

**EAST TENNESSEE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MARCH 10, 2020**

**MINUTES**

The East Tennessee Development District's Executive Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at the Rothchild Conference Center in Knoxville, TN. The following Executive Committee members were present:

Ron Woody, Roane County Executive  
Roland (Trey) Dykes III, Member at Large  
Mark Potts, Jefferson County Mayor  
Joe Brooks, Claiborne County Mayor  
Terry Frank, Anderson County Mayor  
E.L. Morton, Campbell County Mayor  
Mike Byrd, Grainger County Mayor  
Glenn Jacobs, Knox County Mayor  
Jeff Tibbals, Scott County Mayor  
Larry Waters, Sevier County

**Guests**

Rick Yakubic, ETDD  
Anna Beth Walker, Claiborne County Development Representative  
Sharon Heidel, Morgan County Development Representative  
Maxine Gernert, Congressman Fleischmann's Office  
Steve Howell, Congressman Fleischmann's Office  
Aaron Bradley, ETHRA

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Ron Woody called the meeting to order.

## **MINUTES**

Chairman Ron Woody presented the minutes of the February 11, 2020 meeting to the Executive Committee for approval. City of Newport Mayor Trey Dykes made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, it was seconded by Campbell County Mayor E.L. Morton, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Treasurer's Report for the month ending January 31, 2020 was presented by Claiborne County Mayor Joe Brooks. Mayor Brooks made the motion to accept the report as presented and it was seconded by Jefferson County Mayor Mark Potts, and it was approved by all.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

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

### **Grants Update**

#### **CDBG Grants**

Mr. Bobrowski reported that our staff submitted 2020 CDBG applications to ECD Nashville on February 28<sup>th</sup> of 2020. The state typically funds between 60 and 70 applications per year. We submitted applications from Anderson County and White Pine for waterlines; Loudon County for a water tank; New Tazewell, Hamblen County, Union County, Loudon City and Parrottsville for a fire truck; Oakdale and Roane County for ambulances; and Norris and Jefferson City for wastewater projects. The state received about 115 applications from across the state so the program remains very competitive. I expect them to fund around 60 projects this year. We should hear about the winners in September.

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.

## **ARC Grant Programs**

Mr. Bobrowski was pleased to report that four of the eight pre-applications that we submitted were selected for preliminary funding. Claiborne County – boat dock ramp; Claiborne School – Wastewater to Springdale School; Clearfork Utility – Water Plant upgrades and Plateau Utility – Reservoir study. We are also preparing a full application for a training center conversion project in Grainger County.

## **ETDD Budget Overview**

Mr. Bobrowski presented the proposed budget for the upcoming year. It has not changed significantly from prior years. We are in the state's budget again this year for \$150,000 plus an additional \$30,000 and we have received contracts from the federal ARC and EDA for planning work again this year. In fact, our EDA contract was extended out for three years. We will again be adding about \$300,000 into our budget to fund the local planning work component – these are funds that are derived from contractual fees paid to the development district by the 38 communities that we provide local planning services to. In general, our budget is stable and we do not anticipate any problems with our funding sources.

In terms of expenditures, our expense level is essentially the same as last year, the primary increases being in the salary and fringe benefit line items. We will present to the Executive Committee a proposed cost of living increase for our employees beginning in July, however, this will depend on the status of our funding sources at that time. We have an extremely well-funded reserve fund that will allow us to remain in good shape in terms of meeting cash flow requirements.

Claiborne County Mayor Joe Brooks made a motion to recommend the proposed budget to the Board of Directors, and it was seconded by Campbell County Mayor E.L. Morton, and it was approved by all.

## **ETDD Workplan Overview**

Mr. Bobrowski presented our proposed work program for the upcoming year. It has not changed significantly from prior years. It looks like we will again have a contract to complete the Public Needs Infrastructure Inventory; we will again have a solid waste planning contract and contracts for historic preservation and housing planning. Our planning advisory service is thriving – we added another new communities recently – Rockwood in Blount County - and that brings our total to 38. We do not anticipate that we will need to increase the contract amounts for this program next year. TDOT has indicated that we will again contract with them to continue the management of the two Rural Planning Organizations that were formed to serve all or portions of fourteen counties within the ETDD region. Of course, we will focus on grant application work and grant administration work with particular emphasis on the CDBG, ARC, EPA Region IV grants, FEMA fire fighters, HOME and TDOT Enhancement programs.

One continued new area of focus that we hope to expand in our workplan is rural economic development. I am sure most of you have heard that one on Governor Lee's main priorities is an increasing priority on rural economic development. In fact his first Executive Order was all about rural development and directed each state agency to develop a plan for focusing resources on rural areas. Those departmental plans are now being put into action. Rural economic development was again mentioned in his State of the State address as a priority. I feel like this is a special opportunity for the development district to participate in this state-wide effort. There are many different programs that potentially could benefit rural areas including new broadband expansion initiatives, rural transportation planning initiatives, industrial site development initiatives, a new fire department grant program, and the new special set aside of \$100 million for city and county projects.

The Areawide Development Corporation continues to be active in the field of small business financing. Our recent loan activity is not where we would like it to be but we are optimistic about the loans being developed in our pipeline and these should keep the ADC ranked highly in the State of Tennessee both in terms of loan activity and value of loans. We continue to have a reserve of loan funds to invest in agribusiness development projects.

Anderson County Mayor Terry Frank made a motion to recommend the Workplan to the Board of Directors, and it was seconded by Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs and approved by all.

### **Legislative Update**

Mr. Bobrowski wanted to mention that first of all, ETDD recognized Senator Richard Briggs and Representative Jeremy Faison as our Legislators of the Year at the TDDA annual conference in Nashville last week.

In regard to the restoration of our funding that was cut from our budget last year, we have been working closely with Senator Yager's office to get a budget amendment filed that restores the funding. Looks like we have a great sponsor on the House side, Gary Hicks who is the Chair of the Finance Committee. Everything looks very positive right now and I appreciate the calls and expressions of interest that have been shown by our Board members regarding this issue.

### **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 April 14<sup>th</sup> back at the ETHRA offices. And for a long term hold - we have also scheduled our Annual Awards Banquet for Thursday, July the 9<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, Chairman Ron Woody entertained a motion to adjourn and was approved by all.