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### **Economic Development, Transportation, Natural Resources, and Regulatory Subcommittee**

April 28, 2016

#### **Archived Video Available**

- I. Pursuant to House Legislative Oversight Committee Rule 6.8, South Carolina ETV was allowed access for streaming the meeting. You may access archived video of this meeting by visiting the South Carolina General Assembly's website (<http://www.scstatehouse.gov>) and clicking on *Committee Postings and Reports*, then under *House Standing Committees* click on *Legislative Oversight*. Then, click on *Video Archives* for a listing of archived videos for the Committee.

#### **Attendance**

- I. The Economic Development, Transportation, Natural Resource, and Regulatory Subcommittee meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Phyllis J. Henderson on Thursday, April 28, 2016, in Room 108 of the Blatt Building. The following members of the Subcommittee were present for all or a portion of the meeting: Chair Henderson, Representative Ralph W. Norman, and Representative Robert L. Ridgeway, III.
- II. Department of Agriculture Commissioner Hugh Weathers was present to testify before the Subcommittee.

## Minutes

- I. House Rule 4.5 requires standing committees to prepare and make available to the public the minutes of committee meetings; the minutes do not have to be verbatim accounts of meetings. It is the practice of the Legislative Oversight Committee to provide minutes for its subcommittee meetings.
- II. Representative Norman moved to approve the minutes from the Subcommittee's previous meeting on April 14, 2016. A roll call vote was held, and the motion was passed.

<b>Rep. Norman's motion to approve the minutes from April 14, 2016:</b>	Yea	Nay	Not Voting
Rep. Henderson	✓		
Rep. Norman	✓		
Rep. Ridgeway	✓		
Rep. Rivers			✓

## Discussion of the Department of Agriculture

- I. Chair Henderson explained that a purpose of the meeting was to begin the study the Department of Agriculture. Commissioner Weathers was sworn in so that he could provide testimony under oath. He then provided an introductory presentation to the Subcommittee. The slides from that presentation are available on the Committee's website under *Department of Agriculture*.

Representative Norman stated that the Subcommittee would likely focus its questions on the findings of audits of the Department performed by the Legislative Audit Council, the Department's budget figures, and the Farmers Markets.

Representative Ridgeway asked if Commissioner Weathers knew of any pending financial relief for farmers effected by the flood in 2016. Commissioner Weathers answered that the financial relief legislation pending at the General Assembly was the only source of potential relief for effected farmers of which he was aware.

Chair Henderson asked for the most important crops produced in the state. Commissioner Weathers testified that timber, poultry, horticulture (landscaping plants), and beef production were the most important in the state.

- II. Chair Henderson thanked Commissioner Weathers for his testimony, and indicated that Committee staff would contact him to schedule the Subcommittee's next meeting with the agency.

**Public Input on the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank**

- I. Chair Henderson explained that the Subcommittee would next hear testimony from any member of the public who wanted to testify about the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank, and that all testimony would be heard under oath.

Only one person was present who wished to testify, and his name and county of residence is given below, along with a brief summary of his testimony. The italicized notation represents the approximate time at which his testimony begins in the archived video of the meeting.

**Michael Covington, Richland County, testifying on behalf of the Coastal Conservation League 29:40**

Mr. Covington testified about the Bank’s priorities, application process, including the use of “packaging” to aggregate the cost of minor projects in order that the entire “package” meets the \$100 million cost requirement that projects must meet to be eligible for Bank funding. He also testified that the geographic distribution of the Bank Board members correlates to the geographic areas of the state that have been the majority recipients of Bank funding. Mr. Covington spoke favorably of pending state legislation that would subject the Bank’s funding decisions to the approval by the Department of Transportation. Mr. Covington responded to questions from Representative Norman and Chair Henderson.

- II. Representative Ridgeway moved that the Subcommittee include a statement that there was an opportunity for public testimony and that the testimony it received from the public in its study of the Bank. A roll call vote was held, and the motion was passed.

<b>Rep. Ridgeway’s motion to include the testimony the Subcommittee received from the public in its study of the Bank:</b>	Yea	Nay	Not Voting
Rep. Henderson	✓		
Rep. Norman	✓		
Rep. Ridgeway	✓		
Rep. Rivers			✓

- III. Chair Henderson asked if there were any representatives from the Bank present who wished to testify before the Subcommittee. Bank Board Chair Vince Graham came forward to testify, and Chair Henderson notified him that he was still under oath since he had been sworn in at a previous meeting.

Mr. Graham testified that he recognized many of Mr. Covington’s concerns and criticisms as legitimate, and that the Bank was taking steps to correct any errors it identifies in its practices.

**Discussion of the Department of Transportation**

- I. Secretary of Transportation Christy Hall provided an update on the agency’s progress with the audit of DOT being performed by the Legislative Audit Council. Ms. Hall testified that DOT was in the process of developing an implementation plan in order to effectively implement many of the recommendations of the LAC.
  
- II. Representative Norman moved that the Subcommittee approve its study of the Department of Transportation. A roll call vote was held, and the motion was passed.

<b>Rep. Norman’s motion to approve Subcommittee’s study of the Department of Transportation:</b>	Yea	Nay	Not Voting
Rep. Henderson	✓		
Rep. Norman	✓		
Rep. Ridgeway	✓		
Rep. Rivers			✓

- III. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.