



General Membership Meeting

6:30 p.m. - Thursday, January 12, 2023

Third Floor Conference Room

233 Middle Street, New Bern, NC

Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82099313533?pwd=QzZ4UIZyR3dBSkxhRTE1SXdxNDRZQT09>

Minutes

General Membership in Attendance:

Ryan Kelly, Town of Indian Beach
Randy Alexander, City of Havelock
Keith Tyndall, Town of Bridgeton
Barbara Jones, Town of Cove City
Patty Leonard, Town of River Bend

William Ward, Town of Faison
Russ Lanier, Town of Beulaville (via zoom)
Evelyn Paul, Town of Grantsboro
Danny Wooten, Town of Vandemere
William Barnes, Town of Grifton (via zoom)

Executive Committee in Attendance:

Jay Bender, President
Roland Best, Lenoir County
Jesse Dowe, Duplin County
Steve Wiggins, Caucus Rep – Wayne County
Edward Riggs Jr., 1st Vice President

Arthur Robinson, 2nd Vice President
Pat Prescott, Pamlico County (via zoom)
Bill Taylor, Caucus Rep – Carteret County
Shane Turney, Treasurer

ECC Staff in Attendance:

David Bone, Executive Director
Melinda McGuire, Finance Director
Angelia Pridgen, Lead Regional
Ombudsman

Heather O'Connor, Area Agency on
Aging Director
Kim Baker, Lead Aging Programs Consultant

1. Welcome, Invocation, and Call to Order

President Bender called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. Commissioner Robinson gave the invocation. Introductions around the room were made.

2. Adopt Agenda – James Bender, President

Steve Wiggins motioned to adopt the agenda, seconded by Jesse Dowe, and motion was approved unanimously.

3. Consent Agenda – James Bender, President

- a. **Minutes** – General Membership November 10, 2022
- b. **Contribution Based Benefit Cap Report**
- c. **C.E.D.S. Update**
- d. **Community Planning/Technical Assistance Update**
- e. **Area Agency on Aging Update**

Arthur Robinson motioned to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Roland Best, and motion was approved unanimously.

4. Budget & Audit Committee Report – Shane Turney, Treasurer

- a. Check Register
- b. Financial Statements
- c. Committee Information & Recommendations
 - i Potential Pay Schedule Update
 - ii Potential Personnel Policy Update

Shane Turney stated the Budget & Audit Committee met earlier to discuss in greater detail the current period finances, the accounts payable register from the months of October, November, and December 2022. The agenda packet also included the draft financials from July 1st through December 31st, 2022. One of the most notable things is the huge participation of the grocery reimbursement program. He suggested if someone was unfamiliar with the program to contact a staff member. Budget & Audit also discussed recommendations or requests from staff. One request is the switch from monthly payroll back to biweekly. The second request is a change in personnel policy if request one is approved. The Budget & Audit committee is requesting more information from the auditor to make sure these changes will not contradict steps taken in the past.

5. General Overview and Update of the Ombudsman Program – Angelia Pridgen, Lead Regional Ombudsman

Angelia Pridgen explained the ombudsman program is resident directed and protects the confidentiality and identity of anyone voicing complaints. The ombudsman program is not a regulatory agency, but they do investigate and resolve complaints to make life better for that individual and can assist residents in getting complaints made to regulatory agency. Ombudsmen help people through the process of placing somebody into long-term care. Ombudsmen promote community involvement by trying to get visitors into the facilities and working along with providers to resolve issues that may be impacting residents. They provide information to public agencies, legislators, and to the public about resident's rights and elder abuse awareness. Ombudsmen train Community Advisory Committee members, who are volunteers that are certified and designated by the State Ombudsman and appointed by County Commissioners to do friendly visits, investigative visits, and activity visits.

6. Approval of 2023-2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan – David Bone, Executive Director

David Bone stated the ECC serves as the Economic Development District for the region, and one of the major deliverables is the comprehensive economic development strategy plan. As the EDD, ECC acts as a liaison for municipalities and counties that are seeking EDA funds for public works projects. We advocate for these entities applying for funding with a letter of support, verifying the project is consistent with our CEDS plan. The regional economic development plan helps find commonality across the region. The

guideline for development has a lot of different requirements. The CEDS must include a summary background, a SWOT analysis about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, an action plan and evaluation framework and must have resiliency. In September, a survey was developed, and we received input from other governing boards, economic developers and from the public. In October, we hosted a meeting of economic developers, planners, and workforce development officials. Also, in October, we met with city and county managers to get additional feedback. In November the board supported the results of the SWOT analysis and some draft priorities. On December 30th, the final draft document was submitted contingent of the board's approval.

Shane Turney motioned to approve the resolution in approval of the 2023-2027 CEDS, seconded by Patty Leonard, and motion passed.

7. Executive Director's Report – David Bone, Executive Director

David stated that ECC has provided a letter of support for the North Carolina Coastal Federation to get an EDA grant for an aquaculture hub facility in Carteret County. This project will help create jobs and a new investment in our community.

David highlighted the NCDOT Carbon Reduction Program and encouraged the board if their town boards have projects to contact the RPO staff. This project is not just roads but could be for charging stations or sidewalks in their communities.

David said community planning and technical assistance, staff still is making connections with the communities and helping multiple towns with their 160-D compliance ordinances. ECC has helped with Beulaville's recreation master plan, Richlands subdivision plat review, and talked with a number of communities about planning board training.

The grocery reimbursement program has helped over 800 applicants, and ECC has reimbursed \$175,318.40 through the end of December 2022. The AAA has partnered with the New Bern Police and Fire Department to pilot a project called Project Lifesaver. This is a program to help find wanderers quicker by using tracking devices.

There will be a quarterly City and County Manager's meeting on January 18th hosted at the Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point. NC's Southeast is the sponsor.

ECC is hosting a Legislative breakfast on January 23rd, and David thanked everyone for their support. This is a great time to talk to our legislators about our needs and desires. Duke Energy and Jones-Onslow EMC are the sponsors for the event.

ECC is hosting an ethics training for local officials taught by Attorney David Baxter (from Sumrell, Suggs) on February 15th.



The League of Municipalities, NC Association of County Commissioners, and the Council of Government’s received money from the state to help towns and counties with AARP technical assistance. The COGS were allotted \$593,000 for the program, funds have to be obligated by December 31, 2024, and spent by December 21, 2026.

The COG association received funds to develop a disaster recovery finance administration training program. Each COG was allotted \$293,750 for two years. There will be a training course, train the trainer, then it is the responsibility of the COG to get the training out across the region. Other initiatives are FEMA grant writing assistance and training, grant writing for water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure, stormwater ordinance review, and promotion of FEMA community rating system and strategic planning.

8. Municipal Caucus Representatives to the ECC Executive Committee – Jay Bender, President

Jay Bender suggested to table the topic to talk with David Bone more about the schedule of elections and appointments.

9. Member Comments

Jay Bender mention Leighann Morgan has been out sick for a week and ½. Greene County Commissioner Bennie Heath had surgery. Kyle DeHaven will be joining the board as the county manager representative, per the by-laws.

David Bone thanked the board for getting information about ECC out to the communities and if anyone would like a presentation or more information about ECC’s programs and services please contact staff.

10. Adjournment

Patty Leonard motioned to adjourn the meeting and was unanimously carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jay Bender, President

David Bone, Executive Director