

MINUTES
NORTHEAST TEXAS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, INC., AND
ARK-TEX COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
DECEMBER 4, 2025

The Northeast Texas Economic Development District, Inc. (NETEDD) and the Board of Directors of the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) met at 10:00 a.m., Thursday, December 4, 2025, at the Pilgrim's Community Center, 820 West Pecan Street, Mt. Pleasant, Texas, and via videoconference.

1. Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County, called the meeting to order.
2. Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas Center, gave the invocation.
3. Public Comment.

No members of the public made comments.

NETEDD Agenda Items

4. The next order of business was to review and consider approval of the minutes as submitted for the NETEDD meeting held on Thursday, August 28, 2025.

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

5. Ms. Mary Beth Rudel presented the NETEDD Program report for information only.

This concludes all NETEDD agenda items.

ATCOG Board of Directors Agenda Items

6. Ms. Mary Beth Rudel presented for review and approval of the consent agenda items.
 - Approval of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Board of Directors Meeting held Thursday, August 28, 2025.
 - Acceptance of the minutes as submitted for the ATCOG Regional Criminal Justice Advisory Committee meeting held Thursday, April 10, 2025.

Motion to approve was made by Chris Brown, Vice President, Hopkins County Hospital District, and seconded by Lowell Walker, Mayor, City of DeKalb. It was approved.

7. Ms. Leslie McBride presented for review and approval of revisions to the ATCOG Policies and Procedures Manual.

The following revisions to the policy and procedures manual were proposed:

- **7.04 Retirement Plan** - This revision clarifies ATCOG's contributions to employees' retirement accounts as follows: "Employees contribute 4% of their salary into their retirement fund each payday on a pre-taxed basis, and ATCOG matches employee contributions at 200% at retirement."

Upon Board approval, the policy revision will be distributed to all employees and added to our Policies and Procedures Manual.

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

8. Ms. Patricia Haley presented for review and approval of revisions to the Regional Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (RCJAC) Bylaws.

The RCJAC conducts an annual review of its bylaws. Amendments were needed for FY26. The Bylaws were reviewed, amendments were discussed, and the RCJAC approved the following revisions, as explained below.

- **Regular Meetings:** This revision includes an update to provide notice of the meeting at least three full days prior to the meeting date, to align with the new Texas Open Meetings Act requirement.
- **Special Meetings:** This revision includes an update to provide notice of the meeting at least three full days prior to the meeting date, to align with the new Texas Open Meetings Act requirement.

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

9. Ms. Patricia Haley presented for review and approval of revisions to the Regional Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (RCJAC) local priorities and the grant application scoring instrument.

The local priorities and scoring instruments are important tools used by the RCJAC to review and score criminal justice grant applications from the Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office/Criminal Justice Division (PSO/CJD). The RCJAC conducts an annual review of the local priorities and the scoring instruments for each fund source.

Regional Criminal Justice Planning Focus Groups established the local priorities. Those recommendations, along with the scoring instrument, were reviewed and approved by the RCJAC for incorporation into the application scoring process, as required by the Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office/Criminal Justice Division. Upon Board approval, the recommended local priorities and grant application scoring instrument will be incorporated into the application scoring process.

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

10. Ms. Whitney Fezell presented for review and approval of the Ark-Tex Council of Governments 2025 Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA), and State Preparedness Report (SPR).

The State requires each Council of Governments to revise and submit its THIRA, SPR, and Regional Implementation Plan annually. This year, the Implementation Plan was omitted. These documents are interrelated and provide an overview of the threats, risks, and resources in the

ATCOG region. These documents ensure that ATCOG is fully integrated into the State of Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan and that it has identified the resources necessary to achieve homeland security preparedness goals for fiscal year 2026.

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

11. Ms. Whitney Fezell presented for review and approval of continual use of the allocation formula for FY2026 as the method for allocating State Homeland Security Program funds to jurisdictions.

The state requires the Homeland Security Advisory Committee (HSAC) to prioritize applications using a risk-informed methodology. The proposed scoring process will evaluate projects in several areas, including risk and prioritization. Adopting ATCOG's scoring process would reflect the region's priorities and align with state principles.

The ATCOG HSAC met on November 13, 2025, and discussed and reviewed the Risk Methodology and Allocation Process for FY26, as well as the means of prioritizing Statewide Emergency Radio Infrastructure (SERI) projects.

The scoring process will score projects equally in categories of risk, reasonableness, and priority level. The scoring process will allot additional points to applicants applying for regional projects, applicants who participated in the development of the Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment, State Preparedness Report, and Implementation Plan (THIRA/SPR/IP), the Annual Communication Exercise, the Special Events data call, as well as for applicants who did not receive funding the previous grant year.

Scores will be calculated, and projects will be prioritized and ranked according to these scores and recommended for funding in that rank order. Applicants who submit multiple projects must identify their primary project for ATCOG prioritization ranking. Secondary projects, as well as any additional projects, will be ranked at the bottom based on their scores and will be funded only if sufficient funds are available after all primary projects are funded.

Motion to approve was made by Mayor Walker and seconded by Scott Norton. It was approved.

Announcements

Ms. Mary Beth Rudel announced the NADO Washington Policy Conference will be held March 8th - 11th. This is a great time to visit with our House and Senate Members and their staff. Please contact Marla or Mary Beth if interested in attending.

Ms. Rudel stated that the next Executive Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, January 29, 2026, at the Pilgrim's Community Center, 820 West Pecan Street, Mt. Pleasant, Texas, and via videoconference.

Judge Howell called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion to adjourn was made by Judge Lee and seconded by Judge Bell. It was approved. Meeting adjourned.

NETEDD BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County

Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas Center

Travis Ransom, Judge, Cass County
Scott Lee, Judge, Franklin County
Brandon Bell, Judge, Lamar County
Robert Newsom, Judge, Hopkins County
Doug Reeder, Judge, Morris County
Marc Reiter, Mayor, City of Hooks
Ann Rushing, Mayor, City of Clarksville

ATCOG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County
Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas Center
Travis Ransom, Judge, Cass County
Scott Lee, Judge, Franklin County
Brandon Bell, Judge, Lamar County
Robert Newsom, Judge, Hopkins County
Doug Reeder, Judge, Morris County
Marc Reiter, Mayor, City of Hooks
Ann Rushing, Mayor, City of Clarksville

ATCOG BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Chris Brown, Vice President, Hopkins County Hospital District
Juan Duenez, Board of Trustees, Mt. Pleasant Independent School District
Becky Fellers, Board of Trustees, Liberty Eylau Independent School District
Laney Harris, Director, City of Texarkana-AR
Wesley Lyon, Mayor, City of Mt. Pleasant
Gary Spraggins, Council Member, City of Sulphur Springs
Shawn Tully, Red River County Appraisal District
Lowell Walker, Mayor, City of DeKalb

GUESTS PRESENT

Nathan Carroll, Texas Division of Emergency Management
Elizabeth Cockerham, Office of Representative Cole Hefner
Reece DeWoody, Office of Senator Bryan Hughes
Sherrie Houff, Department of State Health Services
Janeth Moreno, Mt. Pleasant Economic Development Corporation
Ray Wilson, Office of Senator Bryan Hughes

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Mary Beth Rudel, Executive Director
Leslie McBride, Deputy Director
Laura Cowling, Finance Director
Whitney Fezell, Homeland Security Coordinator
Patricia Haley, Criminal Justice Coordinator
Marla Matthews, Executive Assistant
Paul Prange, Environmental Resources Coordinator
Debbie Purifoy, Compliance and Purchasing Officer
Bobby Williams, Transportation Operations Coordinator

Signature on File

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

ATTEST:
Signature on File
