MINUTES

UPPER COASTAL PLAIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

# January 17, 2023

## BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Bobbie Jones, Chairman Mayor Town of Princeville

Miranda Boykin, Vice-Chair Mayor Town of Sims

James Alston Mayor Town of Castalia

Randy Beale Mayor Town of Woodland

Fred Belfield Commissioner Nash County

Michael Bell Council Member City of Wilson

Eddie Braxton Mayor Town of Scotland Neck

Eddie Coats At-Large Board Member Nash County

Beverly Davis Commissioner Town of Sharpsburg

Mark Frohman At-Large Board Member Nash County

Doris Garner Mayor Town of Weldon

Deborah James Mayor Town of Gaston

Matthew Lassiter Commissioner Town of Jackson

Brenda Lucas Commissioner Town of Spring Hope

Martha Lucas Commissioner Town of Momeyer

Sherry Lucas Commissioner Wilson County

Tawanda Moore Mayor Town of Elm City

Joshua Pair At-Large Board Member Northampton County

Julian Phillips County Manager Northampton County

Stacie Shatzer County Manager Nash County

Barbara Simmons At-Large Board Member Halifax County

Barbara Taylor Commissioner Town of Pinetops

Leo Taylor Mayor Pro-Tem Town of Tarboro

Ralph Webb Commissioner Edgecombe County

\*If your name is missing, you may not have been included in the roll call. Please let us know so we can make that correction.

**MEMBERS PRESENT BY PROXY**

Roy Bell Mayor Town of Garysburg

Dia Denton, Secretary/Treasurer County Manager Halifax County

Reginald Harris At-Large Board Member Wilson County

Tracy Shearin Town Administrator/Clerk Town of Red Oak

Emily Turner Mayor Town of Macclesfield

John White Mayor Town of Halifax

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

Vacant (Alt. attended) Manager Town of Littleton Dillon Bissette Commissioner Town of Bailey

Brenda Brown Mayor Town of Nashville

Delane Bryant At-Large Board Member Edgecombe County

Eric Evans Manager Edgecombe County

Carl Ferebee (Alt. attended) Mayor Pro-Tem City of Roanoke Rapids

Steven Flythe Commissioner Town of Lasker

Wilbert Harrison Mayor Town of Speed

Ron Hunt County Manager Wilson County

Jeff Johnson Mayor Town of Lucama

Andre’ Knight Council Member City of Rocky Mount

Geraldine Langford Mayor Town of Seaboard

Marshall Lassiter Manager Town of Severn

Luther Lewis, Jr. Mayor Town of Middlesex

Gerry Lynch Mayor Town of Conetoe

Esterine Pitt Town Administrator Town of Whitakers

Coley Rhodes Mayor Town of Stantonsburg

Mondale Robinson Mayor Town of Enfield

Elaine Saunders Commissioner Town of Saratoga

Cathy Scott At-Large Board Member Halifax County

Mack Smith Mayor Town of Black Creek

Robert Sykes Mayor Pro-Tem Town of Hobgood

Charles Tyner (Alt. attended) Board Chairman Northampton County

Jackie Vick (Alt. attended) Mayor Town of Dortches

Gail Wade Mayor Pro-Tem Town of Conway

Reginald White Mayor Town of Rich Square

Tim Wiggs At-Large Board Member Wilson County

Steward Woodard Mayor Pro-Tem Town of Conway

**GUESTS**

Walter Duke Mayor Town of Conway

Thomas Everette Town Administrator Town of Scotland Neck

Brenda Harrell Mayor Town of Pinetops

Jean Wooten-Jiles Commissioner Town of Macclesfield

**STAFF**

Robert Hiett Executive Director

Michael Williams Workforce Development Program Director

Mary Marlin Aging Program Director

Kelly Lancaster Finance Director

Ben Farmer Planning and Development Services Director

Kelly Skinner Executive Assistant/Clerk to the Board

Alexis Whitley Administrative Assistant

Tyra Hines Regional Planner

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Jones called the meeting of the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments Board of Directors to order at 6:45 p.m. He welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for taking the time to attend. He introduced special guests in attendance and recognized new Board members. Roll was called and attendance was duly noted.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Jones called for a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda items which included approval of the October 18, 2022 meeting minutes, Finance Reports (September, October and November 2022) and the Workforce Development Budget Amendment. Chairman Jones called for a Motion to approve the consent agenda items. A Motion was made by Mr. Leo Taylor and seconded by Ms. Barbara Simmons. All voted in favor. The Motion carried and the consent agenda was approved.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Presentation of Audit Results – Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., P.A.**

Mr. Stuart Hill of Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., P.A. presented the audit results for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022. He explained the information found in the summary beginning on Page 17 of the Board packet. After some brief discussion, Chairman Jones called for a Motion to approve the audit report. A Motion was made by Mr. Eddie Braxton and seconded by Mr. Mark Frohman. All voted in favor and the audit report was approved.

**Prosperity Zone Realignment Resolution – Robert Hiett, Executive Director**

Mr. Hiett presented background information regarding prosperity zones and how they came to be. He stated that they are often too large to foster cooperation within those regions. He further stated that using COG regions as the basis for prosperity zones would decrease duplication and confusion for local governments and facilitate better coordination of services.

He presented to the Board a resolution that will be presented to the North Carolina General Assembly asking them to consider the interests of its local and regional leaders and wholly assign Edgecombe, Halifax, Nash, Northampton, and Wilson Counties to the Central Prosperity Zone, or to consider new legislation that designates each COG region as its own Prosperity Zone.

After a brief discussion, Chairman Jones called for a Motion to approve the Resolution. A Motion was made by Mr. Greg Browning and seconded by Mr. Mark Frohman. All voted in favor and the Resolution was approved.

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

Chairman Jones invited everyone to attend the 138th annual Founder’s Day celebration in the Town of Princeville. The event begins on February 11, 2023, and will last several days.

**NORTH CAROLINA REGIONAL COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENTS (NCARCOG) UPDATE – Mr. Greg Browning**

Mr. Browning gave a brief overview of the NCARCOG and the important work that the organization is doing across the State. He also gave a re-cap of the December meeting which was held in Winston-Salem. The next meeting is in February in the Raleigh area.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Mr. Hiett began his report by calling the Board’s attention to the Executive Director’s report beginning on Page 27 of the agenda packet. He briefly highlighted a few items in his report. First, a reminder that Ms. Betsy Kane is our primary contact for local government ARPA support assistance. Please feel free to call her with questions and pass her contact information along to the appropriate staff at your local government.

Secondly, Mr. Hiett updated the group on the Regional Resilience and Recovery Contract. He reported that the UCPCOG has received funds to administer and deliver the project over the next two fiscal years. NCARCOG has issued a statewide RFP to select a consultant to “train the trainer” to ensure that each COG has properly trained staff. Each COG will also be required to hold a regional training event to support and enhance disaster recovery efforts.

Next, Mr. Hiett discussed the “Greater Rocky Mount, Greenville, and Wilson Area Regional Transit Plan Study.” He reported that work has begun and that NCDOT states that the purpose of the study is to provide a regional approach to transit planning for a 10-county region.

He also announced that we are coordinating a “Funder’s Workshop” in Halifax County this week. The purpose of the workshop is to provide training about available programs, grant requirements, and other items that factor into a viable grant. Several more of these will be held around the region.

Next, Mr. Hiett reported that he had met with representatives for the North Carolina Conservation Trust to discuss opportunities to develop a regional climate resilience corps. Follow-up meetings will happen during the first half of 2023.

Lastly, he reported that the UCPCOG has received notifications that grants have been awarded to Princeville, Stantonsburg, and Saratoga totally approximately $1.8 million.

**IMPACT REPORTS**

**Aging Department – Mary Marlin, Aging Director**

Ms. Marlin called the Board’s attention to the Aging report located on Page 43 of the Agenda packet. She also announced the Save the Date for the 2023 Aging Conference that will be held on June 15, 2023 at Edgecombe Community College, Tarboro Campus. She also reported that we have new staff trained to facilitate the Aging workshops. If you are interested in hosting a workshop in your area, please contact her. Lastly, she updated the Board briefly on a potential grant opportunity that would deal with COVID and FLU vaccination outreach and support. More information to come on that.

**Planning and Development Services – Ben Farmer, PDS Director**

Mr. Farmer referred the Board to the PDS Impact Report beginning on Page 45 of the Agenda Packet. He began by thanking the Board for their support on the Regional CEDS. He reported that we are moving ahead with implementation of the CEDS and shared some early wins including the newly awarded grants for Saratoga, Stantonsburg and Princeville.

He also introduced the newest member of the PDS staff, Ms. Tyra Hines. He reported that we will also host a SECU fellow this summer and referred the Board to our website if anyone else is interested in this opportunity.

Lastly, Mr. Farmer referred the Board to the Tri-Cog Feeds survey located on Page 50 of the agenda packet and urged everyone who hasn’t done so already to please complete the survey.

**Workforce Development – Michael Williams, Workforce Development Director**

Mr. Williams referred the Board to the Turning Point Workforce Development Impact Report located on Page 52 of the Agenda Packet. He reported that there were increases in the newly registered unemployed and first-time NCWorks registrants. He also shared the current Labor Market Information and reported that the unemployment rate is down from 6.0 to 5.8. He was pleased to report that North Carolina’s rate is lower than the national rate.

Mr. Williams also reported that the new Career Center in Halifax/Northampton County will be opening on February 1st. He closed his report by sharing a N. C. Division of Workforce Solutions success story, which was included on Page 53 in the Agenda Packet.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Jones announced that our next meeting will be held on March 21 at the Brown auditorium at Nash Community College and called for a Motion to adjourn. A Motion was made by Mr. Mark Frohman and seconded by Mr. Leo Tayor. All voted in favor. There were none opposed. The Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned.

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 Bobbie Jones, Chairman Dia Denton, Secretary/Treasurer