



## Eastern Carolina Council

### Minutes

Executive Committee Meeting  
6:30 p.m. - Thursday, April 11, 2024  
Third Floor Conference Room  
233 Middle Street, New Bern, NC

#### Executive Committee in Attendance:

Jay Bender, Caucus Rep., Jones County (Pollocksville)  
Roland Best, Lenoir County Commissioner  
Kyle DeHaven, County Manager Caucus Rep., via Zoom (Greene County)  
Jessie Dowe, Duplin County Commissioner  
Frank Emory, 1st Vice President (Jones County Commissioner)  
Bennie Heath, Greene County Commissioner  
Chadwick Howard, Craven County Commissioner, via Zoom  
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)  
Billy Ward, Caucus Rep. Duplin County  
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:

Linda Marshall, Town of Alliance

#### 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

#### Guests in Attendance:

Dave Diaz, IEDC volunteer  
Frank Welch, IEDC volunteer

- 1. Welcome, Invocation, and Call to Order** – Ed Riggs, Jr., President, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. President Riggs welcomed everyone. Commissioner Heath provided the invocation.
- 2. Adopt Agenda** – *Commissioner Dowe motioned to adopt the amended agenda, seconded by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Frank Emory; the motion was approved unanimously.*

3. **Consent Agenda – Ed Riggs, Jr., President**
  - a. **Minutes – Executive Committee Meeting – February 8, 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**

President Ed Riggs asked if there were any questions about the consent agenda or any items for discussion. *Commissioner Heath motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Mayor Bender; the motion was approved unanimously.*

4. **Budget & Audit Committee Report**
  - a. **Check Register**
  - b. **Financial Statements**
  - c. **Budget Amendments**
  - d. **Committee Information & Recommendations**

Treasurer Bill Taylor stated the Budget and Audit Committee met. They reviewed the check register and financial statements and had a preliminary discussion about the budget. He turned it over to Assistant Executive Director / Finance Director Melinda McGuire who asked if there were any questions. Ms. McGuire spoke about Budget Amendment 3. She stated the amendment is for the Flood Mitigation Grant that is through the North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management. The total grant is \$200,000.00 but the budget amendment is for \$100,000.00 for this fiscal year. Director David Bone spoke up and explained that the North Carolina Department of Public Safety applied for a grant through FEMA to assist regions with hiring personnel to identify homeowners who may be eligible for the Flood Mitigation Grant. It is a two-year program. Depending on the success, we may be able to keep the position for another year. Mr. Bone stated there is certainly a need for this program, and it could be valuable in our region. *Caucus Rep. Shane Turney motioned to approve the budget amendment, seconded by 2nd Vice President, Lorraine Washington; the motion was approved unanimously.* Mr. Bone advised the Budget and Audit Committee has called a special meeting for May 30, 2024, at 5:00 p.m., to discuss the budget.

5. **Development of Regional Military Retention Strategies through a Partnership with the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) – Executive Director David Bone introduced the two IEDC volunteer economic development professionals - Dave Diaz (from Loudon County, VA) and Fred Welch (from Copperas Cove CDC in Copperas Cove, TX). They have been at ECC for the last few days conducting stakeholder interviews / focus groups to aid with developing a Regional Military Retention Strategy for our region. Mr. Welch stated they have spoken with over 50 people. They are putting together a lot of notes to help put together a summary to help our region. Mr. Diaz spoke about the feedback and collective wisdom they have received. He sees this as an opportunity for ECC to help educate and inspire the region with the military bases around us. Their report will give ECC and our region recommendations to leverage opportunities with the military and the potential economic impacts.**

6. **Presentation – Development of the 2024-28 Regional Aging Services Plan** – David Rosado, Human Services Director-AAA, addressed the board to give an overview of the Area Agency on Aging 4-year plan. Every four years, all 56 state units on aging are required to develop a 4-year plan. The plan includes every program ECC offers and things we would like to do. He spoke about a survey Aging developed that is required as part of the plan. The survey was sent out to our region with 348 responses. The top three needs for the region are affordable medication, access to in-home and personal care services, and home repair/safety improvements. ECC hopes to address these needs with the 4-year plan. Mr. Rosado briefly went over the top three needs in each of our nine counties. He stated that the entire 4-year plan would be emailed out to the ECC Board for review. Board members can contact him directly if they have any questions or comments. He noted the Regional Aging Advisory Committee (RAAC) is also reviewing the plan. The finalized 4-year plan that takes effect July 1, 2024, is due to the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services (NCDAAS) by May 1, 2024.
7. **Input from the Executive Committee about Potential Events to Host as Part of an ECC Member Engagement Effort** – Executive Director David Bone spoke about events ECC is hoping to host to engage our members. He mentioned events ECC has hosted and continues to host such as the Legislative Breakfast, the Transportation Summit, quarterly Managers and Mayors meetings, Regional Aging Advisory Committee and more. ECC is working to have events that bring value to bring people together. Historically ECC and other COGs have hosted an annual dinner. Mr. Bone stated that ECC is seeking feedback from the Executive Committee about specific events they would like to see ECC host to bring people together, celebrate the good things we are doing and to collaborate and share ideas.

There was talk among the committee members about the annual events that were hosted previously but were very expensive. Another issue that was discussed was finding a venue that can handle 150 people, and having a backup plan for weather if the venue was outside. Mayor Bender noted that an event needs to be somewhere that people will drive to, because some of the previous events had limited attendance. Mr. Bone noted that there is the possibility of some sponsorship for an event. A cookout or pig picking was discussed. Commissioner Howard remarked that we should look for a smaller venue if we weren't expecting a large number of people to attend. Mayor Bender stated it was incumbent upon the board members to go back to their communities to bring fellow commissioners and elected officials to show up. Mayor Bender and Assistant Executive Director/Finance Director Melinda McGuire discussed that August or preferably September was the best time to have this event. Caucus Rep. Shane Turney asked about possibly having something that would give municipalities and counties information on Aging problems. It was discussed that ECC has had various events and an Aging Summit in the past. Mr. Bone spoke up to say that this is something we can talk about. There are a lot of events we want to have coming up that provide education, but we need to be focused on our strategy. Mr. Bone thanked everyone for their input and stated that ECC staff will take into consideration all the ideas in deciding what to do.

8. **NC Association of Regional Councils of Government (NCARCOG) Legislative Day – May 8th** – Executive Director David Bone spoke about the NCARCOG Legislative Day. All 16 COGs come together on May 8, 2024. ECC would like to get two or three representatives from the Executive Committee to go up to Raleigh with staff. We will stay overnight the day before, and ECC will cover the cost this year. Mr. Bone stated that it is a long day. It starts at 9 am at the legislative building and there will be a legislative session the night of May 8th. President Ed Riggs asked board members to get in touch with David Bone if they are interested in attending. 1st Vice President Frank Emory stated he may be able to attend.

9. **Executive Director’s Report** – The following are some highlights of Executive Director David Bone’s report:

- IEDC will be helping ECC with two additional regional projects to help implement strategies in our 2023 -2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). These are 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).
- All local governments have an ARPA reporting deadline of April 30, 2024. We are assisting a number of local governments with this reporting requirement. If anyone has any questions about ARPA reporting, please reach out to our planning staff.
- Digital Inclusion Planning Effort – ECC is in partnership with North Carolina State University's Institute for Emerging Issues (NCSU IEI) to develop a Regional Digital Inclusion Plan that will include sections for each of the 9 counties. We expect to have public engagement events in the 6 counties that do not currently have digital inclusion plans, and we will coordinate these efforts with the counties.
- There are several offerings for seniors to participate in Senior Games in our region. ECC will send out a list of the games.
- 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.

10. **Member Comments**

Linda Marshall, Town of Alliance, spoke up to commend Carlton Gideon, ECC Senior Community Planner, for his help with the ARPA reporting for Alliance. She stated he was patient and helpful.

11. **Adjournment** – *A motion to adjourn was made by Mayor Bender; seconded by 1st Vice President Frank Emory; the motion was unanimous.*

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Ed Riggs Jr., President

  
David Bone, Executive Director