



## Eastern Carolina Council

### Minutes

### General Membership Board Meeting

*Thursday, March 14, 2024*

*Third Floor Conference Room*

*233 Middle Street, New Bern, NC*

#### **Executive Committee in Attendance:**

Roland Best, Lenoir County Commissioner  
Jessie Dowe, Duplin County Commissioner, via Zoom  
Cindy Edwards, City of Jacksonville  
Frank Emory, 1st Vice President (Jones County Commissioner)  
Bennie Heath, Greene County Commissioner  
Karen Lewis, City of Havelock  
Mark Price, Onslow County Commissioner  
Ed Riggs Jr, President (Pamlico County Commissioner)  
Bill Taylor, Treasurer (Town of Morehead City)  
Shane Turney, Caucus Rep. Craven County (Town of Trent Woods)  
Lorraine Washington, 2nd Vice President, Caucus Rep. Greene County (Town of Snow Hill)  
Danny Wooten, Caucus Rep. Pamlico County (Town of Vandemere)

#### **General Membership Board in Attendance:**

Courtney Barnhill, Town of Cape Carteret (via Zoom)  
Ryan Kelley, Town of Indian Beach  
Bea Cunningham, Town of Peletier  
Clark Edwards, Town of Pine Knoll Shores  
Barbara Jones, Town of Cove City  
Trudy Solomon, Town of Surf City  
Courtney Norfleet, Town of Alliance  
Linda Marshall, Town of Alliance  
Evelyn Paul, Town of Grantsboro (via Zoom)  
Allen Price, Town of Oriental (via Zoom)

#### **ECC Staff in Attendance:**

David Bone, Executive Director  
Melinda McGuire, Assistant Executive Director/Finance Director  
Heather O'Connor, Deputy Finance Director  
Kim Baker, Finance Specialist  
Larry Faison, Planning Director  
David Rosado, Human Services Manager - AAA

#### **Guest in Attendance:**

Knox Proctor, Attorney, Ward & Smith  
Robbie Bittner, PB Mares

1. **Welcome, Invocation, and Call to Order** – Ed Riggs, Jr., President, called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. President Riggs asked everyone to go around the room and introduce themselves. Commissioner Bennie Heath provided the invocation.
2. **Adopt Agenda** – President Riggs asked for a motion to adopt the agenda. *He stated there would be an action item to add 5a for an amendment to the audit contract. Commissioner Heath motioned to adopt the agenda, seconded by Cindy Edwards, city of Jacksonville; the motion was approved unanimously.*
3. **Introduction of Human Services Manager David Rosado** – Executive Director David Bone introduced the new Human Services Manager, David Rosado. Mr. Bone noted that Mr. Rosado was rejoining ECC. Mr. Rosado stated he was looking forward to working with everyone and reminded board members about the Aging survey that was sent out.
4. **Consent Agenda**
  - a. **Minutes** – General Membership Board – January 11, 2024
  - b. **Contribution Based Benefit Cap Report**
  - c. **Economic Development Update – funded through E.D.A. Partnership Planning and Southeast Crescent Regional Commission**
  - d. **Human Services / Area Agency on Aging Update**
  - e. **Community Planning/Technical Assistance Update**
  - f. **Transportation Update**

*Commissioner Mark Price motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Lorraine Washington; the motion was approved unanimously.*
5. **FY 2021-2022 Audit Presentation** – Robbie Bittner with PB Mares gave a brief overview of the 21/22 audit. Completion of this audit was delayed, and the reasons involved in that were briefly discussed, including transitions in staffing and leadership. He stated there were two material compliance violations and three material weaknesses – mostly dealing with internal controls, which have been addressed. Mr. Bittner stated as of June 30, 2022, the Council ended the year with a combined fund balance of \$349,889, a 2.11% increase over June 30, 2021. Mr. Bittner complimented the vision and leadership of the Council, moving forward. *Cindy Edwards motioned to approve the audit presentation, seconded by Commissioner Roland Best; the motion was approved unanimously.*
  - a. **Amendment to current Audit Contract** – Executive Director David Bone spoke about the number of challenges with the current audit due to several factors including the transition of staff. The proposed amendment to the audit contract is to change the NTE (not to exceed) amount from \$51,200.00 to \$92,120.00. ECC is still negotiating the final amount with PB Mares, but the audit report cannot be submitted without amendment signed.

*Commissioner Heath motioned to approve the amendment to the audit contract, seconded by Karen Lewis, City of Havelock; the motion was approved unanimously.*
6. **Budget & Audit Committee Report**
  - a. **Check Register**
  - b. **Financial Statements**

- c. **Request for \$2,000 Donation to Eastern Carolina Community Assistance Organization (ECCAO), a 501c3 nonprofit**
- d. **Budget Amendments**
- e. **Committee Information & Recommendations**

Treasurer Bill Taylor stated the Budget and Audit Committee was able to review the check register and financial statements. He referred any questions to Assistant Executive Director / Finance Director Melinda McGuire. Ms. McGuire advised the board there was an item in the check register for a grocery reimbursement check. This check was for a void and reissue situation, and ECC is not currently doing grocery reimbursements.

Treasurer Bill Taylor spoke about the \$2,000 request for donation to the 501c3 for seed money. He stated the money would be used to open a bank account and to purchase QuickBooks for the 501c3. Executive Director David Bone spoke up and stated that the 501c3 would be used to apply for grants and funding opportunities that ECC cannot apply for as a council of government. *2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Lorraine Washington motioned to approve the donation request, seconded by Commissioner Roland Best; the motion was approved unanimously.*

The budget amendments requested for approval are (1) \$35,000 increase – Southeast Crescent Regional Commission grant awarded, and (2) \$144,904 increase – NC State University (BAND-NC Digital Inclusion Planning) grant awarded. Mr. Bone gave a brief overview of both amendments. He stated the Southeast Crescent grant will be renewed and will help ECC in their role to assist communities to apply for Southeast Crescent funding. Digital Inclusion is a one-time grant for a two-year program to assist communities with their digital inclusion plans and to help grow technology in our region. *Karen Lewis motioned to approve the donation request, seconded by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Frank Emory; the motion was approved unanimously.*

- 7. **Response Letter to the NC Local Government Commission about the FY2021-22 Audit** – Executive Director David Bone went over the required response letter explaining ECC’s corrective action to NC Local Government Commission. The response letter was included in the agenda packet.

*Commissioner Heath motioned to approve the response letter, seconded by Commissioner Mark Price; the motion was approved unanimously.*

- 8. **Report on the ECC Member Survey** – Executive Director Bone went over the Member Survey that ECC distributed in February. ECC will use this information to aid with planning our strategic goals and budget for 2024-25. Fifty-one surveys were completed with all nine counties represented. The results were included in the agenda packet. Highlights of the results include:

- 84.31% of respondents had a “Very Positive” or “Positive” impression of ECC. (15.69% were “Neutral”.)
- 43% of respondents were “Extremely Familiar” or “Very Familiar with ECC services and program. 47% were “Somewhat Familiar”.
- 92% of respondents were satisfied with the level of communication from ECC.

- 80% of respondents were satisfied with the current mix of services.
- 9. Update on the 2023-24 Strategic Goals** – In preparation for the development of ECC’s Strategic Priorities for 2024-25, Executive Director David Bone gave a brief update on the status of the Strategic Priorities for 2023-24. The update showing the action items, completion goals and progress report as of March 2024, was included in the agenda packet.
- 10. Executive Director’s Report** – The following are some highlights of Executive Director David Bone’s report:
- The Regional Aging Plan survey is still live until March 22<sup>nd</sup>, so please encourage others to take the 5-minute survey.
  - There are several offerings for seniors to participate in Senior Games in our region. ECC will send out information for the games in the weekly updates and newsletter.
  - The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) will be helping ECC with three projects to help implement strategies in our 2023 -2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). These are Development of Regional Military Retention Strategies/Action (tentatively planned for the week of April 8-12), Workforce Housing Strategies (tentatively planned for the week of May 6-10), and Talent Attraction and Retention Strategies (tentatively planned for the week of Jul 24-28).
  - These training/workshops will take place soon at ECC.
    - Disaster Recovery Training on April 16, 2024.
    - Grant Writing Workshop, a 2-day class on April 30 and May 1, 2024.
- 11. Member Comments** – President Riggs asked if there were any member comments. Cindy Edwards wished everyone a Happy Women’s History Month and Happy Easter. President Riggs thanked the staff for all they do and thanked David Bone.
- 12. Adjournment** – *A motion to adjourn was made by Clark Edwards; seconded by Bennie Heath; the motion was unanimous.*

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Ed Riggs Jr., President

  
David Bone, Executive Director