

## South Carolina Mitigation Association

Executive Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
January 14, 2020

### Opening

The regular meeting of the Executive Committee of the South Carolina Mitigation Association was called to order January 14, 2020 via conference call by Allen Conger.

#### Attending:

Tara Allden  
Allen Conger  
Tommy Cousins  
Doug Hughes  
Daniel Johnson  
Kristin Knight-Meng  
Ross Nelson  
Sydni Redmond  
Jack Smith  
Ryan Smith  
Blair Wade

### I. Approval of Previous EC and Annual Meeting Minutes

- Meeting minutes were not available from the last meetings.

### II. Proposals from Management Associations

- Allen initiated the discussion of the four management proposals received from Capital Consultants, Gray Fox, JMA, and MPA Strategies. He stated that they varied quite a bit in fees and scope. He suggested forming a subcommittee to perform conference call interviews of two or three firms. Doug and Sydni volunteered to serve on the subcommittee along with Allen and Ross.

Allen mentioned that on JMA's proposal, they require a two-year agreement, but that they would set the cost for the fee for the second year at a later date. This would have to be clarified before entering into a contract with them.

- Doug asked if we are looking at more administrative or legislative needs. Allen stated the association management was the priority and legislative monitoring was secondary.
- Allen brought up that one of the proposals said we had missed opportunities in the legislature. He stated that we do need to monitor legislature, but not much currently coming up to affect the mitigation market. Lobbying is expensive and we first need to manage the other administrative elements of our group. He said he is hesitant to spend more on these management services that we take in in one year.
- Allen solicited Jack's opinion and Jack agreed that management should be the focus while perhaps dipping our toes into lobbying.

Allen wondered if the firms overestimated our size and complexity. He stated that SCMA is a pretty straight-forward group. We depend on our website for sharing information.

### **III. Quarterly Meeting Dates and Speakers**

- Tara stated that the three membership meetings had speakers last year in the partnership, technical, and policy areas.
- Allen said we would continue doing these quarterly with dates not yet set, but at some point later in each quarter. The quarterly meetings generally switch between Charleston and Columbia. Allen asked for speaker suggestions, but none were given at the time. The Executive Committee will set the dates and then we will fill in the speakers later.

### **IV. Member Care – Member Tracking, Contacting former Members and Solicitation of New Members**

- Following up on member care, Ross has recently taken the initiative to update the old membership spreadsheet and send emails to old members. Allen suggested SCMA could solicit memberships from all existing and proposed mitigation banks listed on RIBITS. Doug mentioned there could be geographic weak spots, and that we should monitor those metrics and see where there are more opportunities (for membership). Tara said that this would be a good first task for the management consultant we hire. Daniel added that he liked the part of Sara’s proposal that has incentives for the consultant to obtain new members for SCMA with a financial bonus. Allen agreed this part of Sara’s proposal seemed reasonable.
- Allen also stated we are open to changes in the membership fee structure if people have suggestions.
- Blair gave an update on the website. Our website is currently hosted by Silicon Harbor out of Charleston (Contact: Robert Boyer, [rboyer@siliconharbor.services](mailto:rboyer@siliconharbor.services), (843) 972-9284, <https://www.siliconharbor.services> ). In our current contract, we have a 30 min/month update included. It’s possible that the new management consultant could take over the website and have more of a communication role.
- Allen stated that some of the membership information on the website is up-to-date, but some of it is not. We need to clean up the member tracking spreadsheet. Allen asked how we make changes to the website and Blair said we just email the website contact (see above). Allen asked everyone to check their contact information in the spreadsheet and Kristin can finalize it.
- The discussion went back to the new management’s role and what our total operating expenses are. Tara said so far we only spend money on the website and refreshments at meetings. Ryan asked what our top end is that we can afford on management consultant. Allen said around \$24,000; we have around \$94,000 in the bank account currently. Allen stated he would be willing to spend what we are taking in annually but wants to get the best deal for the money. We could spend more for lobbying if it’s worth it.

Tara stated we need to look closer at our income before we commit to hiring someone. Ryan noted that full-fledge lobbying becomes expensive very quickly, and so we need to know our end game before hiring someone for that role. Tara pointed out that in a state like North Carolina, water policy can occur more at the state level, but not as much in South Carolina.

- Doug switched topics to ask about past meeting documentation – noticed not much from 2018-2019 on Dropbox. Allen said there is a gap in documentation from that time, but moving forward we are committed to open communication and posting meeting minutes. A better format on the website would also help with this.

**V. Code of Ethics Contact and Confirmation**

- Allen asked in the Code of Ethics statement needs to be signed by new members. Tara said she thought it wasn't necessary for a signature and that the membership agreement itself was sufficient. Allen asked all individual members of the Executive Committee to review the Code of Ethics. He also suggested the Executive Committee of SCMA could benefit from management training from our new association manager.

**VI. Old Business**

Allen brought up the next meeting of SCMA with SCDOT at their office. Previously SCDOT did not want to have too large of a meeting with SCMA members, but recently at the December meeting expressed an interest to increase the number of members at a joint meeting. Allen will need to reach out to SCDOT and see what they would like to do on this matter.

- Blair asked if we knew the topics ahead of the meeting with SCDOT and also suggested we consider a rotation of SCMA members attend the meetings.
- Allen stated that it's intended to be a small group discussion, but that 5-6 or 7-8 might not be unreasonable. Many committee members expressed interested in attending the meetings.
- Switching topics, Ross had joined the meeting and provided further update on the consultant proposals. He did not give them a range of fees we would consider, but did tell them that our annual income was less than \$20,000, and mentioned we had savings to extend the investment at least in the short term.
- Ross also said that SCDOT had cancelled the previously awarded mitigation contract for the Pee Dee awarded in Fall 2019. There was a protest from another respondent to the solicitation, and the Chief Procurement Officer decided to cancel the contract and reissue the solicitation later in 2020. There was no indication of how this would affect the other RFPs mentioned by SCDOT at the December 2019 annual meeting.

**VII. New Business**

- There was no new business raised.

**Adjournment**

- Meeting was adjourned at approximately 10 am by Allen. The next Executive Committee Meeting will be at 9:00 am on February 11, 2020 via conference call.

Minutes submitted by: Kristin Knight-Meng

Approved by: