

MINUTES
UPPER COASTAL PLAIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MAY 15, 2018

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Barbara S. Simmons, Chairman	At-Large Board Member	Halifax County
Doug Hughes, Vice Chairman	At-Large Board Member	Northampton County
Greg Browning, Sec/Treas.	Alternate Board Member	City of Roanoke Rapids
Blake Proctor	Town Administrator	Town of Sharpsburg
Tim Wiggs	At-Large Board Member	Wilson County
Florence Pender	Commissioner	Town of Pinetops
Hank Raper, Alternate	Manager	Town of Nashville
Sherry L. Lucas	Commissioner	Wilson County
Brenda Lucas	Commissioner	Town of Spring Hope
Owen Scott	Mayor	Town of Littleton
Kenneth Manuel	Mayor	Town of Woodland
Alice Delbridge	Mayor	Town of Gaston
Leo Taylor	Mayor Pro-Tem.	Town of Tarboro
A. P. Coleman	Council Member	City of Wilson
Jonathan Felton	Commissioner	Edgecombe County
Bobbie D. Jones	Mayor	Town of Princeville
Mary Wells	Commissioner	Nash County
Fred Belfield, Jr.	Commissioner	Nash County
Tony Brown	Manager	Halifax County
Roy Bell	Mayor	Town of Garysburg
Samuel R. Davis	At-Large Board Member	Edgecombe County
Linda Ingram	Mayor	Town of Conetoe
Ellene Leonard	Mayor	Town of Castalia
Ron Hunt, Alternate	Assistant Manager	Wilson County
Dana Hewett	Mayor	Town of Sims

*If your name is missing, you may not have signed in. Please let us know so we can make that correction

GUESTS

Robert Hiatt	Special Guest	
Jae Kim	Manager	Town of Spring Hope
George Delbridge	Special Guest	
Corey Davis	Reporter	Rocky Mount Telegram

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MEMBERS PRESENT BY PROXY

Esterine G. Pitt	Mayor	Town of Whitakers
Grady Smith	Mayor	Town of Elm City
John L. White	Mayor	Town of Halifax

STAFF

Greg T. Godard	Executive Director
Michael Williams	Workforce Development Program Director
Mary Marlin	Area Agency on Aging Program Director
Ron Townley	Planning & Development Services Program Director
Olga Abrams	General Administration/BDC Manager
Mark Hill	Finance Director

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Mr. Godard introduced NC Treasurer Dale Folwell during dinner because he had another speaking engagement following his presentation to the UCPCOG Board.

Mr. Folwell expressed his thanks for the opportunity to speak to the board and his appreciation for the value the UCPCOG brings to the region it serves. He described himself as the “Keeper of the Public Purse”, from the book by former Treasurer Harlan E. Boyles. Mr. Boyles says, “the State Treasurer of North Carolina has more constitutional and statutory responsibilities and duties than any other elected official in the state except for the governor.”

Highlights:

- The single biggest threat to public education is how states are going to fund and account for and deal with the unfunded pension and health care liabilities of their communities.
- The major responsibility of the NC State Treasurer is to maintain North Carolina’s AAA bond rating.
- NC State Treasurer is responsible for creating the Debt Affordability Study; it talks about how much debt the state can have.
- Mr. Folwell is the Chair of the Local Government Commission.
- NC State Pension Plan is one of the 5 best funded pension plans in the US
 - The combination of the state pension plan and the state health plan along with the pharmacy benefit that goes along with the state health plan results in spending almost \$750 million every 30 days for active and retired state employees.
 - Nash County – 2,800 retirees on the state pension plan and NC sends \$57 million to retirees in Nash County annually

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- Edgecombe County – 1,400 retirees on the state pension plan and NC sends \$28 million annually to retirees
- Halifax County – 1,800 retirees; \$34 million to retirees annually
- Northampton County – 745 retirees; \$13 million to retirees annually
- Wilson County – 2,595 retirees; \$53 million to retirees annually
- Last month, pensions checks were paid out to 7,120 retirees age 90+
- Found savings in Wall Street fees totaling \$75 million, a \$300 million savings over four years
- Treasurer’s office lowered assumed rate of return on the pension plan
- The NC State Health Plan is one of the five (5) most insolvent in the US.
 - \$35 billion in the hole
 - BCBS has never been the insurer for the State of NC but the administrator; it’s always been self-funded, so the health plan card has been redesigned
 - Explanation of Benefits OB will be redesigned soon

Mr. Folwell answered several questions from the floor.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Simmons called the meeting of the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments Board of Directors to order at 7:32 p.m. The guest speaker was allowed to speak before the opening because he had another speaking engagement to attend. Chairman Simmons welcomed all in attendance and asked for introduction of any new guests or members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Simmons called for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2018 Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments Board of Directors meeting. Mr. Proctor made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2018 minutes, Ms. Pender seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

IMPACT REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Workforce Development (WFD), Michael Williams, Program Director

Mr. William presented highlights for the WFD section of the Impact Report.

Highlights:

- Provided twelve scholarships for individuals in March and April and four Work-based learning placements
- Seventeen employer recruitment efforts

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- Three regional career fairs were held over the past couple of months
 - In Wilson County, in partnership with Department of Social Services (DSS), NCWorks, and other agencies, approximately 40 employers and about 300 job seekers attended at NC Cooperative Extension office.
 - In Halifax – Northampton Counties at Halifax Community College, in partnership with Northampton and Halifax County Departments of Social Services and several other partners, there were about 37 employers and about 275 job seekers attended.
 - In Nash – Edgecombe at Nash Community College, over 70 employers and approximately 600 job seekers attended.
 - Information is still being totaled as to how many of those actually were hired as a result of those job fairs.
- Employers are now utilizing WFD services more than in the past. They are beginning to look at our system and allowing NCWorks staff to post more jobs, especially smaller companies with no HR departments.
- Unemployment rates:
 - Regionally, unemployment is down from 6.8% to 6.4%
 - North Carolina is down from 4.6% to 4.3%
 - Edgecombe County is down from 8.1% to 7.6%
 - 134 more people are working in May than were working in April.
 - 2,120 fewer are working than were working this time last year.
- The Bi-annual Consortium meeting is coming up; they are the authority over the funds received under the Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act. The meeting is held twice a year and the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 24, 2018. Budgets, output, and a regional program of works will be presented to them.

Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Mary Marlin, Program Director

Ms. Marlin presented highlights for the AAA portion of the Impact Report.

Highlights:

- AAA will be attending the Division of Aging and Adult Services Listening Session on June 19, 2018, being held in Greenville, NC. We will be providing our input to the state plan as it pertains to the Aging programs we offer.
- The next Regional Aging Advisory Committee (RAAC) meeting is scheduled for May 29, 2018 at Eastpointe in Rocky Mount and will begin at 10 a.m. The program will be on the topic of “Dementia Friends”. Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) training will follow.
 - Linda Barfield and Ms. Marlin attended the Aging Network Conference for regions 3 & 4 of the Administration for Community Living in early May in Atlanta, GA. There were two days of packed information and sharing, and they came back with some ideas to better serve our communities. We are particularly

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interested in bringing Applied Suicide Intervention Skills to our region, working more with assistive technology and also gaining a better understanding of what Georgia has done regarding elder abuse, to improve the outcomes in North Carolina. We had some conversations about elder abuse and some things we can do to advocate in our region and in our state.

- The Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training is a two-day interactive workshop in suicide-first-aid. Participants learn to recognize when someone may be at risk of suicide and respond in ways that help increase their immediate safety and link them to further help. That training is for everyone. This is something that can affect any age and is something we could all be prepared for as citizens, knowing what to say if you should ever find yourself in that situation.
- We are looking at reallocation within the region for our HCCBG funding. Our best projected plans don't always come to fruition, so we have some counties who are overspending and some who are under spending and we are keeping a close watch on that. We do believe we will have a service provider within the region that we can spend those funds should the counties that they are currently allocated to not be able to fully expend the funds.
- The next Caregiver Conference will be held May 23, 2018 at Nash Community College.

Planning and Development Services, Ron Townley, Program Director

Mr. Townley presented highlights for the PDS section of the Impact Report.

Highlights:

- Applications were submitted for the Town of Enfield and the Town of Lucama for the Drinking and Water State Revolving Fund. We have eight municipalities lined up for the fall round of funding.
- The Impact Report lists county by county activity for the region with planning and zoning projects.
- We are working in Northampton and Halifax County on the Golden Leaf Community Based Development Initiative on projects for the fall.
- We have been invited, after about 18 months of work, to present to the US Department of Energy on our Powering Energy Efficiency and Impact Framework project; and then to a national audience a couple of days later. Both meetings are being set for June 2019. Partners include the NC Clean Energy Technology Center; NC State University Center for Geospatial Analytics; NCSU System Design Optimization Lab; the NC State Sustainable Energy Association; the Justice Center of Vermont Law School; the University of South Carolina, and others.
 - The idea behind the project is to take data about low-income households and design an online access portal for the area utilities to share information in a legal

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manner so that the proper assistance with energy efficiency can be brought to the households that need it within our communities. This is the national pilot project previously mentioned to help overcome some of the obstacles that stand in the way of being able to share that information in a relevant manner without sharing confidential data.

- Hurricane Matthew efforts continue; a lot of funds have been put into the private sector consulting, making those individual county resiliency plans.

Mr. Townley opened the floor for questions.

Business Resource Center, Greg Godard, Business Resource Loan Officer

Mr. Godard stated that there are no loans for approval.

General Administration/Business Development Center (BDC), Olga Abrams, Manager

Ms. Abrams reported on activities for General Administration and the BDC.

Highlights:

- The Fall/Winter 2017-2018 Semi-Annual Newsletter was published and mailed out last week.
- Electronic newsletter will be published next week.
- Ms. Abrams stated that she and Mr. Godard have been busy transitioning the Business Development Center from the Upper Coastal Plain Development Corporation to the City of Wilson. Effective July 1, 2018, the Business Development Center will become the City of Wilson's Innovation Hub.

Finance, Mark Hill, Finance Director

Mr. Hill stated that his focus has been on the FY 2018-2019 budget. The Executive Committee which also serves as the Finance Committee has recommended the second draft budget be brought before the full board for approval at its June board meeting.

Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Second Draft Budget Presentation

Highlights:

- Federal/state revenues are budgeted to be at \$9.3 million. The COG currently does not have final funding numbers from the Division of Aging and Adult Services or the

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Division of Workforce Solutions, so those numbers are based on last year's projections. Like last year, we will have to work with these projections and make amendments once the final numbers come in, but we believe these numbers to be a reasonable estimate based on previous years.

- The proposed Hurricane Matthew budget is \$117,000, which is \$557,000 less than last year because those funds are closing out. This impacts the WFD budget.
- The COLA is included at 2%, but the Finance Committee decided to recommend a COLA of 1% effective July 1, 2018 with the potential of an additional 1% COLA to be considered in January 2019.
- Budget highlights:
 - Amended budget as of February 28th is \$12.4 million; our requested budget is \$10,530,000.
 - Local government dues are decreasing by just under \$1,000 due to population decrease.
 - WFD budget has decreased as a result of Hurricane Matthew Funds. It is not uncommon to see a large deduction in WFD funds because the budget always gets amended in October due to carryover funds.
 - Aging program has a proposed reduction of \$52,000.
 - Planning and Development Services has a proposed reduction of \$168,000.
 - General Administration expenses shows a reduction of \$3,000 as the result of the depreciation of an automobile effective June 30, 2018.
 - We are not projecting to use any of the general fund balance at this time.
- Sources of revenue are projected to be at 73% federal; any rescinded funds greatly impact our organization. State funds are projected to be \$7.6 million, which are predominantly matching funds on the federal funds \$1.6 million. Local funds at \$1,181,000. General Fund Balance 0%.

Mr. Hill answered any questions from the floor.

Request for Public Hearing

Mr. Hill requested that a public hearing be set for 6:45 p.m., Tuesday, June 19, 2018 at Word Impact Center, 821 Word Plaza, Rocky Mount, NC, to adopt the FY 2018-2019 Budget.

Chairman Simmons called for a motion to set a public hearing prior to the adoption of the FY 2018-2019 Budget. Commissioner Felton made a motion to set a public hearing on the FY 2018-2019 Budget as indicated, Mr. Bell seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

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BOARD OF DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Chairman Simmons invited Mr. Robert Hiett to the podium to introduce himself to the board. Mr. Hiett is being recommended to the board to fill the position of Executive Director effective July 1, 2018.

Mr. Hiett stated that he was greatly honored to be recommended as the next Executive Director for the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments. He stated that he is from Georgia and has worked for regional commissions for about 18 years, working for the State of Georgia prior to that and for the Department of Juvenile Justice. Mr. Hiett stated that he was also in the Army National Guard and US Reserves for almost 13 years and was honorably discharged as a Captain in 2003. He started in transportation and ended up as a combat engineer; he explained that he had aspired to that position because his Granddaddy was a combat engineer in World War II.

He shared some thoughts on the structure of the local government commissions and why they were created and how the basic needs have not changed: Local governments coming together to resolve regional issues and needs by supporting one another over county and city lines because there are a lot of things that we do together that make us stronger as a region. He summarized that a regional commission's (regional council's) primary purpose is to help its local governments to help their communities plan, grow, deliver effective community and government services and to do additional programs like aging and workforce development.

Mr. Hiett stated that he is a true believer in regionalism, working together for the greater good, the bigger picture, to help our communities grow and thrive, but at the same time to make sure that the building blocks are being taken care of to get to the regional picture by working very hard with local governments to help them be successful, to coordinate things where we can, and help those communities grow and prosper as well. He feels the primary drivers to be successful as a region are to things related to customer service, maximizing our funding sources, making sure that we are delivering projects that have maximum community input and always looking for new opportunities to grow together and be stronger as a region.

Ms. Simmons stated that the Search Committee recommended Mr. Hiett to the Executive Committee for hire as the new Executive Director. The Executive Committee is recommending Mr. Hiett for the position of Executive Director effective July 1, 2018. Chairman Simmons asked for a motion from the floor to hire Mr. Robert Hiett on as our new Executive Director for the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments. Mayor Delbridge made a motion to accept the recommendation of Mr. Hiett as the new Executive Director, Mr. Felton seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Simmons commented to Mr. Hiett that he was now officially hired. She also commented to the board that this was not an easy task; there were originally about 17 applicants that were narrowed down to 4 that were interviewed and scored to get the final result. She stated that we

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are happy to have Mr. Hiett come on board and look forward to the great things that he will bring to the UCPCOG Region. Mr. Godard stated that there is one other item that needs to be approved by the COG Board of Directors, the travel and moving expense allowance to move Mr. Hiett's family from Georgia to North Carolina.

Chairman Simmons called for a motion to approve the travel and moving expense allowance for Mr. Hiett to move from Georgia to North Carolina. Mr. Felton made the motion to approve the travel and moving expense allowance, Mr. Davis seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Godard asked everyone to look at the document titled an Intra-Regional Marketing Agreement. He stated that in NC, we try to utilize the talent and skills and expertise of our regional council partners; there are 16 regional councils in the state. This cooperative agreement indicates that we make a concerted effort to utilize each other's talents and to respect each other's boundaries, but to be willing to go across the boundaries to provide a service if another regional council is unable to provide that service.

Mr. Coleman made a motion to approve the Intra-Regional Marketing Agreement, Mayor Bell seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Godard had nothing further but stated that Chairman Simmons will be asking for an appointment of the Nominations Committee to nominate new officers at the June 19, 2018 meeting, the last meeting of the fiscal year. That meeting will be held at the Word Impact Center and there will likely be a Development Corporation meeting before the Executive Committee meeting to sign paperwork for the transition of the BDC.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman Simmons stated that 3 names were given as recommendations for the Nominations Committee: A. P. Coleman, Mary Wells, and Roy Bell. Mr. Godard interjected that it's an easy task, we will only be replacing 1 officer, someone to step up to the Secretary/Treasurer's position and explained what we have done historically is to have the Vice-Chair to move up as Chairman, the Secretary/Treasurer moves up to Vice-Chair, and then we fill the seat of Secretary/Treasurer. Mr. Coleman, Ms. Wells, and Mr. Bell all agreed to serve as the Nominations Committee to fill the new Secretary/Treasurer position.

Ms. Simmons opened the floor to Mr. Coleman to make an announcement. Mr. Coleman stated that he has been representing the UCPCOG for about 40 or more years, and has been representing the UCPCOG on the Joint Regional Forum for about the last 12 years. He stated that he is now ready to step down and let someone else from the board serve as the Joint

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Regional Forum representative for the UCPCOG. Mr. Coleman commented that he feels that it is critical to do it now because there is a new UCPCOG Executive Director and new leadership at the Joint Regional Forum. Mr. Coleman explained that there is a state-wide meeting scheduled for May 30, 2018, and he feels this would be a good time for the new representative to go with Mr. Godard to get acclimated. He feels this will be critical because this representative for the UCPCOG Board on the Joint Regional Forum will be going to the State Legislature to push for more funding for the COGS, especially in the micro areas, and to impress the importance of regionalism in the State of North Carolina. Mr. Coleman stated that he has appreciated the opportunity to serve in the Joint Regional Forum. Mr. Godard asked for a round of applause for Mr. Coleman's service.

Ms. Simmons thanked Mr. Coleman for his service and asked for a volunteer to replace Mr. Coleman on the Joint Regional Forum. Mr. Browning stated that he is willing to volunteer if no one else wishes to do so. Ms. Simmons called for a motion to approve Mr. Browning as the new UCPCOG Representative on the Joint Regional Forum. Ms. Delbridge made a motion to approve Mr. Browning, Ms. Pender seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Simmons called for a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments Board of Directors Meeting at 8:12 p.m. Mr. Davis made the motion, Ms. Wells seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned.

Barbara Simmons, Chairman

Greg Browning, Secretary/Treasurer