

**JOINT MINUTES
NORTHEAST TEXAS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT AND
ARK-TEX COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
February 29, 2024**

The Northeast Texas Economic Development District (NETEDD) and the Executive Committee of the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) met at 10:00 a.m., Thursday, February 29, 2024, at the Northeast Texas Small Business Development Center, located at 105 North Riddle, 2nd Floor, 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 member(s):

- Larry Hinsley, Mayor, City of Bogata, Texas, Red River County

Ms. Mary Beth Rudel, Executive Director, recognized a current Board member attending his first meeting.

- Dana Reeves, Chief of Lake Patrol, Franklin County Water District

NETEDD Agenda Items

Item 4. The first order of business was to review and consider approval of the minutes as submitted for the NETEDD meeting held on Thursday, December 7, 2023.

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

Item 5. Ms. Toni presented the NETEDD project report for information only.

Item 6. Ms. Leslie McBride presented for review and consideration approval of the NETEDD Articles of Incorporation and bylaws.

While renewing NETEDD's SAM.gov (System for Award Management) registration, it was discovered that the organization's title on the Articles of Incorporation did not match the title in the system. The title was initially filed in 1966 as North-East Texas Economic Development District, Inc. However, the title was listed with "Inc" on some documents and without "Inc" on others. The hyphen was listed on some documents and not others, causing a delay in renewal with SAM.gov. It was also discovered that the registered agent listed is the former Executive Director, L.D. Williamson and the membership counties have not been updated since the articles were formed.

Upon review of all supporting documents, it was noted that the bylaws of the NETEDD member counties had not been updated after the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) approved moving Camp and Marion Counties to the East Texas Council of Governments service area.

Staff requests approval to revise the bylaws to reflect the correct member counties and revise the

organization's title to North East Texas Economic Development District, Inc., on the Articles of Incorporation, bylaws, and current contracts so that all official documents agree and to allow NETEDD's SAM.gov registration to be renewed for grant purposes.

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

This concluded all NETEDD agenda items.

ATCOG Executive Committee Agenda Items

Item 7. Ms. Mary Beth Rudel presented for review and consideration approval of the consent agenda items.

- Approval of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Executive Committee Meeting held Thursday, January 25, 2024.
- Ratification of the ATCOG and Frontier Energy, Inc. participation agreement for the AEP Power Company Targeted Low-Income Program.

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

Regular Business

Item 8. Ms. Mary Beth Rudel presented for review and consideration approval of a nominee to serve on the Texas Community Development Block Grant Unified Scoring Committee.

Each state planning region is provided an opportunity to nominate one representative for appointment to a 24-member Unified Scoring Committee. Members will participate in a committee meeting and select state-wide scoring factors for 2025-2026 CD Fund applications.

The ATCOG Board is responsible for this representative nomination. The nominee must meet the following criteria:

- Currently serving as an elected or appointed official of a non-entitlement community;
- Able to pass a basic background check; and
- Available to travel to the Unified Scoring Committee meeting and related training in San Antonio, Texas, on April 10, 2024.

The ATCOG Board of Directors may select a new representative or elect to continue to be represented by the region's 2023-2024 USC Member, which is Mayor Lowell Walker. Mayor Walker is willing to serve in this role again should the board elect him to continue serving.

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

Item 9. Ms. Whitney Fezell presented for review and consideration approval of the submission of the following applications for FY24 State Homeland Security Program grant funds through the Office of the Governor Homeland Security Grant Division.

- ATCOG is applying for funding in the amount of \$96,000 for the ATCOG Planning, Training, and Exercises project. This project will cover a 12-month period and include salary for two positions (Homeland Security Coordinator and Finance Specialist), employee benefits, office

rent, postage, copying expenses, office telephone, and ATCOG indirect expenses, as well as travel for training and State/Regional meetings, and annual contracts for regional support (regional mass notification system, WebEOC, and EOC support equipment). This project will provide planning, training, and exercise services related to prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery from terrorist activities for the nine-county region.

- ATCOG will be applying for funding in the amount of \$76,000 for the ATCOG Regional Law Enforcement Planning and Training project. This project will cover a 12-month period. Budget items include \$76,000 in instructor fees to host training for law enforcement officers in the ATCOG region and salary and benefits for two positions (Homeland Security Coordinator and Criminal Justice Coordinator). This project will only be funded or partially funded if ATCOG does not meet its Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Activities (LETPA) requirement of 35%.

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

- Item 10. Ms. Whitney Fezell presented for review and consideration approval of the prioritization of 2024 Homeland Security Grant Program funds.

The Homeland Security Advisory Committee (HSAC) met on February 22, 2024, and approved the 2024 Grant funding prioritization requests. Projects were submitted in numerous categories: Regional Planning, Interoperable Communications, Intelligence information sharing, and first responder capabilities. The HSAC scored the projects via ballot based on risk, reasonableness, and priority level.

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

- Item 11. Ms. Whitney Fezell presented for review and consideration approval of the submission of the applications for FY24 Statewide Emergency Radio Infrastructure (SERI) grant funds through the Office of the Governor Public Safety Office Homeland Security Grant Division.

The Office of the Governor Homeland Security Grants Division (HSGD) has released applications for a Statewide Emergency Radio Infrastructure grant. The funds will support projects that support state and regional efforts to improve or sustain interoperable emergency radio infrastructure.

The State requires that each applicant submit a resolution with the funding application, signifying that the applicant's governing body approves of the agency applying for the funding and is willing to abide by the grant requirements.

Upon approval, ATCOG will apply for funding up to \$2 million on behalf of jurisdictions in the ATCOG region. If awarded the grant, the projects will provide the jurisdictions with emergency radio equipment to improve communications and interoperability.

Motion to approve was made by Judge Newsom and seconded by Branden Bell, Judge, Lamar County. It was approved.

- Item 12. Ms. Patricia Haley presented for review and consideration approval of the submission of a grant application to the Office of the Governor Public Safety Office Criminal Justice Division.

ATCOG requests approval to submit an application for a training project titled "The Specialized Regional Crisis Training Program." This program will provide specialized training for law enforcement and investigators in our region who respond to high-risk situations and interpersonal violence, such as child abuse.

ATCOG will apply for a total of \$48,337, to include approximately \$22,160 in contracted training costs. Training will be conducted by a TCOLE-approved specialized training instructor/provider and arranged/hosted by ATCOG at various locations across the region. Contracted training to be included in the program will be Child Abuse Investigations training, Criminal Patrol/Drug Interdiction training, Search Warrants training, and Advanced Vehicle Contraband Concealment training. The program will have a 12-month project period.

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

- Item 13. Ms. Patricia Haley presented for review and consideration approval of the list of representatives and reappointments or appointments to serve on the Regional Criminal Justice Advisory Committee through December 31, 2025.

The members of the RCJAC are appointed or reappointed at the beginning of each even-numbered year and are nominated for appointment/reappointment by their respective County Judges. The committee has 29 members, and the number of members per county is based on population. If a vacancy should exist during the two-year term, a new appointment shall be presented to the ATCOG Board of Directors/Executive Committee for approval to fill the vacancy.

Members appointed/reappointed will serve their two-year membership terms during the 2024 and 2025 calendar years. The complete RCJAC Membership list was provided for review.

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

- Item 14. Ms. Toni Lindsey presented for review and consideration approval of the submission of an application for Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG) Revolving Loan Fund grant to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The RBDG Revolving Loan Fund grant is a competitive grant designed to support activities leading to developing or expanding small and emerging private businesses in rural areas with fewer than 50 employees and less than \$1 million in gross revenues.

ATCOG requests approval to apply for a \$1,000,000 RBDG Revolving Loan Fund grant with no match requirement. The grant will allow ATCOG to loan funds to small and emerging businesses within the region at a low interest rate, assisting these businesses. ATCOG's current RBDG Revolving Loan Fund does not allow for capitalization projects, but acquiring the new RBDG funds will enable us to reach additional markets.

ATCOG staff request approval to submit the application for funding to USDA.

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

Announcements

It was announced that the 2024 Spring Judicial Education Meeting is scheduled on the same date as the March ATCOG Board meeting. An alternative meeting date of Thursday, April 11, 2024, was proposed. Mary Beth Rudel will review agenda items requiring Board approval and notify the Board of a confirmed meeting date.

NETEDD BOARD 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 Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas Center
Travis Ransom, Judge, Cass County
Doug Reeder, Judge, Morris County
Marc Reiter, Mayor, City of Hooks

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 Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas Center
Travis Ransom, Judge, Cass County
Doug Reeder, Judge, Morris County
Marc Reiter, Mayor, City of Hooks

ATCOG BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Juan Duenez, Board Member, Mt. Pleasant Independent School District
Rosina Duckworth, Mayor, City of Cumby
Laney Harris, Councilmember, City of Texarkana-AR
Larry Hinsley, Mayor, City of Bogata
Ronald Humphry, Mayor, City of New Boston
George Moore, Board Vice President, Texarkana College
Dana Reeves, Chief of Lake Patrol, Franklin County Water District
Lowell Walker, Mayor, City of DeKalb

GUESTS PRESENT

Reece DeWoody, Office of United States Senator John Cornyn

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

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, Deputy Director
Paul Prange, Environmental Resources Coordinator
Debbie Purifoy, Compliance and Purchasing Officer
Mary Beth Rudel, Executive Director
Melinda Tickle, Finance Director


Bobby Howell, President
Northeast Texas Economic Development District, Inc.
Board of Directors

ATTEST:

