



## Eastern Carolina Council

### Minutes

#### Executive Committee Meeting

6:30 p.m. - Thursday, September 12, 2024

Third Floor Conference Room

233 Middle Street, New Bern, NC

#### Executive Committee in Attendance:

Jay Bender, Caucus Rep., Jones County (Mayor of Pollocksville)  
Kyle DeHaven, County Manager Caucus Rep., via Zoom (Greene County)  
Jesse Dowe, Duplin County Commissioner  
Cindy Edwards, City of Jacksonville  
Bennie Heath, Greene County Commissioner  
Frank Emory, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President (Jones County)  
Mark Price, Onslow County Commissioner  
Ed Riggs Jr, President (Pamlico County Commissioner)  
Billy Ward, Caucus Rep-, Duplin County  
Lorraine Washington, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President (Caucus rep-, Greene County)

#### General Membership Board in Attendance:

Clark Edwards, Town of Pine Knoll Shores  
Barbara Jones, Town of Cove City  
Ryan Kelley, Town of Indian Beach  
Linda Marshall, Town of Alliance  
Trudy Solomon, Town of Surf City  
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  
David Rosado, Human Services Manager – AAA  
Susan Wolf, Administrative Assistant

#### Guests in Attendance:

Knox Proctor, Attorney, Ward & Smith  
John Tayloe, Senator Ted Budd's Office

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. **Adoption of Agenda** – President Riggs asked for a motion to adopt the agenda. *Commissioner Bennie Heath motioned to adopt the agenda, seconded by 2nd Vice President Lorraine Washington; the motion was approved unanimously.*
3. **Consent Agenda** – *Ed Riggs, Jr., President*
  - a. **Minutes – Executive Committee Meeting – July 11, 2024**
  - b. **Economic Development Update – funded through E.D.A. Partnership Planning and Southeast Crescent Regional Commission**
  - c. **Human Services / Area Agency on Aging Update**
  - d. **Community Planning/Technical Assistance Update**
  - e. **Transportation Update**

President Ed Riggs stated a correction needs to be made to the July 11, 2024, minutes. He stated the minutes should reflect between items 8 & 9, that the board came out of closed session and the regular session resumed at 8:11pm. On a motion made by Mayor Bender, seconded by Treasurer Bill Taylor, the executive committee voted unanimously to grant a salary increase for the executive director by a budgeted 5% rounded to the next \$1,000 to \$147,000, effective July 1, 2024. President Riggs also stated the motion to adjourn was seconded by Commissioner Mark Price and the meeting was adjourned at 8:13pm.

President Ed Riggs then asked if there were any questions about the consent agenda or any items for discussion. *Commissioner Mark Price motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with corrections to the minutes, seconded by Council Member Cindy Edwards; the motion was approved unanimously.*

4. **Budget & Audit Committee Report**
  - a. **Check Register**
  - b. **Financial Statements**
  - c. **FY2022-23 Audit Contract**
  - d. **Budget Amendment #1**
  - e. **Committee Information & Recommendations**

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Lorraine Washington conducted the Budget & Audit Committee Meeting in the absence of Treasurer Bill Taylor. Ms. Washington requested Finance Director Melinda McGuire to update the Executive Committee. Ms. McGuire spoke about a check register EFT dated August 9, 2024, for Stella Jackman Ryan for \$3,600. She stated this payment is for a contractor from NC State University for the Digital Inclusion Plan who is helping with some of the work for this two-year grant.

Ms. McGuire went on to give information about a negative amount in the budget under fund code 001/special projects for (\$4,335.00). She stated this has since been reclassified out to a consultant and is no longer a negative under special projects.

Director David Bone spoke about the Motor Vehicle Policy for the ECC-AAA vehicles purchased. He stated the policy was drafted, and details are enclosed in the agenda packet. He stated the policy has been reviewed by Attorney Knox Proctor who made several

suggestions for changes. Mr. Bone mentioned he neglected to change one of the items Mr. Proctor suggested he correct on the draft included in the packet. This is on page 4, Section III, Item 6. It currently reads: All incidents must be reported by the Finance to the ECC Worker's Compensation carrier. It should read: All accidents or citations involving an ECC vehicle or use of a personal vehicle on ECC business must be reported to the Finance Officer. *Council Member Cindy Edwards motioned to approve the Vehicle Policy as amended, seconded by Mayor Jay Bender; the motion was approved unanimously.*

- 5. Acceptance of the Town of Swansboro as a New Member** – President Riggs welcomed the Town of Swansboro as a new member. David Bone stated that they still needed to motion to accept the Town of Swansboro as a member. *Mayor Jay Bender made a motion to accept and receive the Town of Swansboro as a member, seconded by Commissioner Jesse Dowe; the motion was approved unanimously.*

ECC Director David Bone stated that the board is re-welcoming the Town of Swansboro (as they were members before Covid) and that he looked forward to working with everyone.

At this time, Mayor Jay Bender commented on the Financial Statement stating that it's the first time he could remember receiving local revenues that were anticipated; showing building trust for more members to join.

- 6. Status of October 10<sup>th</sup> General Membership Board Meeting** - Executive Director David Bone stated since ECC's BBQ/Social is on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, and many General Membership Board members may attend this dinner, he asked the Executive Committee to provide direction if it would be beneficial to change this meeting to Executive Committee meeting and possible hold it as a virtual meeting in order to take care of any needed business items.

After discussion, a suggestion was made to change the October 10<sup>th</sup> General Membership Board Meeting to an Executive Committee Meeting (possible virtual based on amount & type of issues needed to be addressed) and the November 14<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee Meeting to a General Membership Board Meeting.

*Mayor Jay Bender motioned to approve the change of meeting scheduled for October 10<sup>th</sup> to an Executive Committee Meeting & the November 14<sup>th</sup> meeting to a General Membership Board Meeting; seconded by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Lorraine Washington; the motion was approved unanimously.*

- 7. 2025 Meeting Schedule** – Annually, the Executive Committee adopts a meeting calendar for both the Executive Committee and General Membership Board.

ECC Bylaws state the General Membership Board will ordinarily meet quarterly. Four General Membership Meetings are scheduled for 2025 – January 9<sup>th</sup>, March 13<sup>th</sup>, June 12<sup>th</sup>, and October 9<sup>th</sup>.

The Bylaws state the Executive Committee will ordinarily meet in each month the General Membership Board does not. Historically, there is a conflict in August with the NC Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) annual conference, and typically there is not a meeting in December because of holiday events. The Executive Committee is scheduled to meet on February 13<sup>th</sup>, April 10<sup>th</sup>, May 8<sup>th</sup>, July 10<sup>th</sup>, August 14<sup>th</sup> (if needed; there is not a conflict with the NCACC annual conference this year), September 11<sup>th</sup>, and November 13<sup>th</sup>.

Director David Bone requested the Executive Committee to approve the proposed 2025 Meeting Calendar. *Commissioner Bennie Heath motioned to approve the 2025 Meeting Schedule, seconded by Council Member Cindy Edwards; the motion was approved unanimously.*

**8. Feedback of 2023-2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Plan for Annual Update** - From the Regulations governing the CEDS the following sections must be included- Summary Background, SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), Strategic Direction/Action Plan and Evaluation Framework & in addition must incorporate the concept of economic resilience .For the purpose of an annual update, the Executive Committee was asked to provide feedback on the four Priority Areas of the 2023-2027 CEDS:

- Priority Area 1 -Cultivate and champion regional collaboration and partnership
- Priority Area 2 -Develop critical infrastructure to grow economic opportunities and support disaster resilience
- Priority Area 3 -Grow and support skilled workforce and enhance educational attainment
- Priority Area 4-Create healthy and connected communities and improve quality of life

This 2023-27 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy addresses all 4 priority areas through Approaches, the Implementation Ideas and Key Partners. Director David Bone requested the board review and give feedback for the plan. The report is due by December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

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

- Welcomed Swansboro as returning member
- Welcome Susan Wolf as New Administrative Assistant
- Stated that invitations for ECC BBQ /Social on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, will be sent out & requested rsvp for count
- Advised board of continue search for a second Transportation Planner & Promotion of Mickey Anderson to Senior Transportation Planner
- Updated status for Digital Navigator program in Aging & Choosing Home Program that the delays are at the State level for the grant funding

- Southeast Crescent Regional Commission Funding first year is ending 2023-24 & waiting instructions for second year
- ECC Hosted NCARCOG / COG Directors on September 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>
- ECC Grant Writing Workshop was held on September 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>
- Partnership with NCDOT on a Federal Grant to Fund Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Along the US-70 Corridor. A grant has been applied for and the program if funded would go through the NCDOT. Grant awards are expected in the spring of 2025
- Thanked the staff for their continued efforts, dedication, and support

**10. Member Comments** – President Riggs opened the floor for member comments.

- Edward Clark (town of Pine Knoll Shores) asked for information about Senate Bill 166 and again expressed concerns for affordable housing. Director David Bone stated both will be looked into.
- Commissioner Ryan Kelley announced it was National Assisted Living Week.
- Mayor Jay Bender stated a local mission, The Filling Station as well as the town of Pollocksville, NC, will be featured in an issue of *Our State Magazine*.

**11. Closed Session** – **A Closed Session of the Executive Committee is requested pursuant to NC General Statute § 143-318.11 (a)(3) – Attorney-Client Privilege and NC General Statute § 143-318.11 (a)(6)-Personnel** -President Riggs stated the board needed to go to closed session for a legal issue and a personnel matter. *A motion was made by Mayor Jay Bender; seconded by Commissioner Jesse Dowe; the motion was approved unanimously*

The Board came back into open session at approximately 8:39. Mr. Bone returned to the meeting. *Cindy Edwards moved that the roles and responsibilities of the Aging Department, vis-à-vis the Finance Department, be returned to the situation that existed prior to Mr. David Rosado's departure from ECC, subject to any adjustments approved by the officers. Mark Price seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

*Cindy Edwards then moved that that the Finance Department be directed to fully cooperate in the Officers' review of concerns they have about Aging program funding issues and provider concerns, and any other ECC finance issues. Mark Price seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

*Jesse Dowe then moved that Ms. Melinda McGuire be relieved of her title and role as Assistant Executive Director for the next six months, while the Board considers the ECC structure, but with no diminution in salary at this point. Billy Ward seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

**12. Adjournment** – *A motion to adjourn was made by Mayor Bender; seconded by Council Member Cindy Edwards; the motion was unanimous.*

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Ed Riggs Jr., President



David Bone, Executive Director