

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

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

Richard Briggs, State Senator
Mike Byrd, Grainger County Mayor
Wade Creswell, Roane County Executive
Chris Cutshaw, Hamblen County Mayor
Roland "Trey" Dykes, III, Member at Large
Terry Frank, Anderson County Mayor
Glenn Jacobs, Knox County Mayor
Jerried Jeffers, Scott County Mayor
Scott "Scotty" Kitts, City of LaFollette Mayor
Lori Phillips-Jones, Town of Oneida Mayor
Mark Potts, Jefferson County Mayor
Neal Pucciarelli, Town of Cumberland Gap Mayor

Guests

Emily McCaul, Senator Hagerty's Office
Stacy Chambers, Monroe County
Jane Jolley, Knox County
Grady Vanderhoofven, Three Roots Capital
Tim Hendrick, ETDD
Alan Woods, ETDD
Eric Seiber, ETDD
Ron Woody, ETDD
Harold Edwards, ETDD
Gary Holiway, ETHRA
E.L. Morton, ETHRA

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. City of LaFollette Mayor Scotty Kitts made the motion, it was seconded by Member at Large Trey Dykes and approved by all.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Jacobs asked for any changes to the last meeting's Minutes, dated October 14, 2025, and none were noted, so he called for a motion to approve them. Member at Large Trey Dykes 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 if they had any comments, Emily McCaul from Senator Hagerty's office said hello to the group and reminded them to reach out if they needed anything.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Treasurer Wade Creswell presented the financials for October 2025. Treasurer Creswell pointed out that the revenues exceeded expenses for the month by approximately \$51,206. Treasurer Creswell explained that the year-to-date revenues are at 96.58% of budget and year-to-date expenses were at 89.46%, both of which are lower than budget. Treasurer Creswell pointed out that the lower-than-expected revenues are partially due to the Grant Administration, HPG, and ERP programs, with the HPG programs. Treasurer Creswell explained that the lower revenues in the HPG program are due to delays resulting from the government shut down and that the ERP program is expected to see increased

activity in 2026. Then Treasurer Creswell explained that personnel expenses for the fiscal year thus far are still less than projected, but they are expected to align with the budget as the fiscal year continues to progress.

Chairman Jacobs asked if anyone had any questions for Treasurer Creswell, there were none, so he called for a motion to approve the Financial Report. Anderson County Mayor Terry Frank made the motion, it was seconded by City of LaFollette Mayor Scott Kitts and approved by all.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Rick Yakubic, ETDD Executive Director, started off his report by mentioning that ETDD is currently administering about 127 grants worth about \$65 million, keeping everyone busy.

Then Director Yakubic mentioned that the semi-annual fall North RPO and South RPO meeting were held on December 2nd and that work is well underway on the Cocke County Transportation Plan and that ETDD just began work on the Roane and Union County Transportation Plans.

Mr. Yakubic then mentioned that ETDD was recently awarded \$250,000 in USDRD grant funding specifically earmarked for disaster assistance to benefit the six counties affected by Helene. Executive Director Yakubic then explained that the funding will be used for homes affected by wind and storms from Helene and that the program will be managed by Shane Carney.

Executive Director Yakubic then referenced a letter in the packet from Sarah Anderson regarding the Paul Bruhn Revitalization Grant in the amount of \$750,000 to foster economic and rural communities through the rehabilitation of historic buildings. ETDD will receive the grant money and then will have to prepare the applications on behalf of the communities. Mr. Yakubic explained that there were only 12 of these grants awarded out of 65 applications.

Then Executive Director Yakubic introduced Eric Seiber, the new ETDD Director of Finance, to the group. Executive Director Yakubic announced that Eric will be taking over for Alan Woods who will be retiring at the end of December. Director Yakubic then explained that there is a resolution giving Eric the authority to sign checks and handle the ETDD accounts that will need to be a motion by the group to approve the resolution and allow Eric to sign. Then Executive Director Yakubic explained that the resolution asks for the signature of Chairman Jacobs and Secretary Ingram, but due to Secretary Ingram's absence there would need to be a motion giving Chairman Jacobs the ability to sign on behalf of the Secretary.

Chairman Jacobs asked for a motion giving Eric Seiber the authority to sign. The motion was made by Jefferson County Mayor Mark Potts, it was seconded by Town of Cumberland Gap Mayor Neal Pucciarelli and approved by all.

Chairman Jacobs then asked for a motion to giving the Chairman to sign on behalf of the Secretary. The motion was made by Jefferson County Mayor Mark Potts, it was seconded by Town of Cumberland Gap Mayor Neal Pucciarelli and approved by all.

Executive Director Yakubic then mentioned that in the packets were the final versions of the State and Federal Legislative Agendas that will be sent to the state and federal senators and representatives if no one had any changes, everyone was happy with the final versions.

Next, Director Yakubic mentioned that the Executive Committee Retreat is coming up on January 22nd and 23rd and that it was the last week to RSVP and reserve a room and that concluded his report.

OTHER BUSINESS

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

TOPICAL DISCUSSION – Open Discussion

Chairman Jacobs asked if anyone had anything to discuss, Mayor Frank mentioned that Executive Creswell had something interesting happen recently regarding ChatGPT, Open AI, and other programs. Executive Creswell told the group that he received an open records request from WUOT relating to ChatGPT logs and asked if anyone else had received one, Chairman Jacobs said that he and City of Knoxville Mayor India Kincannon both received one and Town of Oneida Mayor Lori Philips-Jones said they received one as well.

The question was asked “how do we handle this?”, Chairman Jacobs said that their IT people are looking at it to figure out how to handle it because they do not have to provide them working documents. The biggest question seems to be whether the Open Records statute considers drafts of speeches and things like that are sometimes saved but get reworked before going out to the public.

Executive Creswell then brought up that when you obtain your ChatGPT history it prints everything, including items that were for personal use because there is no

way to distinguish other than to go through and manually redact the items which will be time-consuming and cost quite a bit in wages. Executive Creswell said that at the advice of his county attorney to figure out how many hours it would take to redact the unnecessary information how much it would cost and let WUOT know.

The consensus with the group is that there is not a lot of clarity as to what should or should not be included in response to an open records request as it relates to ChatGPT and AI programs.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Jacobs asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by City of LaFollette Mayor Scotty Kitts, it was seconded by Roane County Executive Wade Creswell and approved by all.