

**MINUTES
ARK-TEX COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
October 26, 2023**

The Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) Executive Committee met at 10:00 a.m., Thursday, October 26, 2023, at the Northeast Texas Small Business Development Center (SBDC), 2nd 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.

Judge Howell recognized the following new Board members:

- Joey McCarthy, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Reno, Lamar County
- Terry Roberts, Assistant Mayor/ Ward 1, City of Texarkana-AR, Miller County
- Laney Harris, Director Ward 2, City of Texarkana-AR, Miller County
- Jeff Hart, Director Ward 6, City of Texarkana-AR, Miller County

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

- Approval of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Executive Committee meeting held Thursday, May 25, 2023.
- Acceptance of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Area Agency on Aging Regional Advisory Council meeting held Thursday, September 14, 2023.
- Acceptance of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Solid Waste Advisory Committee meeting held Thursday, October 12, 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, for information only, the Executive Director Report. She reviewed the reports and provided updates and statistics for ATCOG Programs.

Regular Business

Item 6. Ms. Rudel presented for review and consideration approval of an amendment to resolution AEC23-13 to increase the contract threshold from \$525,000 to \$575,000 to complete renovations at the Paris office building recommended by Texas Health and Human Services (HHS).

The initial contract amount was \$457,117, which included a roof replacement. A 15% contingency

was included in the originally requested amount for approval to cover unanticipated costs that may arise during the project. The current change orders submitted bring the total needed repairs to \$550,000. While the project should be completed in the next few weeks and major change orders are not anticipated, staff request approval to increase the contract threshold to \$575,000 to cover any additional change orders needed. All expenses will be funded by the Federal Transit Administration grant.

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

- Item 7. Ms. Mary Wormington presented for review and consideration approval of the Ark-Tex Council of Governments Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) Annual Plan to be effective October 1, 2023.

ATCOG supports and administers the vouchers for the HCV program. The ATCOG Board must formally adopt any revisions made to this plan as well as approve it annually to establish goals and operating procedures for achieving the Public Housing Authority goals within the HCV program. There are no revisions to the Plan at this time.

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

- Item 8. Mr. Paul Prange presented for review and consideration approval of the FY2024/2025 application to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to administer the Solid Waste Pass-through Grant Program.

ATCOG receives funding every two years from the TCEQ to administer the Solid Waste Pass-Through Grant Program. An application must be submitted by ATCOG to TCEQ at the beginning of each biennium to execute the contract for the grant period. ATCOG plans to utilize the grant by funding Community Collection Events and Illegal Dumping Cleanup Events throughout the ATCOG region during this biennium.

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

- Item 9. Mr. Prange presented for review and consideration approval of funding priorities for the FY2024/2025 Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Solid Waste Pass-through Grant Program.

The ATCOG Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) met on Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 10:30 a.m. to discuss the FY2024/2025 Solid Waste Pass-through grant funding priorities. The SWAC recommended utilizing the funding allocation of approximately \$20,000.00 to sponsor Community Collection Events/Illegal Dumping Cleanup Events throughout the ATCOG region during FY2025

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

- Item 10. Ms. Patricia Haley presented for review and consideration approval authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a contract with Kilgore College not to exceed \$100,000 to provide law enforcement training services.

The 2-year Regional Law Enforcement Training grant award and contract will provide the opportunity to sustain law enforcement training for officers/potential officers and have continuous training during the 2-year period while the funding is available. The 2-year contract with ETPA will be a total of \$75,000 to align with the currently available grant funds. During the grant period, if additional funds become available within the ATCOG grant budget and additional contract funds are needed, ATCOG requests to amend the contract amount with the available funds not to exceed \$100,000. ETPA has provided training to the officers and potential officers in our region for a number of years, and ETPA

will provide various types of training in locations across the ATCOG region, which significantly helps small departments with limited travel budgets. They will provide basic peace officer training, basic corrections/jailer training, and advanced/specialized courses.

Motion to approve was made by Scott Norton and seconded by Ann Rushing, Mayor, City of Clarksville. It was approved.

Other Business

Item 11. Ms. Jessica Fritsche, Senior Planner, Carollo Engineers, presented the Northeast Texas Population Growth Evaluation Report for the ATCOG/Sulphur River Basin Authority. A copy of the population study will be emailed to the ATCOG Board. .

Item 12. Mr. Andrew Cohill, President/CEO of Design Nine, Inc., presented the Northeast Texas Broadband Study. Mr. Cohill provided an overview of the existing broadband infrastructure, gap analysis, opportunities, providers, strategies, and funding/financing options within the ATCOG region. A copy of the Broadband information will be emailed to the ATCOG Board.

Announcements

Ms. Rea Allen announced that the ATCOG 9-1-1 Department is in the planning stages of digitizing and mapping each independent school district indoor classroom within the region. Ms. Allen will provide more detailed information for Board review and approval in the near future.

Judge Howell announced that the next ATCOG Board of Directors meeting will be held on December 7, 2023, 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, Judge Howell adjourned the meeting.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ATCOG BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Chris Brown, Hopkins County Hospital District
Rosina Duckworth, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Cumby
Juan Duenez, Mt. Pleasant Independent School District
Laney Harris, Director Ward 6, City of Texarkana-AR

GUESTS PRESENT

Andrew Cohill, Design Nine, Inc.
Reece DeWoody, Office of United States Senator John Cornyn

Jessica Fritsche, Carollo Engineers
Reeves Hayter, Sulphur River Basin Authority
Jack Maytum, Design Nine, Inc.
Dan Perry, Texas Department of Transportation
David Weidman, Sulphur River Basin Authority

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Mary Beth Rudel, Executive Director
Rea Allen, 9-1-1 Director
Whitney Fezell, Homeland Security Coordinator
Patricia Haley, Criminal Justice Coordinator
Melody Harmon, Economic Development Director
Toni Lindsey, Regional Development Director
Marla Matthews, Executive Assistant
Leslie McBride, Human Resources Director
Holly Pfister, Development Specialist
Paul Prange, Environmental Resources Coordinator
Debbie Purifoy, Compliance and Purchasing Officer
Melinda Tickle, Finance Director
Bobby Williams, Transportation Operations Manager
Mary Wormington, Housing Director



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

