

**EAST TENNESSEE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
September 9, 2025  
MINUTES**

The East Tennessee Development District's Executive Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, September 9, 2025, at ETHRA, 9111 Cross Park Dr., Ste D-100, Knoxville, TN. The following Executive Committee members were present:

Glenn Jacobs, Knox County Mayor  
Rob Mathis, Cocke County Mayor  
Wade Creswell, Roane County Executive  
Chris Cutshaw, Hamblen County Mayor  
Lori Philips-Jones, Mayor of Oneida  
Neal Pucciarelli, Mayor of Cumberland Gap  
Larry Waters, Sevier County Mayor  
Scott "Scotty" Kitts, Mayor of LaFollette  
Roland "Trey" Dykes, III., Member at Large  
Elaine Davis, State Representative

**Guests**

Cindy Boshears, Congressman Fleischmann's Office  
Sarah Fansler, Congressman Burchett's Office  
Nick Castle, Senator Hagerty's Office  
Michael Morelock, Senator Blackburn's Office  
Tim Hendrick, ETDD  
Alan Woods, ETDD  
Harold Edwards, ETDD  
Chris Oelgoetz, ETDD  
Andy Wallace, Anderson County Economic Development Association  
Gary Holiway, ETHRA  
E.L. Morton, ETHRA  
Bill Pollard, BrightBridge Capital  
Clem Renfro, BrightBridge Capital

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Glenn Jacobs 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 Glenn Jacobs asked for any changes to the posted agenda. There were none, so he called for a motion to approve today's Meeting Agenda. State Representative Elaine Davis made the motion, it was seconded by Town of Cumberland Gap Mayor Neal Pucciarelli, and approved by all.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Jacobs asked for any changes to the last meeting's Minutes, dated August 12, 2025. No changes were noted, so he called for a motion to approve them. City of LaFollette Mayor Scott Kitts made the motion, it was seconded by Town of Cumberland Gap Mayor Neal Pucciarelli, and approved by all.

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

Chairman Jacobs opened the floor to any public comments and asked the House and State representatives to introduce themselves. Cindy Boshears from Congressman Fleischmann's office and Sarah Fansler from Congressman Burchett's office introduced themselves and told the group that if they knew any students needing a recommendation to a military academy to reach out to Cindy if they were in the third district and Sarah if they are in the second district. Nick Castle from Senator Haggerty's office then introduced himself.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Treasurer Wade Creswell presented the financials for July 2025. Treasurer Creswell pointed out that the revenues exceeded expenses for the month by \$306,411. Treasurer Creswell then pointed out that the revenues are low in the first period of the fiscal year due to annual invoicing of local planning services and biannual invoicing for planning services. Then Treasurer Creswell explained that the year-to-date revenues were 104.92% of budget which is higher than the budget and year-to-date expenses were at

89.57% which is lower than budget. Treasurer Creswell pointed out that program direct and personnel expenditures were both notably less than budget for the first month of the new fiscal year, but it is anticipated that those expenditures will approximate projections as the fiscal year progresses.

Treasurer Creswell then mentioned that Rodefer Moss will be conducting the annual audit for fiscal year 2025 and is targeting completion in October 2025 with the results to be presented to the audit committee.

Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the Financial Report. Town of Oneida Mayor Lori Phillips-Jones made the motion, it was seconded by Hamblen County Mayor Chris Cutshaw and approved by all.

### **CEDS SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

Andy Wallace and Tim Hendrick presented the updated CEDS report that is posted online and was emailed to the group. Mr. Hendrick pointed out that there were some big updates for 2025 including the addition of an opioid section that includes statistics on fentanyl overdoses and the effects of fentanyl on the region, an updated post-secondary education section to include any new programs that exist, looks at graduation rates, and tracks enrollment in current programs, and the housing section was expanded to include new information received from Knoxville Area Realtors.

Andy Wallace, Anderson County Economic Development Association and CEDS Subcommittee chair, then addressed the group and explained that the best way to grasp the information would be to choose the links in the online report and look at the backup data that is included in the report. Mr. Wallace then asked if there were any questions, and at that time Executive Director Yakubic explained that once the group approves the report it will be submitted to EDA for their approval.

Chairman Jacobs called for a motion to approve the CEDS Subcommittee Report. City of LaFollette Mayor Scotty Kitts made the motion, it was seconded by City of Newport Mayor Trey Dykes and approved by all.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Rick Yakubic, ETDD Executive Director, started off his report by pointing out that ETDD is currently administering 127 grants totaling about \$65 million. Director Yakubic then mentioned that work is underway on the Cocke County transportation plan and that it is going well and that once it is done, they hope to start work on a few others.

Then Director Yakubic mentioned that this month Tennessee Development District Association met in Nashville and had a meeting with Will Reid, the new commissioner of TDOT, who said that he doesn't see much change coming, but that there is a little reorganization happening and recommends checking the different org charts to find out

who you need to speak with on different matters. Director Yakubic then mentioned that TDDA also met with Cliff Lippard from TACIR and discussed the data that the development districts send to TACIR and the letter that was sent to Mr. Lippard in February. Mr. Lippard explained that he did receive the letter, and he is willing to meet with Mayor Frank, Ron Woody, and Mr. Yakubic to discuss the information in the letter. Director Yakubic then mentioned that TDDA will be meeting with Herb Byrd from UT to discuss planning and how the development districts and UT can work together.

Director Yakubic then mentioned that he attended an event in Roane County to announce Oklo, which is one of the largest economic development things happening in the county at \$1.68 billion dollars

Director Yakubic then discussed the upcoming calendar of events including the annual awards celebration on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and reminded everyone that I was the last day to RSVP for the event. He then told the group that the next meeting would be held on October 14<sup>th</sup> with the Audit Committee meeting at 9:30 that morning to review the audit with Rodefer Moss and the Executive Director Yakubic reminded the group that the November 11<sup>th</sup> meeting is cancelled in honor of Veterans Day. Mr. Yakubic also pointed out that the February 10<sup>th</sup> falls on the same day as TCSA Government Day, and the meeting may need to be changed or cancelled.

Director Yakubic mentioned that the merger between Area Wide Development Corporation and BrightBridge is complete. Then Director Yakubic introduced Bill Pollard and Clem Renfro from BrightBridge to explain what they currently do and what they will be doing with the development district. BrightBridge is currently servicing some of the revolving loans that the district has and the goal is to be able to use their capacity to work with the communities to support small business lending, affordable and workforce housing, and project financing through the new market tax credits program that is in place. Mr. Pollard pointed out that unlike other CDFIs BrightBridge does not solicit grants, they strictly work with bank partners to borrow their money and redeploy it in the communities.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairman Jacobs asked if anyone had any other business to discuss, no one had any other business.

## **TOPICAL DISCUSSION – Legislative Agenda Discussion**

Chairman Jacobs turned it back over to Executive Director Yakubic to lead the discussion on ETDD's State and Federal Legislative Agendas for FY 2026-2027.

Director Yakubic started off by saying that he would be going over each item to see if they were still relevant and if they should stay in their current position or moved up on the list. The first top priority item on the agenda discussed ETDD's support for an increase in

funding for each of the development districts, the increase has already been approved earlier this year and the group agreed that it could be moved to ongoing legislative support. Director Yakubic asked if order of the items was still appropriate or if anything needed to be rearranged, no one proposed any changes to the order.

When Director Yakubic reached the item about ETDD supporting legislation for mental health services, Representative Davis referenced a report that Senator Massey did on the need for a mental health facility in East Tennessee and advised that she would reach out to obtain a copy that could be shared with the group.

Director Yakubic then discussed the item related to State shared revenues and ETDD's support for legislation that would ensure no loss of revenue due to tax reform or budgetary adjustments. County Executive Creswell asked if this would be the appropriate place to include language regarding Real Estate Franchise Tax Sharing, Director Yakubic advised that he would be with Anthony Holt or David Connor to get more information and language to incorporate it into what is already there.

There was no other discussion on the State Legislative Agenda, Director Yakubic then moved on to the Federal Legislative Agenda for FY 2026-2027.

Director Yakubic went through each of the top priority items and the current top item related to EDA funding was moved to ongoing items and Energy Capacity was moved to the top spot. Executive Creswell pointed out that due to ongoing changes and needs related to nuclear energy some changes to the wording might need to be made and agreed to help make those changes. There were no other questions or changes about any of the top priority items.

Director Yakubic moved on to the ongoing legislative items that ETDD supports, and Mayor Waters mentioned new legislation that the NACO Task Force he serves on is supporting to reform certain aspects of FEMA. Director Yakubic asked Mayor Waters to send him information, once he has it, on the new legislation to include it as an item on the agenda.

Then Director Yakubic asked if there were any questions, Chairman Jacobs asked if it is possible to add another item to the agenda addressing the low Medicare Wage Index set by CMS even though it is more of an administrative item than legislative, Director Yakubic asked Mayor Jacobs to help him with wording to add it.

There were no comments or questions on any other items, Director Yakubic advised that he will revise the agendas and bring them back to the next meeting for approval.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Jacobs asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by City of LaFollette Mayor Scotty Kitts.