MINUTES

UPPER COASTAL PLAIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

# January 19, 2021

## BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Greg Browning, Chairman Alternate Board Member City of Roanoke Rapids

Bobbie Jones, Vice-Chairman Mayor Town of Princeville

Miranda Boykin, Sec./Treasurer Mayor Town of Sims

James Alston Mayor Town of Castalia

Randy Beale Mayor Town of Woodland

Fred Belfield, Jr. Commissioner Nash County

Roy Bell Mayor Town of Garysburg

Phillip Boone (Alt.) Planning Board Town of Dortches

Eddie Braxton Mayor Town of Scotland Neck

Eddie Coats At-Large Board Member Nash County

Stevie Cox Town Administrator Town of Sharpsburg

Alice Delbridge Mayor Town of Gaston

Dwan Finch (Alt.) Mayor Pro-Tem Town of Bailey

Steven Flythe Commissioner Town of Lasker

Reginald Harris At-Large Board Member Wilson County

Wilbert Harrison Mayor Town of Speed

Doug Hughes At-Large Board Member Northampton County

Charles Jackson Manager Northampton County

Richard Joyner (Alt.) Council Member City of Rocky Mount

Geraldine Langford Mayor Town of Seaboard

Luther Lewis, Jr. Mayor Town of Middlesex

Brenda Lucas Commissioner Town of Spring Hope

Martha Lucas Commissioner Town of Momeyer

Sherry Lucas Commissioner Wilson County

Jason Morris Mayor Town of Jackson

Joshua Pair At-Large Board Member Northampton County

Coley Rhodes Mayor Town of Stantonsburg

Stacie Shatzer Assistant Manager Nash County

Barbara Simmons At-Large Board Member Halifax County

Grady Smith Mayor Town of Elm City

Denise Stinagle Manager Wilson County

Charles Tyner Board Chairman Northampton County

Ralph Webb Commissioner Edgecombe County

Mary Wells Commissioner Nash County

Reginald White Mayor Town of Rich Square

\*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.

**GUESTS**

Natalie Bess Town Administrator Town of Pinetops

Alan Thompson Auditor

Rhonda Payne Mayor Pro-Tem Town of Sims

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

Wayne Anderson Mayor Town of Enfield

Michael Bell Council Member City of Wilson

Brenda Brown Mayor Town of Nashville

Tony Brown Manager Halifax County

Samuel Davis At-Large Board Member Edgecombe County

Eric Evans Manager Edgecombe County

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

Norlan Graves At-Large Board member Halifax County

Jeff Johnson Mayor Town of Lucama

Andre Knight (Alt. attended) Council Member City of Rocky Mount

Marshall Lassiter Manager Town of Severn

Julia Meacham Mayor Town of Weldon

Florence Pender Mayor Pro-Tem Town of Pinetops

Jesse Petteway Commissioner Town of Conetoe

Esterine Pitt Mayor Town of Whitakers

Thomas Richards (Alt. attended) Mayor Town of Bailey

Dennis Sanderson Mayor Town of Macclesfield

Elaine Saunders Commissioner Town of Saratoga

Owen Scott Mayor Town of Littleton

Tracy Shearin Administrator/Clerk Town of Red Oak

Mack Smith Mayor Town of Black Creek

Marcelle Smith Commissioner Halifax County

Robert Sykes Mayor Pro-Tem Town of Hobgood

Jackie Vick (Alt. attended) Mayor Town of Dortches

John White Mayor Town of Halifax

Tim Wiggs At-Large Board Member Wilson County

Othar Woodard Mayor Pro-Tem Town of Tarboro

Steward Woodard Commissioner Town of Conway

**STAFF**

Robert Hiett Executive Director

Michael Williams Workforce Development Program Director

Mary Marlin Area Agency on Aging Program Director

Ron Townley Planning & Development Services Program Director

Mark Hill Finance Director

Kelly Skinner Executive Assistant/Clerk to the Board

Ben Farmer Economic Development Planner

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Browning called the virtual meeting of the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments Board of Directors to order at 6:16 p.m. He welcomed all in attendance and introduced special guests. Roll was called and attendance was duly noted.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

After a review of the Agenda for the meeting, Chairman Browning called for a Motion to accept the Agenda as presented. Mr. Doug Hughes made the Motion which was seconded by Ms. Miranda Boykin. There being no discussion, Chairman Browning called for a vote. Those voting in favor included: Greg Browning, Bobbie Jones, Miranda Boykin, James Alston, Randy Beale, Fred Belfield, Roy Bell, Phillip Boone, Eddie Braxton, Eddie Coats, Stevie Cox, Alice Delbridge, Dwan Finch, Steven Flythe, Reginald Harris, Wilbert Harrison, Doug Hughes, Charles Jackson,

Richard Joyner, Geraldine Langford, Luther Lewis, Brenda Lucas, Martha Lucas, Sherry Lucas,

Jason Morris, Joshua Pair, Coley Rhodes, Stacie Shatzer, Barbara Simmons, Grady Smith, Denise Stinagle, Charles Tyner, Ralph Webb, Mary Wells and Reginald White. There were no opposing votes and the Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Browning called for a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda items which included approval of the meeting minutes from October 20, 2020; Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Board Report; UCPCOG Job Description approvals; Fiscal Year 21 budget Amendment and FY2021 Financial Reports. A Motion was made by Ms. Alice Delbridge and seconded by Mr. Doug Hughes. All in favor included: Greg Browning, Bobbie Jones, Miranda Boykin, James Alston, Randy Beale, Fred Belfield, Roy Bell, Phillip Boone, Eddie Braxton, Eddie Coats, Stevie Cox, Alice Delbridge, Dwan Finch, Steven Flythe, Reginald Harris, Wilbert Harrison, Doug Hughes, Charles Jackson, Richard Joyner, Geraldine Langford, Luther Lewis, Brenda Lucas, Martha Lucas, Sherry Lucas, Jason Morris, Joshua Pair, Coley Rhodes, Stacie Shatzer, Barbara Simmons, Grady Smith, Denise Stinagle, Charles Tyner, Ralph Webb, Mary Wells and Reginald White. There were none opposed. The Motion carried and the consent agenda was approved.

**ITEMS FOR ACTION**

***Audit Presentation – Alan Thompson, Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., P.A***.:

Mr. Alan Thompson presented the audit results for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020. He referred the Board to the audit information on pages 20 – 25 of the agenda packet. He reported that there were no significant compliance findings and congratulated the Board and Staff on a job well done. Chairman Browning asked for questions from the floor. There being none, Chairman Browning called for a Motion to accept the audit report as presented. Mr. Doug Hughes made a Motion and Mr. Ralph Webb seconded. All in favor included: Greg Browning, Bobbie Jones, Miranda Boykin, James Alston, Randy Beale, Fred Belfield, Roy Bell, Phillip Boone, Eddie Braxton, Eddie Coats, Stevie Cox, Alice Delbridge, Dwan Finch, Steven Flythe, Reginald Harris, Wilbert Harrison, Doug Hughes, Charles Jackson, Richard Joyner, Geraldine Langford, Luther Lewis, Brenda Lucas, Martha Lucas, Sherry Lucas, Jason Morris, Joshua Pair, Coley Rhodes, Stacie Shatzer, Barbara Simmons, Grady Smith, Denise Stinagle, Charles Tyner, Ralph Webb, Mary Wells and Reginald White. The Motion carried and the audit report was accepted.

***2021 – 2023 EDA Partnership Planning Investment – Ron Townley, PDS Director:***

Mr. Townley explained that the UCPCOG has applied for $210,000 in funding for a three-year partnership planning investment and referred the Board to page 26 in the agenda packet. He also explained that the EDA investment will be matched with $140,000 in local funds.

Mr. Townley further explained that this EDA investment will provide funding to the PDS department to support planning and economic development activities for the region. Through this investment, UCPCOG will develop and implement a replacement to the existing CEDS 2022. He also stated that this is a recurring grant.

Chairman Browning asked for any questions or comments. There being none, Chairman Browning called for a Motion to accept the grant award if offered. There was a motion made by Mr. Stevie Cox and seconded by Mr. Bobbie Jones. Those voting in favor included: Greg Browning, Bobbie Jones, Miranda Boykin, James Alston, Randy Beale, Fred Belfield, Roy Bell, Phillip Boone, Eddie Braxton, Eddie Coats, Stevie Cox, Alice Delbridge, Dwan Finch, Steven Flythe, Reginald Harris, Wilbert Harrison, Doug Hughes, Charles Jackson, Richard Joyner, Geraldine Langford, Luther Lewis, Brenda Lucas, Martha Lucas, Sherry Lucas, Jason Morris, Joshua Pair, Coley Rhodes, Stacie Shatzer, Barbara Simmons, Grady Smith, Denise Stinagle, Charles Tyner, Ralph Webb, Mary Wells and Reginald White. There were none opposed. The Motion to accept the grant funds was approved.

***Adoption of the COVID-19 Addendum to the CEDS – Ron Townley, PDS Director:***

Mr. Townley gave a brief description of the CEDS COVID-19 addendum and the purpose. He referred the Board to the action item located on page 27 of the agenda packet.

He went on to explain that the CEDS Strategy Development Group (SDG) had met several times and approved this COVID-19 addendum in order to provide a strategy for regional stakeholders and UCPCOG staff to respond to the economic injuries resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and assist with recovery. Mr. Townley also referred the Board to the actual addendum documents located on pages 30 – 36 of the agenda packet.

Chairman Browning called for questions from the floor. There being none, Chairman Browning called for a Motion to adopt the COVID-19 addendum. A Motion was made by Mr. Grady Smith and seconded by Mr. Doug Hughes. Those voting in favor included: Greg Browning, Bobbie Jones, Miranda Boykin, James Alston, Randy Beale, Fred Belfield, Roy Bell, Phillip Boone, Eddie Braxton, Eddie Coats, Stevie Cox, Alice Delbridge, Dwan Finch, Steven Flythe, Reginald Harris, Wilbert Harrison, Doug Hughes, Charles Jackson, Richard Joyner, Geraldine Langford, Luther Lewis, Brenda Lucas, Martha Lucas, Sherry Lucas, Jason Morris, Joshua Pair, Coley Rhodes, Stacie Shatzer, Barbara Simmons, Grady Smith, Denise Stinagle, Charles Tyner, Ralph Webb, Mary Wells and Reginald White. There were none opposed. The Motion carried and the COVID-19 addendum was adopted.

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

Chairman Browning began with an update on the North Carolina Association of Regional Councils of Government (NCARCOG). He reported that the Legislative Chairman of the NCARCOG is Mr. Robert Hiett, our Executive Director. He relayed that they are busy putting together a packet and a Legislative agenda in the hopes that they will be able to attend the upcoming convention in Raleigh.

Next, Chairman Browning spoke about the annual report that was recently mailed out to each Board member and the COG mask that was included in the packet. He applauded the staff for the annual report.

Finally, Chairman Browning spoke about the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine in the region and asked for everyone to please share any information you may have to those who are interested in receiving the vaccine.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Mr. Hiett referred the Board to his report which begins on Page 37 of the agenda packet. He began by highlighting the annual report which was recently mailed out and commended his entire staff on the great job that they are doing in the region. He specifically pointed out on Page 5 of the report the Regional Impact for FY 2020 that shows that every $1 in local government dues returned $110 in state or federal funds to the region.

Next, Mr. Hiett called the Board’s attention to Item #2 in his report which details the coordination activities for regional opioid treatment and recovery efforts targeted within Edgecombe, Halifax, and Northampton Counties. He reported that the North Carolina Healthcare Quality Alliance (NCHQA) developed a final contract to execute with the UCPCOG and recovery coordination services are expected to begin in June, 2021.

Mr. Hiett concluded his report by calling attention to Item #11 in his report on Page 38 which states that the UCPCOG continues to operate on a staggered remote schedule in order to minimize risk to agency employees. He also reported that the aging ombudsman staff have submitted a remote operations plan to the state to ensure compliance with CDC guidelines and maintain a base level of access to area citizens in need of these services.

He thanked the Board for their continued support and participation.

**IMPACT REPORTS AND PROGRAM UPDATES**

**Area Agency on Aging Report – Mary Marlin, Aging Director**

Ms. Marlin referred the Board to her report located on page 49 of the Agenda packet. She reported that the Aging Department is working diligently to get updated vaccine information and to get that information out to seniors as they get it. She indicated that they are sharing the information on Facebook as it becomes available to them.

Ms. Marlin also shared that over 200 clients have been assisted with personal protection equipment and assistive technology devices in the last three months and that number continues to increase. She also shared that over $26,000 has been spent to date on grocery services within the five-county region and that over 500 boxes containing PPE supplies have been delivered.

Finally, Ms. Marlin reported that they did receive three responses to the RFP for the nutrition program and that they hope to have contracts in place by March.

**Planning and Development Services Report – Ron Townley, PDS Director**

Mr. Ron Townley referred the Board to his impact report beginning on Page 46 of the Agenda packet. He reported that the UCPCOG has received $20,000 from NC State University’s Institute for Emerging Issues to assist with Broadband efforts in the Region. UCPCOG convened county-level planning groups to brainstorm potential projects and discuss the digital inclusion landscape.

Mr. Townley also reported that the Brownfields work is going well, with Phase 2 assessment plans submitted at the State and Federal levels for the WestPoint Stevens and M&M Grill sites and that Phase 1 environmental assessments are complete at the Roanoke Rapids JAECO site.

Mr. Townley also reported that UCPCOG staff helped apply for $2.2M in successful grant applications for housing replacement funded by NC Commerce through CDBG-NR in the towns of Lucama, Scotland Neck and Whitakers.

Mr. Townley further reported that the two firms that were selected to provide on-call planning services support for member governments have received several calls regarding help with Chapter 160(d) regulation compliance and he encouraged local governments to take advantage of these services if needed.

Finally, Mr. Townley gave local project updates and referred the Board to Pages 47 and 48 for Town by Town and specific updates.

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

Mr. Williams referred the Board to his report located on pages 49 – 51 in the agenda packet. He gave an update of unemployment data and stated that the current rate is at 8.1% which is a drop from previous months. He did however report that fewer people are working now than last year this time, which he believes is a direct result of COVID-19.

Mr. Williams highlighted a few employment opportunities in the region. Our local school system currently has over 350 positions that need to be filled and there are over 500 medical profession openings. He asked to please encourage anyone with the proper credentials to apply and help to fill these positions.

Finally, Mr. Williams reminded the Board that this is the bidding year for contracts for adult, youth and dislocated worker contracts and he welcomes any competition. He reported that RFPs will go out by the end of February and he hopes to be able to report the results in April.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE**

**Town of Princeville**

Mayor Bobbie Jones reported that 2020 was a great year for the Town of Princeville. They have received the funding to enhance the dike and are working on several storm water projects which include replacing culverts and cleaning out ditches. He also reported that they are working on the flood gates. In a few months, they expect to move back into the Town Hall and Senior Center buildings.

He also was pleased to report that they have purchased over 150 acres of land on higher ground and are currently seeking developers. They are also developing a farmer’s market and upgrading the playground. Mayor Jones expressed his appreciation to the UCPCOG for help with all of these projects.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Browning announced that our next meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2021 and asked for a Motion to adjourn. Mr. Stevie Cox made the Motion which was seconded by Mr. Bobbie Jones. Those voting in favor included: Greg Browning, Bobbie Jones, Miranda Boykin, James Alston, Randy Beale, Fred Belfield, Roy Bell, Phillip Boone, Eddie Braxton, Eddie Coats, Stevie Cox, Alice Delbridge, Dwan Finch, Steven Flythe, Reginald Harris, Wilbert Harrison, Doug Hughes, Charles Jackson, Richard Joyner, Geraldine Langford, Luther Lewis, Brenda Lucas, Martha Lucas, Sherry Lucas, Jason Morris, Joshua Pair, Coley Rhodes, Stacie Shatzer, Barbara Simmons, Grady Smith, Denise Stinagle, Charles Tyner, Ralph Webb, Mary Wells and Reginald White. There were no opposing votes. The Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned.

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 Gregory Browning, Chairman Miranda Boykin, Secretary/Treasurer