

**HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
JUNE 17, 2024
MINUTES**

The Executive Board of the High Country Council of Governments (HCCOG) met June 17, 2024, 7:00pm, in the HCCOG Board Room in Boone. The following members were present at the meeting: Brenda Lyerly, Todd McNeill, Greg Minton, Timmy Evans, Otis Church, Bill Wheeler, Jeff Whitson, Harley Masters, Chandler Reece, Teresa McCoy, Rocky Buchanan, Tom Hartman, Paul Robinson Jr., Dennis Aldridge, and Doug Matheson. The following staff and guests were present at the meeting: Pam Wilson, Jeff Hedrick, Julie Wiggins, Julie Page, Caroline Briggs, Cory Osborne, Misty Bishop-Price, and Victoria Oxentine.

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Chairman Matheson called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. Todd McNeill led the Pledge of Allegiance and Dennis Aldridge offered the invocation.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Brenda Lyerly moved to accept the minutes of the May 20, 2024 meeting, seconded Todd McNeill, the motion carried.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Financial Highlights

Finance Officer, Julie Page presented the Financial Highlights as of May 31, 2024 (Attachment A) and reviewed year to date revenues versus expenditures and balances.

Disaster Recovery Grant Project Ordinance

Finance Officer, Julie Page presented an amended Disaster Recovery Grant Project Ordinance (Attachment A1). Mrs. Page explained that only line items have changed from the original ordinance, it is still the same amount of funding. This Grant Project Ordinance ends June 30, 2024.

Capital Bank and First Horizon Signatories

Finance Officer, Julie Page noted that as she is retiring, they will need to add Caroline Briggs, forthcoming Finance Officer to the list of signatories. Phil Trew was always a backup, so the team requested to add Chris Grubb, Planning & Development Director to the list as well. Then the list would consist of Julie Wiggins, Chris Grubb, and Caroline Briggs. This is a formal request for the board to consider and act upon.

Todd McNeill made a motion to approve the Financial Highlights as of May 31, 2024, the Disaster Recovery Amended Grant Project Ordinance, and the updated list of Capital Bank and First Horizon signatories. Jeff Whitson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

OPENING OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR FY2025 BUDGET ADOPTION

Rocky Buchanan made a motion to open the public hearing for the FY2025 Budget Adoption. Todd McNeill seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CLOSING OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR FY2025 BUDGET ADOPTION

As there were no comments or movement, Otis Church made a motion to close the public hearing for FY2025 Budget Adoption. Timmy Evans seconded the motion. Motion carried.

FY2025 BUDGET ADOPTION

Julie Wiggins, Executive Director presented the FY2025 Budget Resolution (Attachment B) for adoption and provided another overview. Ms. Wiggins noted that the FY2025 budget was presented last month and that there are extra copies of the full budget packet available if needed. Todd McNeill made a motion to adopt the FY2025 Budget Resolution. Brenda Lyerly seconded the motion. Motion carried.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Misty Bishop-Price, Workforce Development Director introduced Pam Wilson, NCWorks Manager and thanked her for attending/presenting. Mrs. Wilson is the NCWorks Manager for Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey counties. Mrs. Wilson noted that what she was presenting was applicable to our entire COG region. Mrs. Wilson presented a PowerPoint (Attachment C) with an overview of the services NCWorks provides, along with Work-Based Learning opportunities, partnerships/events, and NCWorks success stories. Mrs. Bishop-Price noted that the Avery, Mitchell, Yancey NCWorks Work-Based Learning - On the Job Training leads the state and does so well that the Workforce Development department has applied for more funding for that program.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE UPDATE

Cory Osborne, Economic Recovery and Resilience Director gave an update on how the grant money from the past two years has been used in his department, as that funding comes to an end. Mr. Osborne provided a handout (Attachment D) to give further details on the projects and programs including FEMA public assistance management training, grant application assistance, emergency planning in all 7 counties, online mapping/stormwater mapping, and more. Mr. Osborne and his department will continue to work on ARPA administration and noted that ARPA money must be obligated by December 2024. Mr. Osborne also noted that Sarah Price, Resiliency Planner has been working diligently on Opioid Settlement funds in Avery County.

REPORT FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Julie Wiggins, Executive Director thanked Julie Page, Finance Officer for her 5 years of service to the COG and for all she has done. Ms. Wiggins and the Executive Board wished Mrs. Page the best in her retirement. Ms. Wiggins noted that the Advisory Committee had asked her to check into clarifying in person meeting attendance. Upon research, we would need to add one sentence to our Bylaws stating that our board meets in-person only. Next month that sentence will be added to the Bylaws in red and brought to the board for consideration of approval. Ms. Wiggins discussed some recent World Elder Abuse Awareness Day statistics and events the Area Agency on Aging led and participated in. Ms. Wiggins also discussed the recent small, regional housing

kick-off meeting that the HCCOG hosted to discuss the complex issue of affordable, workforce housing. Ms. Wiggins noted that the High Country Managers meet quarterly as well.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Harley Masters thanked HCCOG board members for their attendance and participation and thanked HCCOG staff for all their work in the region, noting that from her recent trip to Raleigh, she can confirm we have the best COG in the state.

CHAIRMAN’S COMMENTS

Chairman Matheson welcomed Greg Minton, Wilkes County Commissioner to the HCCOG Executive Board. Chairman Matheson also noted that a representative from Piedmont Triad Regional Council would like to attend our next meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

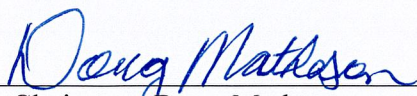
Victoria Oxentine, Communications Manager announced that Summer 2024 ReCOGnition is live online and printed and thanked everyone for their submissions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

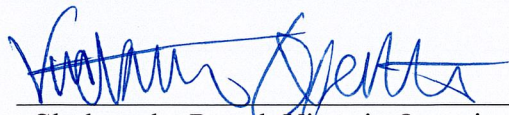
There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no other comments or business, Otis Church made a motion to adjourn. Todd McNeill seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.



Chairman, Doug Matheson



Clerk to the Board, Victoria Oxentine

Date 7/15/24