



## Eastern Carolina Council

### *Minutes*

#### *Executive Committee Meeting*

*6:30 p.m. - Thursday, February 13, 2025*

*Third Floor Conference Room*

*233 Middle Street, New Bern, NC*

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

Jay Bender, Caucus Rep., Jones County (Mayor of Pollocksville)

Jesse Dowe, Duplin County Commissioner

Cindy Edwards, City of Jacksonville

Frank Emory, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President (Jones County Commissioner)

Tim Harrell, Wayne County Commissioner

Bennie Heath, Greene County Commissioner

Rick Prill, City of New Bern

Ed Riggs Jr, President (Pamlico County Commissioner)

Cynthia Evans-Robinson, City of Havelock

Bill Taylor, Treasurer (Town of Morehead City)

Shane Turney, Caucus Rep., Craven County (Town of Trent Woods)

Lorraine Washington, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President (Caucus rep-, Greene County)

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

Linda Marshall, Town of Alliance

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

David Bone, Executive Director

Carol Bell, Finance Director

Kim Baker, Finance Specialist

David Rosado, AAA Director

#### **Guests in Attendance:**

Knox Proctor, Attorney, Ward & Smith

1. **Welcome, Invocation, and Call to Order** – Ed Riggs, Jr., President, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. President Riggs welcomed everyone. Commissioner Bennie Heath provided the invocation.
2. **Adoption of Agenda** – President Riggs requested that we allow an addition to the agenda for a closed session to discuss two matters. He asked for the Agenda to be adopted with the following change: addition of (8a) to add a closed session for G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) for attorney-client privilege and G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) for a personnel matter. President Riggs

asked for a motion to adopt the Agenda as amended. *1st Vice President Frank Emory motioned to adopt the agenda, seconded by Council Member Cindy Edwards; the motion was approved unanimously.*

**3. Consent Agenda – Ed Riggs, Jr., President**

- a. **Minutes** – Executive Committee Meeting – October 10, 2024
- b. **Economic Development Update – funded through E.D.A. Partnership Planning and Southeast Crescent Regional Commission**
- c. **Area Agency on Aging Update**
- d. **Community Planning/Technical Assistance Update**
- e. **Transportation Update**

President Ed Riggs then asked if there were any questions about the consent agenda or any items for discussion. *2nd Vice President Lorraine Washington motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Heath; the motion was approved unanimously.*

**4. Budget & Audit Committee Report**

- a. **Check Register**
- b. **Financial Statements**
- c. **Committee Information & Recommendations**

Treasurer Bill Taylor stated that the Budget & Audit Committee met and reviewed the check register and financial statements. He mentioned that the check register had two entries for AFLAC. He explained that AFLAC was a pass-through situation. Employees can purchase additional insurance items through AFLAC. He stated that Finance will make sure there is not a duplicate entry because there are two entries with the same date. He asked board members to review the financial information provided and referred any questions to Finance Director Carol Bell. Mr. Taylor spoke about Budget Amendment #3. He explained the budget amendment is for additional money we did not expect provided by the Division of Aging grant award.

- \$162,686.65 for the Providing Elders Additional Sustenance (or PEAS) project to fund 003. The funding has to be spent by December 2026.
- \$13,827.00 budget amendment to fund 003 for Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP) funding.
- \$3,965.00 budget amendment to fund 003 for Senior Center General Purpose (SCGP).

Mr. Taylor stated the Budget & Audit Committee recommends approval of Budget Amendment #3 as presented. President Riggs asked if there were any questions about the budget amendment. Executive Director Bone spoke up to say that AAA Director David Rosado wanted to say a few words about the grant award. Mr. Rosado stated that this is a grant award from the State Fiscal Recovery Fund provided by the North Carolina Division of Aging to provide high-risk older adults with additional meals per week or food boxes. He stated they will be engaging with providers in our area and partnering with Catholic Charities regarding this program. He stated ECC has the funds until December 2026.

President Riggs asked for a motion to approve the budget amendment. *Mayor Jay Bender motioned to approve the budget amendment, seconded by Rick Prill, City of New Bern; the motion was approved unanimously.*

Treasurer Bill Taylor stated there was one final item up for discussion. He mentioned it was time for the ECC board to think about the upcoming budget for next fiscal year and whether ECC should increase the dues. He went over the dues structure that was implemented for 2024-25. A municipal dues rate of \$0.40 per capita was established with a minimum of \$300 and a one-year cap of \$11,000. The grant matches were separated from the county dues. A counties dues rate of .20 per capita was established for 2024-25 with a one-year cap of \$45,000. He stated after discussion, ECC has been successful with adding new members and at this time we do not have a pressing need to raise the dues. We do not recommend raising dues at this time.

Executive Director Bone gave a brief update on the 2022-23 audit. He stated the new auditor, Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., was on-site in January, and the audit was going well. The auditor should be done soon and be able to present to the board in March or April. He went on to say the auditors will be starting the 2023-24 audit as soon as this one is finished.

5. **Legislative Breakfast on February 24, 2025** - Executive Director Bone spoke about the ECC Legislative Breakfast held in Kinston in 2023. He stated it went very well and was attended by 105 people. This year, ECC's Legislative Breakfast is scheduled for February 24, 2025, at the La Grange Community Center in La Grange, NC. He stated the registration is going very well and currently there are 95 registrations including Legislators. We anticipate exceeding the last breakfast numbers. Mr. Bone spoke about the sponsors, Duke Energy, Mark III Benefits, and hopefully adding one more. He encouraged everyone to register to attend the event and to connect with our Legislators.
6. **NCARCOG Legislative Day on April 2, 2025** – Executive Director Bone spoke about NC Association of Regional Councils of Government (NCARCOG) Legislative Day scheduled for April 2, 2025. On this date COG Directors, staff and Board members will travel to the Legislature to advocate for COGs. The Policy Priorities for 2025 include the following five priorities:
  - Priority 1 – Build partnerships and capacity for COGs to provide financial administration for local governments.
  - Priority 2 – Provide ongoing funding for COGs to continue disaster resiliency efforts for communities and establish COGs as the entity to develop regional pre-disaster hazard mitigation plans.
  - Priority 3 – Modify the Prosperity Zones to conform to COG regions.
  - Priority 4 – Build strategic partnerships to improve regional delivery of services.
  - Priority 5 – Modify rules, regulations, or legislation to include COGs as eligible entities for state and federal grants.

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

- Welcomed New Executive Committee Members and offered New Board Member Orientation meetings.
- 39 Officials Participated in ECC Hosting Ethics Training for Elected Officials on February 5<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to Attorneys David Baxter and Trey Ferguson for providing the training.
- Town Board Retreats - I facilitated a Strategic Goals workshop for Kinston on January 30<sup>th</sup> and will follow up with Kinston on February 18<sup>th</sup>. With the blessing of another COG, I facilitated a retreat for the Town of Summerfield in Guilford County this past Saturday. With the retreat facilitation, we are providing effective services and expanding revenue sources for ECC.
- Town Manager search – ECC is assisting Mount Olive with its Town Manager search and look forward to working with Mount Olive. We are in the preliminary phase of this search.
- Monitoring the Changing Federal Landscape – There is a lot of speculation about the potential impacts on federal funding due to the actions of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). Along with colleagues in other COGs, we continue to monitor the changing landscape. The current continuing resolution runs through March 14<sup>th</sup>.
- March is National Senior Nutrition Month. Nutrition programs will highlight healthy eating and promote the importance of senior nutrition.
- ECCAAA Provider Meeting Held February 10<sup>th</sup> – ECCAAA hosted a quarterly service provider meeting on February 10, 2025, at ECC. Discussion included the new ARPA Choosing Home Program and the new (Providing Elders Additional Sustenance) PEAS Grant funding.

Executive Director David Bone also referenced some future events:

- **Grant Writing Workshop – February 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>** – We have over 20 people signed up for the two-day training next week. This will be our largest group.
- **Recovery Alliance Initiative 2025 Mid-Year Symposium** – RAI will have its “Healthy Recovery Communities” symposium on March 13-14, 2025, at the Riverfront Convention Center in New Bern.



**8. Member Comments** – President Riggs asked if there were any member comments. Cynthia Evans-Robinson spoke up to formally introduce herself. She is a newly elected City Commissioner from Havelock. President Riggs welcomed her. He stated if there were no other member comments, it was time to go to a closed session. *Mayor Jay Bender motioned to go to closed session, seconded by Council Member Cindy Edwards; the motion was approved unanimously.*

- a. **Closed session for G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) for attorney-client privilege and G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) for a personnel matter was called to order.**

9. **Adjournment** – The open session resumed about 9:29 p.m. There being no further business, *a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Heath, seconded by Commissioner Dowe; the motion was unanimous.*

Respectfully Submitted,

  
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Ed Riggs Jr., President

  
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David Bone, Executive Director   
David Rosado, Interim Executive  
Director