

**EAST TENNESSEE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
April 8, 2025  
MINUTES**

The East Tennessee Development District's Executive Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at ETHRA, 9111 Cross Park Dr., Ste D-100, Knoxville, TN. The following Executive Committee members were present:

Brian Langley, Morgan County Executive  
Rob Mathis, Cocke County Mayor  
Terry Frank, Anderson County Mayor  
Ed Mitchell, Blount County Mayor  
Joe Brooks, Claiborne County Mayor  
Mike Byrd, Grainger County Mayor  
Mark Potts, Jefferson County Mayor  
Wade Creswell, Roane County Executive  
Larry Waters, Sevier County Mayor  
Roland "Trey" Dykes, III, Mayor of Newport  
Neal Pucciarelli, Mayor of Cumberland Gap  
Ron Williams, Mayor of Farragut  
Terrence Carter, Member at Large  
Dasha Lundy, Member

**Guests**

Jane Jolley, Knox County Development Representative  
Tim Hendrick, ETDD  
Chris Oelgoetz, ETDD  
Debbie Sudhoff, ADC  
Gary Holiway, ETHRA  
Dirk Van Housen, Watts Bar Ecology and Fishery Council  
Tammy Merritt, Congressman Fleischmann's Office

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Brian Langley called the meeting to order.

**ROLL CALL**

Meeting Recorder did a roll call to collect meeting attendees, and a quorum was reached.

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairman Brian Langley asked for any changes to the posted agenda. There were none, so he called for a motion to approve today's Meeting Agenda. Town of Farragut Mayor Ron Williams made the motion, it was seconded by Blount County Mayor Ed Mitchell and approved by all.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Langley asked for any changes to the last meeting's Minutes, dated December 10, 2024. No changes were noted, so he called for a motion to approve them. Anderson County Mayor Terry Frank made the motion, it was seconded by Town of Farragut Mayor Ron Williams, and the minutes were approved by all.

## **SENATE, HOUSE & PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman Langley opened the floor to any public comments and asked if any House or State representatives would like to say anything, no one had any comments.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Secretary Rob Mathis presented the financials for February 2025 pointing out that during the month expenses exceeded revenues by about \$18,748. Secretary Mathis explained that monthly revenue variances are cyclical because assessments and planning service revenues are always recorded in the first and seventh month of the fiscal year and in months five and eight both revenues and expenses are greater than forecast. Secretary Mathis then said that eight months into the fiscal year the year-to-date revenues are at 122.27% and expenses are at 120%, both above budget, and that the balance sheet remains strong.

Chairman Langley called for a motion to approve the Financial Report. Town of Farragut Mayor Ron Williams made the motion, it was seconded by Blount County Mayor Ed Mitchell and approved by all.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Anderson County Mayor Terry Frank began by thanking her fellow members of the Nominating Committee for their service.

Mayor Frank reported that the Subcommittee approved the Slate of Executive Committee Officers for the 2025 – 2026 program year. They are:

For Chair:	Mr. Glen Jacobs – Knox County Executive
For Vice-Chair:	Mr. Rob Mathis – Cocke County Mayor
For Secretary:	Mr. Mitch Ingram – Monroe County Mayor
For Treasurer:	Mr. Wade Creswell – Roane County Executive

Mayor Frank continued that the Municipal Mayors approved to serve are:

Mr. Neal Pucciarelli	Mayor of Cumberland Gap
Ms. Lori Phillips-Jones	Mayor of Oneida

Mr. Scott "Scotty" Kitts

Mayor of LaFollette

Chairman Langley called for a motion to approve the nominations. Town of Cumberland Gap Mayor Neal Pucciarrelli made the motion, it was seconded by Town of Farragut Mayor Ron Williams and approved by all.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Rick Yakubic, ETDD Executive Director, started off his report by highlighting his recent trip to the NADO conference with Deputy Director Tim Hendrick, Cocke County Mayor Rob Mathis and Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs where they were able to meet with Senator Haggerty, Senator Blackburn, and Congressman Fleischmann to discuss infrastructure grants such as CDBG, ARC, and EDA staying in place. Mr. Yakubic then let everyone know that the \$995,000 Development District funding bill did make it into the governor's budget with the help of Senator Yeager and Representative Gary Hicks, and that it is recurring. He then thanked everyone who spoke to the senators and representatives for their support of the bill.

The next item of business was a loan ratification that Area-Wide Development Corporation (ADC) is working on for Island Creak Boat Company. Mr. Yakubic introduced Debbie Sudhoff from ADC to discuss the loan ratification. Ms. Sudhoff started by giving an overview of the credit memo presented to the Executive Committee. Island Creak Boat Company owned by Edward M. Malle and Kenneth L. Savage, Jr. and they are applying for a \$100,000.00 loan to provide financing for the master boat molds used in the manufacturing of their KYMA jet boat. The total cost of the master molds is \$200,000.00 (\$100,000 for the hull mold and \$100,000 for the deck mold), the molds are reusable and can be used for many years. Ms. Sudhoff discussed the terms of the loan, it would be financed for 84 months (7 years) at an estimated interest rate of 6.5% with monthly payments of \$1,528.7 and secured by a UCC lien on the master molds as well as the production molds. Mr. Malle and Dr. Savage will personally guarantee the loan and there will be an assignment of life insurance on the life of Mr. Malle in the amount of \$100,000.00.

Ms. Sudhoff pointed out that since the business was started in 2022 the two owners have already invested over \$1.2 million in the business and if there were to happen and the boating industry was struggling Dr. Savage could easily pay the loan off because his income is over \$1 million per year. Ms. Sudhoff brought up the tariffs that are being implemented on items coming from other countries and advised that they would not affect Island Creak because their boat is made with 99% American made products.

Chairman Langley asked if there were any questions and there were none, he called for a motion to approve. Blount County Mayor Ed Mitchell made the motion, it was seconded by Town of Farragut Mayor Ron Williams.

Mr. Yakubic then discussed the upcoming calendar events with the next meeting being the Annual Business Meeting at Rothchild's on May 13<sup>th</sup> and the Awards Celebration on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Executive Director Yakubic then announced that after two years ADC is merging with BrightBridge and Debbie will be going with them, but that the RLF will continue either with BrightBridge or possibly through another Development District.

## **TOPICAL DISCUSSION – Asian Carp Discussion**

County Executive Wade Creswell introduced Dirk Van Housen from the Watts Bar Ecology and Fishery Council to discuss the invasive Asian Carp and why it is important to address the problem before it gets established here.

Mr. Van Housen explained that the invasive Asian Carp are a safety and environmental risk. The carp can jump putting lake and watercraft users at risk because getting hit by one is like getting hit in the head with a bowling ball traveling 30 miles per hour. Asian Carp are causing a reduction in fish and aquatic population due to their severe impact on plankton communities.

Mr. Van Housen discussed the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency's (TWRA) program that they created to aid in getting rid of the carp known as Carp Harvest Incentive Program (CHIP) offering incentives to commercial fisherman and wholesale fish dealers who harvest the invasive species. The program has successfully removed around 30 million pounds of the carp, but the problem is that they will be removing the fish forever unless something else can be done.

These carp can go undetected due to a low population in a particular area, then a breeding population emerges, and they are suddenly everywhere. Due to their invasive nature, carp experts agree that the best thing to do is stop them before they get into an area instead of trying to deal with them once they are there. Fish harvesting has offered some control, but the carp is too invasive for it to be a truly effective solution. Mr. Van Housen explained that there are effective ways to stop the carp from invading the lake. One way to stop the invasion is to close the lock preventing them from getting through, which is a low-cost option, but it would impact commerce and recreation on the lake and would require Congressional action. Other options include installing a deterrent system such as a bioacoustic fish fence, underwater acoustic deterrent, CO2 injection with forced circulation, or an electric barrier (TVA does not support this option).

Mr. Van Housen then mentioned that in February there was a grant request submitted to TDEC for \$495,000.00 preliminary engineering and permitting to come up with a feasible deterrent option for Watts Bar with the Army Corps of Engineers and TVA. Mr. Van Housen brought up an ARC planning grant that he has been working on with Christ Oelgoetz from ETDD that when combined with the TDEC grant would give them the \$1 million dollars needed to get the project going to control the carp population.

At the conclusion of Mr. Van Housen's presentation, County Executive Creswell asked the Executive Committee to consider adding the Asian Carp problem to the legislative agenda for the upcoming year and consider a resolution stating that they support state and local funding to fund barriers at multiple dams downstream to encourage other Development Districts get on board with addressing the issue. Mayor Ron Williams then suggested that Senator Briggs would be a good one to start with and get involved because he is an avid boater.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Langley asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Town of Farragut Mayor Ron Williams.