

**MINUTES**  
**ARK-TEX COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**January 25, 2024**

The Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) Executive Committee met at 10:00 a.m., Thursday, January 25, 2024, at the Northeast Texas Small Business Development Center (SBDC), 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, located at 105 North Riddle Avenue, Mount Pleasant, Texas, and via videoconference.

Item 1. Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County, called the meeting to order.

Item 2. Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas Center, gave the invocation.

Item 3. Public Comment.

No member of the public made a comment.

Item 4. Ms. Mary Beth Rudel, Executive Director, presented the following consent agenda items:

- Approval of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Special Called Executive Committee meeting held Tuesday, August 8, 2023.
- Approval of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Executive Committee meeting held Thursday, October 26, 2023.
- Acceptance of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Area Agency on Aging Regional Advisory Council meeting held Thursday, December 7, 2023.

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

**Review and Comment**

Item 5. Ms. Rudel presented the Executive Director Report for information only. She reviewed the reports and provided updates to the committee. Ms. Rudel requested the committee's feedback and guidance for future quarterly report details. The committee appreciated the new formatting and requested that a list of grants/projects be added and the financial report be provided in the packet.

**Regular Business**

Item 6. Ms. Leslie McBride presented for review and consideration approval of an appointment to the Ark-Tex Urban Transit, Inc. (ATUT) Board of Directors.

The recent personnel position changes at the Ark-Tex Council of Governments require appointing a new ATUT Director/President and Director/Vice-President/Treasurer. The current ATUT Board members are Mary Beth Rudel, Director/Vice-President/Treasurer, and Mark Compton, Director/Secretary. Due to Chris Brown's resignation, there is a vacancy in the President position. ATCOG requests approval of the following appointments to the ATUT Board of Directors effective this day upon approval:

- Mary Beth Rudel, ATCOG Executive Director, ATUT Director/President

- Leslie McBride, ATCOG Deputy Director, ATUT Director/Vice-President/Treasurer
- Mark Compton, ATCOG Transportation Director, ATUT Director/Secretary

Motion to approve was made by Scott Lee, Judge, Franklin County, and seconded by Scott Norton. It was approved.

Item 7. Ms. Jenny Butler presented for review and consideration approval of the submission of an application to the Texas Health and Human Services for the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Services.

ATCOG wishes to apply for the ADRC program funds to continue efforts to serve individuals in the Ark-Tex region. The ADRC programs would be complementary to ATCOG's existing programs. Services provided to the community would be streamlined by having the ADRC and Area Agency on Aging housed under ATCOG. In addition to services offered through the AAA, resources could be provided to individuals through the ADRC by avenues that would avoid duplication of services. The Grant Project Period is from September 1, 2024, through August 31, 2027, and the total application amount is \$420,450.00.

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

Item 8. Ms. Jenny Butler presented for review and consideration approval of the revisions to the Area Agency on Aging Regional Advisory Council By-laws.

The Advisory Council met on December 7, 2023, and approved the proposed addition that a current RAC member could nominate a representative. The proposed change to the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Regional Advisory Council By-laws is as follows:

- ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP; Section 2 - Representatives shall be appointed for a term of five (5) years or until a replacement is found. Regional Advisory Council members are appointed to the Council by the ATCOG Board of Directors, a Regional Advisory Council member, the County Judge, or Title III Service Providers, subject to approval by the ATCOG Board of Directors.

Motion to approve was made by Judge Lee and seconded by Doug Reeder, Judge, Morris County. It was approved.

Item 9. Ms. Jenny Butler presented for review and consideration approval of the revised Area Agency on Aging Policy and Procedures.

The Advisory Council met on December 7, 2023, and the policy and procedures were presented for discussion and approval. The following changes were made as follows:

- Administrative Responsibilities (Chapter 2; pages 10 and 11):  
Targeting Service Delivery - added the phrase "and Ombudsman services" to the policy section, clarifying the ombudsman can assist individuals under the age of 60 in a long-term care facility. Removed the sentence "Benefits Counselors and Local Managing Ombudsman utilize the same principles when dealing with their clients" as it relates to assessment processes from the procedures.
- Fiscal Responsibilities (Chapter 3; page 31)  
Ombudsman Minimum Funding Requirement – clarifies the procedures section that federal funds are used to expend the minimum funding requirement plus additional funding earmarked for the Ombudsman program. This revision included deleting a footnote that did

not clarify or provide any additional information in the section.

- Attachment C; (Page 77)  
Conflict of Interest Form – changed wording regarding the Ombudsman in the association options.

Motion to approve was made by Scott Norton and seconded by Judge Reeder. It was approved.

Item 10. Ms. Mary Wormington presented for review and consideration approval of ATCOG's Housing Department 2024 Fair Market Rent Payment Standards for the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

ATCOG Housing serves the following fourteen counties: Bowie, Cass, Delta, Franklin, Hopkins, Lamar, Morris, Red River, Rusk, Smith, Titus, Upshur, Van Zandt, and Wood counties. ATCOG Housing Department established payment standard amounts for each Fair Market Rent area within the service area and each unit size in each county. For each unit size, a payment standard is established by HUD within the "basic range" of 90 percent to 110 percent of the published Fair Market Rent. The Desegregated Housing Opportunities (DHO) rates are predetermined.

Upon the recommendation of HUD, ATCOG's Housing Department requests the Board's approval of ATCOG's Housing Department 2024 Payment Standards to be included in our Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) document.

Motion to approve was made by Judge Ransom and seconded by Stan Wyatt, NETX Municipal Water District Board Mayor. It was approved.

Item 11. Ms. Patricia Haley presented for review and consideration approval of the submission of a grant application to the Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division, for the Purchase of Juvenile Justice Services Project for FY2025.

The Purchase of Juvenile Justice Services Project provides necessary funds to allow county juvenile probation departments in the ATCOG nine-county region to purchase quality services for juveniles that have been referred to them. Services previously purchased and provided include psychological and psychiatric evaluations, as well as professional therapy and mental health counseling services, anger management, juvenile sex offender counseling/treatment, and possibly substance abuse counseling/treatment if applicable/eligible, and funds are available.

Upon approval, ATCOG will apply for \$55,000 for this project. The proposed Contractual Services will include an approximate total of \$32,000 for Juvenile Justice Services.

Motion to approve was made by Brandon Bell, Judge, Lamar County, and seconded by Scott Norton. It was approved.

Item 12. Ms. Sheena Record presented for review and consideration approval of the ATCOG Rural Transit District (RTD) Title VI Program Plan Facility Analysis for the new Paris Metro/TRAX in Paris, Texas.

TxDOT requires the submission of a Title VI Facility Analysis, which outlines the process ATCOG completed to secure the facility, including the evaluation of properties. Upon completion of the analysis, it was determined the best location that meets all needs of staff, buses, and the citizens of Paris, Texas, is at 1610 Clarksville Street, in central Paris.

Motion to approve was made by Judge Reeder and seconded by Stan Wyatt. It was approved.

## **Announcements**

Judge Howell announced a Workforce CEO meeting will be held immediately following this meeting. Judges, please reconvene at the front of the room or remain on Zoom. All others, please move into the hallway or exit the Zoom meeting.

Ms. Rudel reported that the ATCOG Area Agency on Aging recently had an Ombudsman monitor visit, receiving some recommendations and an excellent report overall.

Ms. Rudel announced that ATCOG has been selected to administer the second round of the Regional Flood Planning Grant for Region 2.

Judge Howell recognized the following new Board members:

- Ms. Pearlee Wells, President, Northeast Texas Resource Conservation District Area, Inc. (Lamar County)
- Mr. Cole Meador, Council Member-Ward-5, Texarkana-TX (Bowie County)

Judge Howell announced that the next ATCOG Executive Committee meeting will be held on February 29, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., at the Northeast Texas Small Business Development Center (SBDC), 2nd Floor, 105 North Riddle Avenue, Mt. Pleasant, Texas, and via videoconference.

With no further business to discuss, Judge Lee made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Judge Newsom. The meeting was adjourned.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Brandon Bell, Judge, Lamar County  
Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County  
Scott Lee, Judge, Franklin County  
Robert Newsom, Judge, Hopkins County  
Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas Center  
Travis Ransom, Judge, Cass County  
Doug Reeder, Judge, Morris County  
Ann Rushing, Mayor, City of Clarksville  
Stan Wyatt, NETX Municipal Water District Board

### **ATCOG BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Juan Duenez, Mt. Pleasant Independent School District  
Laney Harris, Director Ward 6, City of Texarkana-AR  
Ron Humphrey, Mayor, City of New Boston  
Brad Johnson, Northeast Texas Rural Rail Authority Board  
Jean Matlock, Councilwoman, City of Texarkana-TX

### **GUESTS PRESENT**

April Corbit, Northeast Texas Workforce Solutions  
ReaDonna Jones, Texarkana MPO  
KiAnn Richardson, Northeast Texas Workforce Solutions  
Randy Reed, Northeast Texas Workforce Solutions  
Bart Spivey, Northeast Texas Workforce Solutions

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Mary Beth Rudel, Executive Director  
Rea Allen, 9-1-1 Director  
Jenny Butler, AAA Director  
Misti Cole, Human Resources Director  
Patricia Haley, Criminal Justice Coordinator  
Melody Harmon, Economic Development Director  
Toni Lindsey, Regional Development Director  
Marla Matthews, Executive Assistant  
Leslie McBride, Deputy Director  
Paul Prange, Environmental Resources Coordinator  
Debbie Purifoy, Compliance and Purchasing Officer  
Sheena Record, Transportation Coordinator  
Melinda Tickle, Finance Director  
Bobby Williams, Transportation Operations Manager  
Mary Wormington, Housing Director



Bobby Howell, President  
Board of Directors  
Ark-Tex Council of Governments

