

**EAST TENNESSEE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
January 14, 2025  
MINUTES**

The East Tennessee Development District's Executive Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, January 14, 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  
Mitch Ingram, Monroe County Mayor  
Terry Frank, Anderson County Mayor  
Mike Byrd, Grainger County Mayor  
Chris Cutshaw, Hamblen County Mayor  
Mark Potts, Jefferson County Mayor  
Wade Creswell, Roane County Executive  
Jerried Jeffers, Scott County Mayor  
Roland "Trey" Dykes, III. Mayor of Newport  
Neal Pucciarelli, Mayor of Cumberland Gap  
Ron Williams, Mayor of Farragut

**Guests**

Garrett Frye, Congressman Chuck Fleischmann's Office  
Jane Jolley, Knox County Development Representative  
Tim Hendrick, ETDD  
Ron Woody, ETDD  
Gary Holiway, ETHRA  
E.L. Morton, ETHRA  
Joe Austin

**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 Roane County Executive Wade Creswell 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. Town of Farragut Mayor Ron Williams made the motion, it was seconded by Town of Cumberland Gap Mayor Neal Pucciarelli, 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**

Treasurer Mitch Ingram presented the financials for November 2024 pointing out that during the month expenses did slightly exceed revenues by about \$60,000, but that year-to date, five months into the budget, everything is good shape at 123% revenue versus 117% expenses. Treasurer Ingram pointed out that it continues to be a very solid fund balance. Then Treasurer Ingram explained that the GoPlaces expenditures are routinely reimbursed through the Department of Labor and that it sometimes offsets the receipts and that again, the balance remains strong five months in.

Chairman Langley called for a motion to approve the Financial Report. Town of Farragut Mayor Ron Williams 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 with a matter of business that needed to be addressed. Representative Elaine Davis was elected by her peers to serve another two-year term on the ETDD Board, and the Executive Committee and a motion was needed to confirm her appointment. Scott County Mayor Jerried Jeffers made the motion, it was seconded by Anderson County Mayor Terry Frank and all approved. Rick then explained that Senator Richard Briggs wants to serve another term and that he spoke to Lieutenant Governor's office, but they have not come together to vote like the House did and that if they vote him in a contingent motion could be made now to accept the nomination or the committee can wait until the next meeting. Town of Cumberland Gap Mayor Neal Pucciarelli made the motion, it was seconded by Town of Farragut Mayor Ron Williams and approved by all.

Rick then discussed a summary credit memo related to a loan ratification that needed to be presented and ratified. Rick explained that once all due diligence relating to the loan has been completed and the loan is viable then there is a 10-page packet of documentation that goes to the loan committee and that the loan committee has approved the loan. Now that the loan committee has approved the loan there needs to be a summary presentation to ratify and agree

on the loan committee. Rick then presented Joe Austin as the person presenting the loan. Joe explained that this is a small business, and the loan will be funded under the RLF Program, COVID Relief Program. Joe then explained that the loan is for a small business based in Morgan County called Making Connections, Inc. that operates as a cable contractor for both overhead and underground communication cables. The loan they are requesting is to finance a used dump truck to be used for their cable business and allow them to expand their services. The truck would help them diversify their business and allow them to haul materials and that they can aid in cleanup efforts by hauling debris, thus adding a new source of revenue to the business making it more stable. Joe then pointed out that the company has seen a decrease in revenue, but there has been an increase in profits. The company is solely owned by Michael Waters who has a near perfect credit score and the business also has a near perfect credit score based on an Equifax business report. The loan has been approved for \$90,000 with the provision that Mr. Waters must put up 10% of the vehicle purchase price, meaning the vehicle would be 90% financed at an interest rate of 7.5% over 84 months with the truck being held as collateral.

Chairman Langley asked if there were any questions, Mayor Williams asked if Mr. Waters is a US Citizen because in section 3.1 it said that he is not, Joe advised that he is and then Mayor Williams asked if he is a Veteran because the box is blank, to which Joe responded that he is not. Chairman Langley asked if there were any more questions and there were none, he called for a motion to approve. Anderson County Mayor Terry Frank made the motion, it was seconded by Monroe County Mayor Mitch Ingram.

Rick reminded everyone that six of the sixteen counties were disaster designated counties, and that EDA approached ETDD with \$500,000 that they found to be available over the next five years for a disaster coordinator. He mentioned that on January 22<sup>nd</sup> there will be a meeting with EDA to find out more details and if they find out if there will be significant budget changes for this year there will be a budget amendment to add to the financials. Rick then mentioned that ETDD did a pre-application for an ARC grant for the same type of work and that they were asked to do a full application that will be due in February.

Rick mentioned the retreat coming up in a few weeks at the Courtyard Marriott in Gatlinburg and pointed out that in the packet there is a draft agenda with Ron Woody facilitating. Rick reminded everyone that if they RSVP'd, they have a room for the night, and we will be starting at 1:00pm on Thursday and ending at about 6:00 or 6:30pm and then come back the next day for breakfast from 7:30-8:30am followed by a presentation on solid waste by Novastis and a discussion about what is happening in solid waste.

### **TOPICAL DISCUSSION – Open Discussion**

County Executive Creswell asked if there would be any discussion about emergency preparedness at the retreat and Ron Woody said there would be a little discussion about it throughout the presentation and that if more time needs to be spent on it that is an option. County Executive Creswell suggested using one of the Executive Committee meetings to discuss emergency preparedness and hear from Mayor Mathis about what he would do differently if it happened today. Rick suggested having this discussion at the February meeting Mayor Mathis said he would ask his EMA Director Joe Esway to attend the next meeting to help with the discussion. County Executive Creswell then asked if they all could bring their EMA Representatives to the next meeting and Rick said that would be fine and everyone liked the idea. Mayor Mathis then said that Mr. Esway is putting together an after-action report that may not be completed by the next meeting, but that he would make sure it is distributed to the group once it

is completed so that everyone can learn from what they learned. Chairman Langley asked if anyone had anything else to discuss about the agendas, no one had anything.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Langley asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Scott County Mayor Jerried Jeffers, it was seconded by County Executive Wade Creswell.