

**HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
JULY 19, 2021
MINUTES**

The Executive Board of the High Country Council of Governments (HCCOG) met July 19, 2021, 7:00pm, at the High Country Council of Governments Office in Boone. The following members were present at the meeting: Charles E. Vines, Robert L. Johnson, Eddie Settle, Johnny Riddle, Andrew Soots, Bill Osborne, Dennis Aldridge, Doug Matheson, Rocky Buchanan, Kevin Reece, Tom Hartman, Jim Blevins, Rennie Brantz, Paul Robinson Jr., Todd McNeill, and Valerie Jaynes. The following staff and guests were present at the meeting: Julie Wiggins, Julie Page, Jeff Hedrick, Nicole Hiegl, Kathy Garland, Karon Edwards, Phil Trew, and Victoria Potter.

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Chairwoman Jaynes welcomed everyone to the High Country Council of Governments July Executive Board meeting. Chairwoman Jaynes called on Robert L. Johnson to lead the invocation. Chairwoman Jaynes then led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Charles E. Vines made a motion to approve the June 21, 2021 Executive Board minutes. Robert L. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Financial Highlights

Finance Officer, Julie Page presented the Financial Highlights as of July 15, 2021 (Attachment A) and reviewed year to date revenues versus expenditures and balances. Mrs. Page still noted that revenues are below because everything is a month behind, and Aging provider funds did not come in on time. Mrs. Page announced that the FY2021 audit is progressing. Mrs. Page attended the NC Government Finance Officer Association Webinar this week and stated that a budget amendment will likely be on the agenda in August.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING PROVIDER UPDATES

Kathy Garland, Mitchell County Senior Center Director thanked the Executive Board for all they do and for how decisions they make trickle down through the Area Agency on Aging to the seniors in our region. Mrs. Garland discussed how the senior center quickly arose to the challenges of COVID-19 in 2020 by providing drive-through meals, emergency meals, and weekend meals to encourage seniors to stay at home (Mitchell County Senior Center provided weekend meals to 100 seniors every weekend for 49 weeks). Mrs. Garland also discussed how her team would check-in on their clients at least three times a week during the height of the pandemic as well as turning events virtual through Facebook, sending weekly activities and newsletters, and highly concentrating on mental health outreach. For the Mitchell County Senior Center 2020 was their 4th busiest year of the Meals on Wheels program.

Karon Edwards, Alleghany Council on Aging Director, discussed the demographics in her county where there are far more seniors than children. Mrs. Edwards shared photos of the brand-new Senior Center facility in Alleghany County which fully opened in June 2021 (Attachment B). Mrs. Edwards discussed how important those daily check-ins on clients were during the COVID-19 pandemic because of isolation and loneliness. She also discussed an increased demand for Meals

on Wheels in Alleghany County. In 2020 Alleghany Council on Aging served 17,950 meals compared to around 9,000 in previous years.

Mrs. Garland and Mrs. Edwards both discussed projects that had been completed at their facilities from CARES Act and Families First funding.

REPORT FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Julie Wiggins, Executive Director thanked Mrs. Garland and Mrs. Edwards for presenting. Ms. Wiggins noted that it was good to see the Executive Board fully in-person. Ms. Wiggins announced that 2021 Annual Banquet invitations were mailed out earlier today and reminded everyone that the event will be held at Linville Ridge on September 10, 2021. Ms. Wiggins quickly recapped the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) regional tour earlier this month where Federal Co-Chair Gayle Manchin and other Washington staff visited ARC funded locations in Avery, Watauga, Ashe and Alleghany counties. Ms. Wiggins then turned it over to Area Agency on Aging Director (AAA), Nicole Hiegl. Mrs. Hiegl thanks Mrs. Garland and Mrs. Edwards for their hard/heart work. Mrs. Hiegl announced that due to life circumstances she will be stepping down as AAA Director in mid-September. Mrs. Hiegl will gladly help with the transition and will continue to be available and engaged. Ms. Wiggins thanked Mrs. Hiegl for her dedication and hard work over the past seven years.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dennis Aldridge noted that Senior Center meals are back to in-person in Avery County. Todd McNeill thanked the presenters and commended all the Senior Centers in the region.

CHAIRWOMAN'S COMMENTS

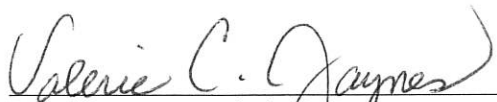
Chairwoman Jaynes mentioned that the Town of Newland is still seeking a Town Administrator.

OTHER BUSINESS

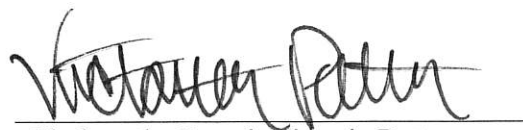
Victoria Potter, Communications Manager reminded the Executive Board about the upcoming group photo at the August 16, 2021 meeting at 6:30 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no other comments or business, Robert L. Johnson made a motion to adjourn. Johnny Riddle seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:39 pm.



 Chairwoman, Valerie Jaynes



 Clerk to the Board, Victoria Potter

Date 08-16-21