacation cashout program for vacation but rather have staff use their vacation. She also asked for additional information on the employee recognition and department allowance numbers which had increased from \$9,000 to \$30,000.

Executive Director Ajise stated that SCAG promotes a work-life balance. He stated SCAG had been affected severely by the current situation we had with COVID-19 and indicated that in a good year on average employees used 80 hours, and last year had not been conducive to that, not only could employees not visit families, but they also could not go to anywhere. He indicated this was not an excuse and taking time from work was key. He further clarified that they had encouraged time off as much as possible in the last year, understanding that not only did they have a pandemic, but also had the added pressure of having to deal with both the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) and Connect SoCal in the same year. He stated these were some of the factors to consider. He also indicated that the year was not done and expected additional time off. He thanked Councilmember Viegas-Walker for bringing this up and hoped that they continued the pilot program so they can gather more data and then decide whether this is something they want to continue. He expressed that he hoped that they grant us the opportunity to continue the pilot program for another year or two before they bring it back for a further decision.

Councilmember Viegas-Walker stated she also believed in succession planning and thought another reason why they needed to encourage people to be out of the office was to allow staff the opportunity to act in place of their manager to make sure that they can do the job.

A MOTION was made (Ramirez) that the Regional Council: 1) Approve the Fiscal Year 2021-22 (FY 2021-22) Draft Comprehensive Budget in the amount of \$147,812,051; 2) Authorize the release of the Draft Overall Work Program (OWP) to initiate the 30-day public comment period; and 3) Approve the General Fund Budget and Membership Assessment and transmit to the General Assembly. Motion was SECONDED (Brown) and passed by the following votes:

AYES: Brown, Finlay, Harnik, Huang, Lorimore, Nguyen, Pollock, Ramirez, Richardson, Robertson, Solache, Viegas-Walker, Wapner and Yokoyama (14)

NOES: None (0)

ABSTAIN: None (0)

Councilmember Deborah Robertson, Rialto, District 8, asked how they would keep track of the issues that were raised by Councilmember Viegas-Walker.

Executive Director Ajise stated that this was something they had committed to reporting and was in the CFO monthly report so they could track it. He indicated that as an executive team they would be looking at strategies to ensure that staff are in fact taking time off.

2. Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSAA) Inter-County Apportionments

President Richardson requested to pull Item 2, and in the meantime, staff would prepare the inter-county apportionment split letter for the first \$828 million of CRRSA funds administratively. He indicated that the remaining unapportioned funds, approximately \$126 million, staff would be doing more work on it and would come back to the EAC next month, based on further conversation with the transit agencies. He stated this would hopefully put SCAG in a position to be able to move forward with the additional amount. Seeing no objection, he proceeded to pull the item as requested by staff so that staff could return to the Regional Council in April.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval Items

3. Minutes of the Meeting – February 2, 2021
4. Contracts \$200,000 or Greater: 21-015-C01, SCAG Local Demonstration Initiative
5. Contracts \$200,000 or Greater: 21-028-C01, Safe and Resilient Streets Strategies and Mini-Grants
6. Contracts \$200,000 or Greater: 21-032-C01, Enterprise Business Intelligence
7. Contracts \$200,000 or Greater: Contract No. 21-041-C01, Secondary Data Center Services

8. ACA 1 (Aguiar-Curry) – Voter Approval Threshold
9. SB 4 (Gonzalez) and AB 14 (Aguiar-Curry) – Broadband
10. SB 7 (Atkins) - The Jobs and Economic Improvement Through Environmental Leadership Act of 2021
11. SB 44 (Allen) - CEQA Streamlined Judicial Review: Environmental Leadership Transit Projects
12. AB 43 (Friedman) - Traffic Safety
13. SCAG Memberships and Sponsorships

Receive and File

14. CFO Monthly Report

First Vice President Clint Lorimore, Eastvale, District 4, requested to pull Items 8 and 9.

Councilmember Peggy Huang, TCA, requested to pull Item 8.

A MOTION was made (Solache) to approve Consent Calendar, Items 3 through 7 and 10 through 13; Receive and File Item 14. Motion was SECONDED (Finlay) and passed by the following votes:

AYES: Brown, Finlay, Huang, Lorimore, Masiel, Nguyen, Pollock, Ramirez, Richardson, Robertson, Solache, Viegas-Walker, Wapner and Yokoyama (14)

NOES: None (0)

ABSTAIN: None (0)

Director of Policy and Public Affairs Art Yoon provided a report on Item 8 regarding the ACA 1 bill sponsored by Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry, which would lower the voter threshold from two thirds to 55% to approve local bonds and special taxes by city, county, or special district to fund public infrastructure, affordable housing, or permanent supportive housing.

Councilmember Peggy Huang thanked staff for inviting Assemblywoman Aguiar-Curry to join the Legislative/Communications and Membership Committee (LCMC). She stated they had had conversations about need for funding for affordable housing, however, after hearing the discussion, she thought lowering the threshold did not seem to be the answer to this problem. She indicated they needed more state funding rather than what this did at the local level. She emphasized that

the reason they had a higher threshold was because they wanted the buy in of the whole community.

Supervisor Ramirez stated she supported this because it gave the local jurisdiction the ability to work on getting something passed with a lower threshold.

First Vice President Clint Lorimore stated he appreciated the comments from his colleagues and the reason why he had Items 8 and 9 pulled was because he did not agree and could not support either of the items. He indicated that city of Eastvale conducted a special election on a measure they put forward and the community came out in support of this item with 82.6%. He stated that it was possible to work with your community, if it was something that the community needed, and have a vote in favor of it. He indicated he disagreed with lowering the voter threshold, which is why he could not support this item. For Item 9, he stated the concern was related to there being no cap in AB 14 and therefore was not going to be able to vote in favor of it. He suggested that to save time they could vote on both items together.

Councilmember Jose Luis Solache, Lynwood, District 26, reported that the LCMC recommend this item for approval and they had some healthy discussion on the areas of concern, but ultimately the committee did approve it.

Councilmember Viegas-Walker stated she wanted this opportunity as an option for her city and this allowed for that.

Councilmember David Pollock, Moorpark, District 46, stated he had a different perspective from his time at the California School Boards Association, and was there when Senator O'Connell lowered the voting threshold for school bonds from sixty-six and two thirds to 55%. He indicated that what he had seen happen since then had been a whole lot more investment in public school facilities. He expressed that he did not think this was negative at all as it gave the opportunity for small communities to be able to vote to tax themselves without having to get that two thirds threshold, which was extremely difficult in most communities. He stated 55% was still a super majority.

Councilmember Margaret Finlay stated she thought that with the funding coming down for schools in Sacramento these days, the school bond initiatives that people were passing in their cities was the way that capital improvements were being funded and expressed support for this.

Councilmember Robertson stated this puts them in a position to be able to have local control and this was a tool that local elected officials needed, for this reason she was in support of it.

President Richardson stated housing was a big focus for SCAG and thought SCAG needed to be on the right side of this by giving them the tools. He expressed that he did not believe it was the state's

responsibility to pay for our housing and believed that they had to have local tools because building housing was an economic development strategy.

A MOTION was made (Robertson) to approve Consent Calendar, Items 8 and 9. Motion was SECONDED (Brown) and passed by the following votes:

AYES: Brown, Finlay, Harnik, Masiel, Nguyen, Pollock, Ramirez, Richardson, Robertson, Solache, Viegas-Walker, Wapner and Yokoyama (13)

NOES: Huang and Lorimore (2)

ABSTAIN: None (0)

CFO REPORT

Ms. Giraldo reported they made some changes to the CFO report and were looking to enhance it over the months to come. She indicated there would be monthly updates on the vacation cashout pilot program, as well as funding on pension liabilities, and information on how the employees are transitioning from the classic plan to the much more affordable and manageable PEPPA Plan that is now required by CalPERS.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Richardson welcomed Councilmember Art Brown, Buena Park, District 21, as the newest member of the EAC and reported that he was selected as Vice Chair of the Transportation Committee last month. He reminded the members that in place of the Policy Committee meetings, there would be a Joint Policy Committee meeting at 9:30 a.m. featuring the work of the Special Committee on Equity and Social Justice and three presentations from experts who were going to talk about equity from several stand points, followed by the Regional Council meeting at 12:30 p.m. In closing, he reported the next meeting of the EAC was scheduled for Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Ajise reported that the final RHNA Allocation Plan would be considered by the Regional Council for adoption and that the final action would provide certainty to local jurisdictions on the number units they needed to be planning for as part of their Housing Element updates, which were due October 2021. He stated that part of the final RHNA Allocation Plan includes the redistribution of successfully appealed units from the RHNA appeals process and must be consistent

with the regional determination provided by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). He reported that at the request Peggy Huang, Chair to the RHNA Appeals Board, the Regional Council would also consider a resolution to address various issues that were raised during the RHNA process. He further stated that the resolution outlined a strategy for SCAG to explore reforms for RHNA such as continued support of the subregions and local jurisdictions in advancing the housing element work, facilitation of discussions with HCD, statewide committee participation, legislative changes, and enhanced communications with county transportation commissions. He indicated the resolution was reviewed and approved by RHNA Appeals Board and the Community, Economic, and Human Development Committee.

He also reported that SCAG had launched a public survey to gather input on the development of the Racial Equity Early Action Plan and stated that through the work of the President's Special Committee on Equity and Social Justice, SCAG had drafted a definition of racial equity and established a set of goals and strategies to guide SCAG in this work going forward. He mentioned they were seeking input on specific actions and the input would inform a draft Racial Equity Early Action Plan. In closing, he indicated the survey was available on the new Inclusion, Equity, Diversity and Awareness webpage on SCAG's website.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEM/S

There were no future agenda items.

ANNOUNCEMENT/S

There were no announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President Richardson adjourned the Regular Meeting of the EAC at 3:58 p.m.

[MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE EAC]

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Executive / Administration Committee Attendance Report

2020-21															Total Mtgs Attended To Date
MEMBERS	CITY	Representing	JUN (Sp. Mtg.)	JULY	AUG (Retreat)	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	
Hon. Rex Richardson, President	Long Beach	District 29	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1			8
Hon. Clint Lorimore, 1st Vice Chair	Eastvale	District 4	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1			8
Hon. Jan Harnik, Chair, 2nd Vice Chair		RCTC	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1			8
Hon. Alan Wapner, Imm. Past Chair		SBCTA								1	1	1			3
Hon. Jorge Marquez, Chair, CEHD	Covina	District 33	1			1	0	1	1	1	1	0			6
Hon. Frank Yokoyama, Vice Chair, CEHD	Cerritos	District 23	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1			8
Hon. David Pollock, Chair, EEC	Moorpark	District 46	1	D	D	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			8
Hon. Deborah Roberston, Vice Chair, EEC	Rialto	District 8	1	A	A	0	1	0	0	1	1	1			5
Hon. Cheryl Viegas-Walker, Chair, TC	El Centro	District 1	1	R	R	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			8
Hon. Art Brown, Vice Chair, TC	Buena Park	District 21										1			1
Hon. José Luis Solache, Chair, LCMC	Lynwood	District 26	1	K	K	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			8
Hon. Peggy Huang, Vice Chair, LCMC		TCA	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1			8
Hon. Margaret Finlay, President's Appt.	Duarte	District 35	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1			8
Hon. Kim Nguyen, President's Appt.	Garden Grove	District 18	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1			8
Sup. Carmen Ramirez, President's Appt.		County of Ventura	1			0	1	1	1		1	1			6
Hon. Andrew Masiel, Sr.	Pechanga Dev. Corporation	Tribal Government Regional Planning Board	0			0	0	0	0	1	1	1			3
Mr. Randall Lewis, Ex-Officio Member	Lewis Group of Companies	Business Representative	1			1	1	1	1	1	0	1			7
			14	0	0	12	13	13	13	15	15	16	0	0	111

*Revised to reflect attendance not previously recorded in the minutes approved on 1/7/21

Attachment: EAC Attendance Sheet 2020-21 (Minutes of the Meeting - March 3, 2021)