MINUTES

UPPER COASTAL PLAIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

# August 16, 2022

## BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Bobbie Jones, Chairman Mayor Town of Princeville

Miranda Boykin, Vice-Chair Mayor Town of Sims

Dia Denton, Secretary/Treasurer County Manager Halifax County

Fred Belfield Commissioner Nash County

Michael Bell Council Member City of Wilson

Eddie Braxton Mayor Town of Scotland Neck

Brenda Brown Mayor Town of Nashville

Eddie Coats At-Large Board Member Nash County

Mark Frohman At-Large Board Member Nash County

Doris Garner Mayor Town of Weldon

Deborah James Mayor Town of Gaston

Marshall Lassiter Manager Town of Severn

Matthew Lassiter Commissioner Town of Jackson

Brenda Lucas Commissioner Town of Spring Hope

Martha Lucas Commissioner Town of Momeyer

Sherry Lucas Commissioner Wilson County

Joshua Pair At-Large Board Member Northampton County

Julian Phillips County Manager Northampton County

Coley Rhodes Mayor Town of Stantonsburg

Mondale Robinson Mayor Town of Enfield

Stacie Shatzer County Manager Nash County

Tracy Shearin Town Administrator/Clerk Town of Red Oak

Barbara Simmons At-Large Board Member Halifax County

Denise Stinagle Manager Wilson County

Barbara Taylor Commissioner Town of Pinetops

Leo Taylor Mayor Pro-Tem Town of Tarboro

Charles Tyner Board Chairman Northampton County

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**

James Alston Mayor Town of Castalia

Roy Bell Mayor Town of Garysburg

Reginald Harris At-Large Board Member Wilson County

Gerry Lynch Mayor Town of Conetoe

Elaine Saunders Commissioner Town of Saratoga

Emily Turner Mayor Town of Macclesfield

John White Mayor Town of Halifax

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

Stephen Barcelo (Alt. attended) Mayor Pro-Tem Town of Littleton

Randy Beale Mayor Town of Woodland

Delane Bryant At-Large Board Member Edgecombe County

Beverly Davis Commissioner Town of Sharpsburg

Eric Evans Manager Edgecombe County

Carl Ferebee Mayor Pro-Tem City of Roanoke Rapids

Steven Flythe Commissioner Town of Lasker

Wilbert Harrison Mayor Town of Speed

Jeff Johnson Mayor Town of Lucama

Andre’ Knight Council Member City of Rocky Mount

Geraldine Langford Mayor Town of Seaboard

Luther Lewis, Jr. Mayor Town of Middlesex

Tawanda Moore Mayor Town of Elm City

Esterine Pitt Mayor Town of Whitakers

Thomas Richards Mayor Town of Bailey

Cathy Scott At-Large Board Member Halifax County

Mack Smith Mayor Town of Black Creek

Robert Sykes Mayor Pro-Tem Town of Hobgood

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

**STAFF**

Robert Hiett Executive Director

Michael Williams Workforce Development Program Director

Mary Marlin Area Agency on Aging Program Director

Mark Hill Finance Director

Kelly Lancaster Assistant Finance Director

Ben Farmer Planning and Development Services Director

Kelly Skinner Executive Assistant/Clerk to the Board

Alexis Whitley Administrative Assistant

**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 which included Mr. Reginald Speight, USDA Rural Development State Director and Ms. Betty Jo Shepheard, Field Representative from Senator Richard Burr’s office. Roll was called and attendance was duly noted.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Jones called for a Motion to amend the consent agenda items to add item F) UCPCOG Aging Administrative Contract for Edgecombe County. A Motion was made by Mr. Mark Frohman and seconded by Mr. Fred Belfield. All voted in favor and the Motion carried.

Chairman Jones then called for a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda items which included approval of the June 21, 2022 meeting minutes, Uniform Guidance Procurement Policy Amendment, Proposed Daily Deposit Amendment, CSLFRF Eligible Use Policy, Rural Opportunity Institute Resilient Leaders Initiative Grant, UCPCOG/NCARCOG ARPA contract, and UCPCOG Aging Administrative Contract for Edgecombe County. Chairman Jones called for a Motion to approve the consent agenda items. A Motion was made by Mr. Eddie Braxton and seconded by Mr. Mark Frohman. All voted in favor. The Motion carried and the consent agenda was approved.

**SPEAKER PRESENTATION**

Mr. Reginald Speight, USDA Rural Development State Director, spoke to the group about federal funding that is available. He explained the definition of persistent poverty counties and stated that we need to concentrate in these counties. He discussed ways to level the playing field and spoke about the Justice 40 project. He further explained that the Federal Government has made it a goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution. He also discussed the Rural Partners Network and stated that there will be community engagement meetings with the persistent poverty counties. The challenge is to manage the expectations. He referred the group to [www.rural.gov](http://www.rural.gov) for more information.

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

Chairman Jones reminded everyone of the upcoming annual banquet to be held on November 15, 2022, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Smith’s Pavilion in Dortches. He announced that we will be scaling back this year and due to the limited amount of space, unfortunately, Board member spouses will not be able to attend. It will be Board members, staff, legislators and special invited guests.

He also mentioned Board member attendance and shared the percentages on page 61 of the Board packet. He stressed to the group that it is very important to attend the meetings, or to have your alternate attend in your place if you cannot attend.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

In the interest of time, Mr. Hiett referred the Board to his full impact report beginning on page 34 of the agenda packet. He did touch on one item (Item #3) to let the Board know that our ARPA point of contact, Ms. Betsy Kane, will be out on leave for an unknown amount of time and that we have contracted with Two Rivers Development Partners, LLC to provide support and assistance to member governments. The point of contact for Two Rivers is Ms. Lea Henry, and he shared her contact information. He urged anyone who has questions about ARPA to please feel free to call her.

**IMPACT REPORTS**

**Aging Department - Mary Marlin, Aging Director**

Mary referred the Board to the Aging Impact Report located on Page 43 of the agenda packet. She called attention to two items in the report. Ombudsman volunteers (Community Advisory Committees – CACs) are being permitted to go back into facilities. We are actively recruiting volunteers in all counties. Please contact Ty Whitaker if you would like more information.

Next, she reported that we are kicking off a new round of consumer supported agriculture (CSA) boxes and will be working with providers on the logistics. There may be a new set of distribution sites. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Barfield.

**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 giving a CEDS update and called the Board’s attention to the rough draft located on Page 50. He reported that he hopes to have a final draft to present at the October meeting.

Next, Mr. Farmer reported that we are seeking to hire a project manager. The details and job description are located on our website. He gave a brief update on broadband, housing and water and sewer projects and called the Board’s attention to the one-page flyer on page 59 which details information about a new project called Tri-COG FEEDS (Tri-Cog Food Ecosystem Economic Development Strategy) which will be a joint effort between our COG, Triangle J COG and Kerr-Tar COG.

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

Mr. Williams referred the Board to the Workforce Development Impact Report located on page 44 of the agenda packet. He began by reporting that they are still busy with the QVC fire funding, but that this funding can also be used for any dislocated worker. Please spread the word that funding and staff are available to help.

Next, he reported that, unfortunately, the unemployment rate has risen slightly in our area since his last report. It has gone from 5.7% to 6.3%. Lastly, he thanked everyone that was involved in the move of the Wilson NC Works Career Center, and he stated that he is pleased to announce that they are still providing all the services that they were providing before, both on the campus of Wilson Community College (Building C) and the 2nd floor of the Upper Coastal Plain Business Development Center.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Jones announced that our next meeting will be held in person on October 18th at the Brown auditorium at Nash Community College and called for a Motion to adjourn. A Motion was made by Ms. Tracy Shearin and seconded by Ms. Brenda Lucas. 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