

MINUTES
ARK-TEX COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
April 29, 2021

The Executive Committee of the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) met at 10:00 a.m., Thursday, April 29, 2021, at the Titus County Extension Office, 1708 Industrial Road, Mt. Pleasant, Texas, as well as, via teleconference/webinar.

Item 1. L.D. Williamson, Judge, Red River County, called the meeting to order.

Item 2. Scott Lee, Judge, Franklin County, gave the invocation.

Item 3. Public Comment.

No members of the public made a comment.

Item 4. Chris Brown, Executive Director, presented the following consent agenda items:

- Approval of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Executive Committee meeting held Thursday, February 25, 2021, via teleconference/webinar.
- Acceptance of the minutes as submitted for the Homeland Security Advisory Committee meeting held Thursday, March 18, 2021, via teleconference/webinar.
- Acceptance of the minutes as submitted for the Regional Criminal Justice Advisory Committee meeting held Thursday, March 18, 2021, via teleconference/webinar.

Motion to approve was made by Robert Newsom, Judge, Hopkins County, and seconded by Judge Lee. It was approved.

Review and Comment

Item 5. Mr. Brown presented, for information only, the Executive Director Report. He reviewed the indirect finance reports and explained that overall, the percentages of the budget used is in-line with the fiscal year. Mr. Brown also provided updates and statistics for all ATCOG programs.

Item 6. Paul Prange, Environmental Resources Coordinator, presented for review and comment on an application by the City of Winfield to Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to renew its permit.

Motion to approve was made by Stan Wyatt, President, Northeast Texas Municipal Water District, and seconded by Brandon Bell, Judge, Lamar County. It was approved.

Item 7. Mr. Prange presented for review and comment on an application by Adrian Van Der Jagt to TCEQ to expand an existing dairy cattle facility.

Motion to approve was made by Judge Newsom and seconded by Judge Lee. It was approved.

Item 8. Toni Lindsey, Regional Development Manager, presented for review and comment on a grant application by Detroit Independent School District in the amount of \$12,886 to be submitted to the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Head Start, for continuation/refunding of Head Start programs.

Motion to approve was made by Judge Lee and seconded by Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County. It was approved.

Regular Business

- Item 9. Patricia Haley, Criminal Justice Coordinator, presented for consideration approval for the Executive Director to submit an application to the Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division, for a grant to purchase supplies and PPE to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus in the ATCOG region for the project's grant period for the remaining of FY2021.

Motion to approve was made by Judge Howell and seconded by Judge Bell. It was approved.

- Item 10. Ms. Haley presented for consideration approval of priorities/recommendations established by the Regional Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (RCJAC) concerning projects being submitted to the Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division, for funding consideration.

A representative from each of the three applicants for the General Victim Assistance – Direct Services grant (VOCA) spoke on behalf of their programs for funding consideration. Ryan Shriver spoke on behalf of SAFE-T Crisis Center. Mr. Shriver shared that SAFE-T received the highest score from the RCJAC and was advised to receive the requested funding. Mr. Shriver added that SAFE-T serves over 4,700 clients in nine counties, including Delta, Franklin, Hopkins, Lamar, Morris, Red River and Titus Counties. Mr. Shriver emphasized the importance of the SAFE-T Crisis Center, as well as, the other grant applicants, Domestic Violence Prevention, Inc., and the Victim Assistance Coordinator/Legal Assistant position in the Hopkins County District Attorney's Office. Mr. Shriver stated that each of the three programs are essential to the ATCOG region, and recommended that the ATCOG Executive Committee does not change the recommended funding allocations.

Pam Dennington spoke on behalf of Domestic Violence Prevention Inc. for funding consideration. Ms. Dennington shared that Domestic Violence Prevention, Inc. received the second highest score from the RCJAC and was advised to receive partial funding. She added that the program serves Bowie and Cass Counties and provides services to domestic violence victims including emergency shelter, crisis intervention, advocacy, court accompaniment and counseling. Ms. Dennington emphasized that the program is essential and that client intake has increased by 38% since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Partial funding from the VOCA grant would allow the program to stay operational and maintain the emergency shelters; however, Domestic Violence Prevention, Inc. would be forced to end some of the program's services and layoff several staff members due to decreased funding.

Will Ramsay spoke on behalf of the Hopkins County District Attorney's Office for funding consideration. Mr. Ramsay shared that the Hopkins County District Attorney's Office received the lowest score from the RCJAC and was advised to not receive the requested funding. Mr. Ramsay noted that the funding requested for Hopkins County funds the salary and operating expenses for the position of Victim Assistance Coordinator/Legal Assistant. He added that the position is responsible for building relationships with victims and helping them feel comfortable throughout the process of their case. Mr. Ramsay emphasized that the Victim Assistance Coordinator is essential that Hopkins County case filings have increased by 100% since the COVID-19 pandemic began. No funding from the VOCA grant would force the Hopkins County District Attorney's Office to layoff the staff member and terminate the position due to decreased funding. Mr. Ramsay urged the ATCOG Executive Committee to not approve the RCJAC VOCA funding allocation recommendations and request additional grant funds from the Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division.

Judge Lee made a motion to approve the CSEY, JAG, JJTP and VAWA funding considerations, and to recommend to the Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division, to fully fund all the VOCA grant applicants' requested amounts. The motion was seconded by Judge Howell. It was approved.

Motion to approve was made by Judge Lee and seconded by Judge Howell. It was approved.

- Item 11. Whitney Fezell, Homeland Security Coordinator, presented for consideration approval of prioritization of 2021 Homeland Security Grant Program funds as recommended by the ATCOG Homeland Security Advisory Committee (HSAC).

Motion to approve was made by Becky Wilbanks, Judge, Cass County, and seconded by Judge Bell. It was approved.

- Item 12. Mary Beth Rudel, Deputy Director, presented for consideration approval of the submission of an Older Adult Home Modification Program application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Judge Williamson asked Ms. Rudel if houses are required to be fully paid for in order to be eligible for modification through the Older Adult Home Modification Program. Lisa Reeve, Area Agency on Aging Director, stated that the houses do not have to be fully paid for to be eligible for modification through the program. She added that the client must own the house and be low-income. Ms. Reeve also added that trailer homes would be eligible for modification through the program.

Motion to approve was made by Judge Lee and seconded by Mr. Wyatt. It was approved.

Other Business

- Item 13. Rea Allen, 9-1-1 Program Director, presented the 2021 ATCOG Telecommunicator of the Year award to Meagan McBain.

- Item 14. Mr. Brown presented Busline Magazine's article featuring Bobby Williams, Transportation Coordinator.

Announcements

Mr. Brown announced that a Workforce CEOs meeting will be held immediately following this meeting.

Lastly, he announced that the next Executive Committee meeting will be held on May 27, 2021 at 10:00 a.m., at the Titus County Extension Office in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, as well as, via teleconference/webinar.

With no other announcements, motion to adjourn was made by Judge Bell and seconded by Marc Reiter, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Hooks. The meeting was adjourned.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Becky Wilbanks, Judge, Cass County
Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County
Brandon Bell, Judge, Lamar County
Doug Reeder, Judge, Morris County
L.D. Williamson, Judge, Red River County
Marc Reiter, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Hooks
Robert Newsom, Judge, Hopkins County
Scott Lee, Judge, Franklin County
Scott Norton, President/CEO, TexAmericas Center
Stan Wyatt, President, Northeast Texas Municipal Water District

ATCOG BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Lowell Walker, Mayor, City of DeKalb

GUESTS PRESENT

April Corbit, Workforce Solutions

Doug Avery, Bi-State Communications
Ginny Lewis Ford, Texas Association of Regional Councils
Keith Whitfield, City of Daingerfield
Meagan McBain, Bi-State Communications
Pam Dennington – Domestic Violence Prevention, Inc.
Randy Reed, Workforce Solutions
Ryan Shriver, SAFE-T Crisis Center
Tim Wilson, Northeast Texas SBDC
Todd Kleiboer, Sulphur Springs News Telegram
Wendy Herring, Bi-State Communications
Will Ramsay, Hopkins County District Attorney's Office

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Chris Brown, Executive Director
Erin Chewning, Executive Assistant
Lisa Reeve, Area Agency on Aging Director
Leslie McBride, Human Resources Director
Mae Lewis, Housing Director
Mary Beth Rudel, Deputy Director
Merle Luster, 9-1-1 PSAP Operations Coordinator
Melinda Tickle, Finance Director
Paul Prange, Environmental Resources Coordinator
Patricia Haley, Criminal Justice Coordinator
Rea Allen, 9-1-1 Program Director
Toni Lindsey, Regional Development Manager
Whitney Fezell, Homeland Security Coordinator



L.D. Williamson, President
Ark-Tex Council of Governments

ATTEST:


