

**EAST TENNESSEE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
FEBRUARY 6, 2018  
MINUTES**

The East Tennessee Development District's Executive Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, February 6, 2018, at the ETHRA offices in Knoxville, TN. The following Executive Committee members were present:

Johnny Merritt, Mayor of Lutell  
E.L. Morton, Campbell County Mayor  
Ron Woody, Roane County Executive  
Roland (Trey) Dykes III  
Donald Mull, Mayor of Alcoa  
Terry Frank, Anderson County Mayor  
Terry Wolfe, Mayor of Bean Station  
Larry Waters, Sevier County Mayor

**Guests**

Don Woods, ADC  
Rick Yakubic, ETDD  
Gary Holiway, ETHRA  
Tammy Hopper, Claiborne County  
Jane Jolley, Senator Bob Corker's Office

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Johnny Merritt called the meeting to order.

## **MINUTES**

Chairman Johnny Merritt presented the minutes of the January 9, 2018 meeting to the Executive Committee for approval. Anderson County Mayor Terry Frank made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, it was seconded by Town of Bean Station Mayor Terry Wolfe, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Treasurer's Report for the month ending December 31, 2017 was presented by Member at Large Roland (Trey) Dykes III. Anderson County Mayor Terry Frank made the motion to accept the report as presented and it was seconded by Campbell County Mayor E.L. Morton and it was approved by all.

## **REPORT OF 2018 NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Chairman Johnny Merritt made the report on the Nominating Committee and thanked the following members for their service:

Don Edwards, Morgan County Executive and Committee Chair  
Don Mull, Mayor of Alcoa  
Terry Frank, Anderson County Mayor  
Bill Brittain, Hamblen County Mayor  
Dale Perdue, Scott County Mayor  
Johnny Merritt, Mayor of Luttrell, ex officio

Chairman Johnny Merritt reported that the Nominating Committee met in person and via telephone prior to this Executive Committee meeting and proposed the following nominations for ETDD/ETHRA officers for 2018-2019:

For Chair:	Mr. E.L. Morton, Campbell County Mayor
For Vice Chair:	Mr. Ron Woody, Roane County Executive
For Secretary:	Mr. Roland (Trey) Dykes, III, Member at Large
For Treasurer:	Mr. Tim Yates, Monroe County Mayor

Chairman Johnny Merritt entertained a motion that the Executive Committee recommend to the Board of Directors that these candidates serve as the new officers for the 2018-2019 program year. Town of Bean Station Mayor Terry Wolfe made a motion to accept the nominations and it was seconded by Sevier County Mayor Larry Waters and approved by all.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Terry Bobrowski, ETDD Executive Director, gave his Director's report:

### **Grants Update**

There are several items to report on:

#### **CDBG Grants**

Mr. Bobrowski reported the 2018 applications will be due in Nashville on February 23<sup>rd</sup> of 2018. We are working on about 17 applications right now, which is a really high number from our region. The state typically funds between 60 and 70 applications per year. We currently are working with Jefferson City, Loudon County, Parrottsville, Anderson County, Rocky Top, Caryville, Dandridge, Cocke County, Harrogate, City of Loudon, Madisonville, Claiborne County, Union County, Clinton, Tazewell, Cumberland Gap and New Market.

The CDBG program remains the only viable public infrastructure program that is available to communities so it is extremely important that we advocate for this program whenever we have discussions with federal legislators. The program has not been well supported at the federal level and has consistently lost funding over the past several years. This translates into fewer and fewer grants at the local level and we have really started to feel the pinch in the last couple of years.

#### **FEMA Fire Fighters Grant Program**

Mr. Bobrowski reported we just finished up working on applications for FEMA Firefighters grant funds. This grant program is offered by FEMA to eligible fire departments around the country. It is a great program that allows fire department to access big bucks without having to contribute a large amount of local share. For a \$100,000 project for example, the grant might be \$95,000 and the local share might be \$5,000. This year we put in 12 applications that requested a total of \$860,775 of grant funds matched by \$41,041 of local funds. The typical project was a request for turn out gear for a small volunteer fire department in a rural area. We also had two departments that requested pumper trucks this year at a cost of about \$210,000 apiece.

#### **Home Program**

Mr. Bobrowski stated that THDA recently announced that they will be accepting HOME program applications again this year. The applications will be due in Nashville on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The HOME program provides grant funds for owner occupied housing rehabilitations for low and moderate income persons.

Mr. Bobrowski also stated we are working hard to finish up our Emergency Repair Program for the Elderly effort for FY 2018. We have expended over \$280,000 of grant funds for housing repairs and we were recently awarded an additional \$209,000 from THDA because we are really proficient with this program. This is a very popular program and we work with small housing providers in your communities to get these grant funds out there working to benefit the elderly population.

### **Historic Preservation Grants**

Mr. Bobrowski reported we worked recently on a small number of historic preservation grants. These are small grants that are offered each year by the Tennessee Historical Commission to advance preservation activities. Typically, the grant funds are used to make minor improvements to structures that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Since the grants are small – in the \$25,000 range – the projects are comprehensive but still meaningful. The deadline is January 29<sup>th</sup>. We submitted applications on behalf of Candoro Marble Company in Knox County for \$15,000, Roane County Heritage Commission for \$41,393, the Oliver Springs Historical Society for \$9,600 and the New Salem Church in Sevierville for \$33,416.

### **Local Parks and Recreation Fund Program**

Other grant programs that are on the horizon that we are working on include the Local Parks and Recreation Fund, the big grant program from TDEC that rolls around every two years. We are currently working with 11 communities on their applications. The deadline is April 18<sup>th</sup>. There is also a Recreation Trail program that is available. These funds can be used for trail development, trail rehab and trailhead facilities. Grants range from \$25,000 to \$500,000 and a 50% match is required. Applications are due on April 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **General Assembly Update**

Mr. Bobrowski is very pleased to report that the appropriation for the East Tennessee Development District is contained in the Governor's budget on a recurring basis at the same level that was approved last year. We receive a basic appropriation of \$150,000 that is supplemented by an additional \$50,000 on an annual basis. We use these funds to match our federal grant revenues and fund special programs like our economic development program.

The Tennessee Development District Association is sponsoring a legislative appreciation breakfast in Nashville on March 14<sup>th</sup> from 7am to 9 am at the Doubletree Hotel. If you are in Nashville please plan to stop by. We will also be honoring our legislators of the year from our region – they are Senator Ken Yager and Representative Kent Calfee.

We will also recognize Campbell County with the 2018 John Wilder Rebuild Tennessee award at the breakfast. Campbell County invested over \$750,000 in new electrical upgrades to support the location of a new company. Congratulations to Campbell County.

## **Broadband Expansion Program Update**

Mr. Bobrowski stated we are getting heavily involved with broadband expansion efforts in rural areas of our region. Campbell County is the beneficiary of a \$1 million grant from the ARC to install broadband in a very rural area in the western portion of the County. Highland Telephone, the local telephone service provider is providing the local share, construction and engineering design services. Another \$35,000 from the US Economic Development Administration will pay for a feasibility study that will examine broadband expansion into the northern area of the county. Also, the Newport Utility Board received a grant in the amount of \$500,000 from the Appalachian Regional Commission to partially fund broadband expansions in Cocke County. There are a number of new funding programs, most notably to POWER grant program from the ARC that are assisting communities with the transition for reliance on coal production to a more diversified local economy. One of the primary goals of the POWER program is to increase access to high speed broadband in rural areas as a means of increasing economic activity.

The State of Tennessee recently announced the award for \$10 million in grants for broadband expansion. I am not aware of any grants from ECD that were awarded in this region but this funding source will probably continue into the future.

## **Planning Assistance Service Overview**

Just a few items that were not on the agenda. First, we recently added the Town of Huntsville and Claiborne County to our list of clients that we serve with our local planning service. We are now at 35 communities served.

Second, we are set up to assist communities with the LUCA process, or the local update of census addresses. As soon as we get guidance on the specific detail of data collection from the census we will be in a position to assist communities with verifying local addresses to make sure there is a good count. At an estimated \$115 per person, the state tax payment for census certified residents can add up in a hurry.

## **Calendar Matters**

Several meetings are coming up that I wanted to make sure that you are aware of:

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for March 6<sup>th</sup> immediately preceding the ETDD/ETHRA Annual Business meeting that has been scheduled for Tuesday, March the 6<sup>th</sup> – at Rothchilds on Kingston Pike in Knoxville. Commissioner David Purkey will be our keynote speaker at the luncheon again this year.

We have also scheduled our Annual Awards Banquet for Thursday, July the 12<sup>th</sup> – we are going to go back to The Venue in Lenoir City for this event this year.

**Other Business**

No other business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business the meeting was adjourned.