

**HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
APRIL 18, 2022
MINUTES**

The Executive Board of the High Country Council of Governments (HCCOG) met April 18, 2022, 7:00pm, at the High Country Council of Governments Office in Boone. The following members were present at the meeting: Eddie Settle, Jeff Whitson, Mike Inscore, Otis Church, Larry Fontaine, Dennis Aldridge, Steve Pitman, Kevin Reece, Jim Blevins, Rocky Buchanan, Wes Brinegar, Tim Futrelle, Tom Hartman, Doug Matheson, and Todd McNeill. The following staff and guests were present at the meeting: Julie Wiggins, Julie Page, Jeff Hedrick, Phil Trew, Zack Green, Cory Osborne, Lola Benfield, and Victoria Potter.

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Chairman McNeill welcomed everyone to the High Country Council of Governments April Executive Board meeting. Chairman McNeill called on Dennis Aldridge to lead the invocation and Tim Futrelle to lead the board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Wes Brinegar made a motion to approve the March 21, 2022 Executive Board minutes. Tim Futrelle seconded the motion. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Financial Highlights

Finance Officer, Julie Page presented the Financial Highlights as of March 31, 2022 (Attachment A) and reviewed year to date revenues versus expenditures and balances.

Budget Amendment #5

Finance Officer, Julie Page presented Budget Amendment #5 (Attachment A1) and explained that it is an increase for the Planning and Development department from federal and local funds. Budget Amendment #5 is an additional \$18,362.00.

Eddie Settle made a motion to approve the Financial Highlights as of March 31, 2022, and Budget Amendment #5. Otis Church seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CORY OSBORNE INTRODUCTION

Cory Osborne, Director of Recovery and Resilience re-introduced himself to the Executive Board and stated that he was happy to be back at High Country Council of Governments. Mr. Osborne is currently working with local government staff on reporting for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and plans to also work with local stakeholders to make the region more stable and livable in the future.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING PRESENTATION

Zack Green, Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Director presented a slideshow (Attachment B) giving an overview of the AAA, its staff members, the budget and AAA program overview. Mr. Green explained that additional ARPA funding the department has received will be spent in the region to help support local service providers to make long term investments in their facilities and for the aging community.

APPOINTMENT OF ONE REGION D DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Phil Trew, Planning and Development Director explained that one of the Region D Development Corporation (RDDC) members must be appointed by the Executive Board. This appointment needed to be filled by a representative on the Executive Board from Mitchell, Wilkes, or Yancey County. Kevin Reece made a motion to appoint Mike Inscore, Mayor of Wilkesboro as a member of the RDDC Board of Directors. Otis Church seconded the motion. Motion carried.

RECESS OF HCCOG EXECUTIVE BOARD SESSION AND CONVENING OF RDDC SESSION

Wes Brinegar made a motion to recess the HCCOG Executive Board session and convene the Region D Development Corporation (RDDC) session. (Attachments C and C1). Jeff Whitson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

[Please reference RDDC Minutes for April 18, 2022]

CLOSING OF RDDC SESSION AND OPENING OF HCCOG EXECUTIVE BOARD SESSION

Mike Inscore made a motion to close the RDDC session and open the HCCOG Executive Board session. Jeff Whitson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

REPORT FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Julie Wiggins, Executive Director reviewed key items for the FY23 budget that were discussed at the Advisory Committee Retreat. The draft budget will be presented in May and voted on in June. Ms. Wiggins noted that the Advisory Committee discussed adding a 5% Cost of Living Increase for HCCOG staff in the FY23 budget and to complete a pay study in the fiscal year so that the organization has formal pay scales in place. Ms. Wiggins discussed Annual Banquet planning and potential new locations for the event coming up this fall. Ms. Wiggins also noted that the Statewide Workforce Commission recently voted on the guiding principals and adopted a policy for requesting Workforce Development Boards movement. Ms. Wiggins will get more information on this soon. Ms. Wiggins also commended Cory Osborne, Director of Recovery and Resilience on his great work already in his first week back at the HCCOG. Ms. Wiggins congratulated Victoria Potter, Communications Manager on becoming a North Carolina Certified County Clerk.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Otis Church asked the board to remember his family at this time during the loss of his brother. Kevin Reece noted that Robert Johnson's health is not well and asked the board to remember him during this time. Mike Inscore noted that MerleFest is coming up next weekend.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman McNeill thanked Advisory Committee members for attending the retreat in Ashe County on April 9th (in the snow/cold). Chairman McNeill also thanked Mayor Hartman and Mayor Powers for their help with the tours.

OTHER BUSINESS

Eddie Settle announced that racing is back in Wilkes County. Victoria Potter, Communications Manager reminded board members about the COG hosting a regional Clerks Gathering on May 4, 2022 at 8:30AM. Clerks need to RSVP by April 22.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no other comments or business, Eddie Settle made a motion to adjourn. Wes Brinegar seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.



Chairman, Todd McNeill



Clerk to the Board, Victoria Potter

Date 5-16-22