

**JOINT MINUTES  
NORTHEAST TEXAS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, AND  
ARK-TEX COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
September 29, 2022**

The Northeast Texas Economic Development District (NETEDD) and the Board of Directors of the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) met at 10:00 a.m., Thursday, September 29, 2022, at the Ark-Tex Council of Governments Office, EOC Room, 4808 Elizabeth Street, Texarkana, Texas, as well as, via teleconference/webinar.

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

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

Item 3. Public Comment.

No members of the public made a comment.

**NETEDD AGENDA ITEMS**

1. The Board of Directors of the Northeast Texas Economic Development District (NETEDD) met on Thursday, September 29, 2022.

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6. The Board of Directors of the Northeast Texas Economic Development District (NETEDD) met on Thursday, September 29, 2022.

*This concludes the NETEDD Agenda Items.*

**ATCOG Board of Directors Agenda Items**

Item 7. Mr. Brown presented the following consent agenda items:

- Approval of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Board of Directors Meeting held Thursday, June 30, 2022.
- Acceptance of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Homeland Security Advisory Committee meeting held Thursday, August 18, 2022.
- Acceptance of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Solid Waste Advisory Committee Meeting held Friday, August 19, 2022.

- Ratification of the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between ATCOG and the Public Safety Office within the Office of the Governor.

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

### **Executive Closed Session**

Item 8. Judge Williamson announced that the Open Session would recess and go into Executive Closed Session to discuss personnel matters as allowed in the Texas Open Meetings Act, Section 551.074, Executive Director's performance evaluation.

### **Open Session/Regular Business**

Item 9. The Board of Directors reconvened in Open Session. Upon review of Mr. Brown's performance evaluations, Judge Williamson recommended that he should receive a 5% COLA increase.

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

Item 10. Mr. Brown presented for consideration approval of ATCOG's Financial Plan for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2023.

Mr. Brown stated that the Work Program and Financial Plan reflect anticipated revenues of \$26,700,636 and proposed expenditures of \$26,700,636.

Mr. Brown noted that the combined ATCOG Work Program and Financial Plan are not technically a budget because ATCOG does not have taxing or oversight authority. As required by legislation, the ATCOG Work Plan and Financial Plan presents each grant's objectives, work tasks, performance measures, implementation schedules, and human resource requirements and budget information. He further explained that within each State or Federal grant that ATCOG administers, the funding agency regulates the categories in which we are allowed to spend funds.

ATCOG has 14 Managed Programs with over 60 Projects/Contracts that make up the revenue sources in the FY2023 ATCOG Strategic Work Program and Financial Plan.

Mr. Brown stated the Plan recommends merit step increases for several staff along with a 5% COLA increase for all staff. Funding is provided for the Salary Schedule effective October 1, 2022. He stated total COLA increase for the past ten years adds up to 11%, while the SSI COLA increased to 18.80% prior to 2023.

The current draft funds 94 FT and 15 PT personnel (99.74 FTEs).

Changes include:

- Maintenance/IT to full-time status
- AAA Coordinator to Manager
- Addition of Housing Manager
- Addition of PT Housing Inspector position
- Addition of Compliance & Purchasing Coordinator

Mr. Brown stated that ATCOG's healthcare provider continues to be Texas Municipal League (TMLIEBP). Premiums for the basic medical plan increased again this year. ATCOG will increase its defined contribution amount from \$789.82 per month for each employee's basic medical coverage

to \$845.12, which is 100% of the employee premium. Employees can “buy up” to a medical plan with a lower deductible and/or out-of-pocket costs and make extra contributions to their HSA. Additional premium costs over the defined employer contribution of \$845.12 per month will be paid by the employee. Employee dental insurance premiums will remain at \$28.44 per month. Rates for life and AD&D did not change.

The ATCOG Retirement Plan is managed by the Texas County & District Retirement System (TCDRS). ATCOG is currently at a 150% employer-to-employee match with an employee contribution rate of 4%. The Budget/Personnel Committee recommended that Mr. Brown provide the data for a 200% match, which aligns with most cities and counties. He provided data to show the impact of the employer contribution at 200%, with the elected rate at 5%. The overall retirement cost would increase by approximately \$42,000.

- Based on preliminary data, ATCOG could increase to 165% employer-to-employee match with no change to the elected rate of 4%.
- The current financial plan proposal represents the impact of the employer contribution at 200%, with a 5% elected rate.

The Benefit rate is estimated to increase to 53.77%. ATCOG had an Over Allocation FY2021. Upon utilizing the FY2021 Over allocation, the rate is 49.85%.

The estimated Indirect rate is 23.15% based on Total Direct Personnel Cost (5.48% based on the Modified Total Direct Cost). When utilizing the FY2021 Over allocation, the rate is 17.92%.

Mr. Brown requested to utilize \$60,000 of ATCOG Unrestricted Funds for Aging match and other needs to support ATCOG programs and personnel.

Mr. Brown stated that ATCOG program revenues are anticipated to trend down due to CARES and ARPA funding utilization. Revenues and Expenses may continue to see some adjustments as the timing of funding and other factors are considered.

Mr. Brown noted that the largest increase would be in Housing, with additional vouchers being awarded. Transportation will see a decrease but is still ahead of normal funding levels and continues its opportunities for additional capital improvements.

Mr. Brown presented the following future capital improvement projects in the near term:

- Roof repairs/replacement
- Parking lot repairs
- Common Area carpeting
- Omaha Building – sell property

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

- Item 11. Mary Beth Rudel, Deputy Director, presented for review and consideration for authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an Interlocal Agreement to provide transportation management services for the Texarkana Urban Transit District (TUTD).

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

Item 12. Mary Beth Rudel presented for review and consideration approval of the utilization of ATCOG's indirect cost rate for ATCOG employees working on behalf of the Texarkana Urban Transit District.

- The indirect cost rate for Oct. 1, 2022 – Sept. 30, 2023, is 17.92%.

Motion to approve was made by Judge Brian Lee and seconded by Travis Ransom, Judge, Cass County. It was approved.

Item 13. Mary Beth Rudel presented for review and consideration approval of revisions to the ATCOG Policy and Procedures Manual.

15.03 Employee Performance Reviews. The quarterly schedule for employee performance reviews is shifting by a month. The new proposed schedule will allow additional time for budget preparations relating to performance reviews and employee salaries. The proposed schedule is as follows:

1st Quarter – May-July  
2nd Quarter – August-October  
3rd Quarter – November-January  
4th Quarter – February-April

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

Item 14. Leslie McBride, Human Resource Director, presented for review and consideration of the annual renewal of the ATCOG Ethics Policy Manual. No changes have been made.

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

Item 15. Leslie McBride presented for review and consideration approval of updates to the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan. No changes have been made.

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

Item 16. Leslie McBride presented for review and consideration adoption of the ATCOG Flexible Benefits Cafeteria Plan for FY 2023.

Ms. McBride stated that Colonial Insurance manages the ATCOG Cafeteria Plan.

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

Item 17. Jenny Butler, AAA Coordinator, presented for review and consideration approval of the revisions to the Ark-Tex Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Policy and Procedures Manual concerning interest lists.

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

Item 18. Lisa Reeve, AAA Director, presented for review and consideration approval for the ATCOG Executive Director to submit an application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the Older Home Modification Program.

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

Item 19. Patricia Haley, Criminal Justice Coordinator, presented for review and consideration approval of the new resolution to include the updated grant ending date and as required by the Office of Governor, Public Safety Office-Criminal Justice Division.

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

Item 20. Judge Brian Lee presented for review and consideration approval of the appointment of the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) Board of Directors Executive Committee members, Officers, and sub-committees.

A Nominating Committee was appointed by President L.D. Williamson to make recommendations to appoint the ATCOG Board of Directors Executive Committee, Officers, and subcommittee members. The Nominating Committee consists of L.D. Williamson, Judge, Red River County/Chair; Brian Lee, Judge, Titus County/Vice-Chair; Ann Rushing, Mayor, City of Clarksville; Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas; Scott Lee, Judge, Franklin County; and Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County. The Nominating Committee recommends the following Executive Committee members for appointment beginning October 1, 2022.

<b>Executive Committee</b>
Honorable L.D. Williamson, Judge, Red River County
Honorable Brian Lee, Judge, Titus County
Honorable Scott Lee, Judge, Franklin County
Honorable Travis Ransom, Judge, Cass County
Honorable Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County
Honorable Doug Reeder, Judge, Morris County
Honorable Brandon Bell, Judge, Lamar County
Honorable Robert Newsom, Judge, Hopkins County
Honorable Ann Rushing, Mayor, City of Clarksville
Honorable John Sellers, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Sulphur Springs
Honorable Marc Reiter, Mayor, City of Hooks
Mr. Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas
Mr. Stan Wyatt, NEX Municipal Water District/Board of Director

The Nominating Committee recommends the following Officers for appointment beginning January 1, 2023, with the exception of the Secretary Officer position to be effective upon election.

<b>Board of Directors Officers</b>
President – Honorable Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County
Vice-President – Mr. Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas
Secretary – Honorable Travis Ransom, Judge, Cass County
Treasurer – Honorable Scott Lee, Judge, Franklin County

The Nominating Committee recommends the following sub-committee members for appointment beginning January 1, 2023, upon Board approval of the officers listed above.

<b>Audit Committee</b>
Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County, President; Chair
Mr. Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas, Vice-President; Vice-Chair
Travis Ransom, Judge, Cass County
Brandon Bell, Judge, Lamar County
Scott Lee, Judge, Franklin County

<b>Budget/Personnel Committee</b>
Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County, President; Chair
Doug Reeder, Judge, Morris County
Robert Newsom, Judge, Hopkins County
Ann Rushing, Mayor, City of Clarksville

Mr. Stan Wyatt, NEX Municipal Water District/Board of Director
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<b>Nominating Committee</b>
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Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County, President; Chair
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Mr. Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas, Vice-President; Vice-Chair
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Ann Rushing, Mayor, City of Clarksville
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Doug Reeder, Judge, Morris County
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Scott Lee, Judge, Franklin County
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Robert Newsom, Judge, Hopkins County
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<b>Retirement Plan Trustees Committee</b>
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Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County, President; Chair Permanent
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Mr. Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas, Vice-President; Vice-Chair
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Robert Newsom, Judge, Hopkins County
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Mr. Stan Wyatt, NEX Municipal Water District/Board of Director
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Mr. Chris Brown, Executive Director, ATCOG
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Ms. Mary Beth Rudel, Deputy Director, ATCOG
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Ms. Rea Allen, ATCOG Staff (elected by ATCOG staff)
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Ms. Karon Khan, ATCOG Staff (elected by ATCOG staff)
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Motion to approve was made by Judge Scott Lee and seconded by Mr. Norton. It was approved.

- Item 21. Mary Beth Rudel presented for review and consideration the adoption of a resolution authorizing recognition of National Fire Prevention Week.

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

- Item 22. Marla Matthews, Executive Assistant, presented for review and consideration approval to combine the November Executive Committee and December Board of Directors meetings into one Board of Directors meeting to be held Thursday, December 8, 2022.

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

### **Other Business**

- Item 23. Mr. Brown recognized the ATCOG Board member longevity and thanked everyone for their service to the region. He also recognized staff achievements and announced ATCOG's Employee of the year.

### **Announcements**

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on October 27, 2022, at 10:00 a.m., at the Northeast Texas Small Business Development Center (SBDC), 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, located at 105 North Riddle Avenue, Mt. Pleasant, Texas, and via teleconference/webinar.

With no other announcements, a motion to adjourn was made by Judge Scott Lee and seconded by Judge Ransom. The meeting adjourned.

### **NETEDD BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County

Brian Lee, Judge, Titus 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  
Marc Reiter, Mayor, City of Hooks  
Ann Rushing, Mayor, City of Clarksville  
L.D. Williamson, Judge, Red River County

ATCOG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County  
Brian Lee, Judge, Titus 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  
Marc Reiter, Mayor, City of Hooks  
Ann Rushing, Mayor, City of Clarksville  
L.D. Williamson, Judge, Red River County

ATCOG BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

David Fordinal, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Como  
Ron Humphry, Mayor, City of New Boston  
Jean Matlock, Councilwoman, City of Texarkana, Texas  
Lowell Walker, Mayor, City of DeKalb

GUESTS PRESENT

Gaye Beard, Office of United States Representative Pat Fallon  
Reece DeWoody, Office of United States Senator Cornyn  
Angela Hill, Ark-Tex AAA Regional Advisory Council, Cass County  
Bob Hundley, Regional Criminal Justice Advisory Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair, Lamar County  
Tammy Lawing, Ark-Tex AAA Regional Advisory Council Chairperson, Lennox Health Resource Center  
Katie Martin, Texas Department of Transportation  
Angela Price, Regional Criminal Justice Advisory Committee, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, Hopkins County  
Ray Wilson, Office of the United States Senator Bryan Hughes

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Rea Allen, 9-1-1 Program Director  
Telia Allen, Accounting Clerk  
Chris Brown, Executive Director  
Jenny Butler, AAA Coordinator  
Mark Compton, Transportation Director  
Victoria Craig, Housing Manager  
Pam Frost, Accounting Clerk  
Debbie Graff, Accounting Specialist  
Patricia Haley, Criminal Justice Coordinator  
Melody Harmon, Economic Development Director  
Toni Lindsey, Regional Development Director  
Merle Luster, 9-1-1 PSAP Operations Coordinator  
Marla Matthews, Executive Assistant  
Leslie McBride, Human Resources Director  
Paul Prange, Environmental Resources Coordinator  
Debbie Purifoy, Accounting Specialist

Claude Ramsey, IT Director  
Lisa Reeve, Area Agency on Aging Director  
Mary Beth Rudel, Deputy Director  
Melinda Tickle, Finance Director



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

ATTEST:

