

**HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING  
APRIL 21, 2025  
MINUTES**

The Executive Board of the High Country Council of Governments (HCCOG) met April 21, 2025, 7:00pm, in the HCCOG Board Room in Boone. The following members were present at the meeting: Charles E. Vines, Brenda Lyerly, Todd McNeill, Kelly Melang, Bill Wheeler, Jeff Whitson, Bobby Munsey, Mike Parlier, Jeff Harding, Rocky Buchanan, Teresa McCoy, Tom Hartman, Dennis Aldridge, and Doug Matheson. The following staff and guests were present at the meeting: Colt Bowles, David Williams, Jessina Molina, Holly Jones, Julie Wiggins, Jeff Hedrick, Caroline Briggs, Cory Osborne, Chris Grubb, and Victoria Oxentine.

**CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION**

Chairman Matheson called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. Brenda Lyerly led the Pledge of Allegiance and Todd McNeill offered the invocation.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

Kelly Melang moved to accept the minutes of the March 17, 2025 meeting, seconded by Brenda Lyerly. Motion carried.

**FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**Financial Highlights**

Finance Officer, Caroline Briggs presented the Financial Highlights as of March 31, 2025 (Attachment A) and discussed revenues versus expenditures. Charles E. Vines made a motion to approve the Financial Highlights as of March 31, 2025. Todd McNeill seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Budget Amendment #5**

Finance Officer, Caroline Briggs presented Budget Amendment #5 (Attachment A1), which is an increase of \$85,962 for the total budget. This increase is \$57,660 for a Social Isolation Grant for the Area Agency on Aging department and an increase of \$28,302 for NCWorks Centers IFA Funds for the Workforce Development department. Brenda Lyerly made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #5. Charles E. Vines seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Providing Elderly Additional Sustenance (PEAS) Grant Project Ordinance**

Finance Officer, Caroline Briggs presented a Grant Project Ordinance for Providing Elderly Additional Sustenance (PEAS) (Attachment A2), which is additional funding of \$97,120 that goes through December 2026 allocated to the Area Agency on Aging department. Tom Hartman made a motion to approve the PEAS Grant Project Ordinance. Dennis Aldridge seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**LONG TERM RECOVERY OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE (AN INTRODUCTION TO THE IS-RSF MISSION)**

Colton Bowles, Infrastructure Recovery Support Function (IS-RSF) Program Manager for US Army Core of Engineers (USACE) presented a slideshow (Attachment B) overviewing the duties, timeline, and examples of prior recovery missions. Mr. Bowles discussed current recovery operations in WNC in the wake of Hurricane Helene.

**NC DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S ONGOING & FUTURE RESPONSE TO HURRICANE HELENE**

David Williams, Director of the Division of Soil & Water Conservation at the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services presented a slideshow (Attachment C) overviewing the response and programs the department has been working on in the wake of Hurricane Helene. Mr. Williams noted that the department of Agriculture is trying to fill the gaps in ongoing recovery processes still needed.

**REPORT FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Julie Wiggins, Executive Director shared that the Advisory Committee had discussed adjustments to the 2025 Legislative Priorities and the marked-up draft will be sent to the Executive Board and presented for a vote at the May meeting. Ms. Wiggins also noted that the draft FY26 budget will be presented in May. Ms. Wiggins discussed new grant funding among HCCOG departments.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

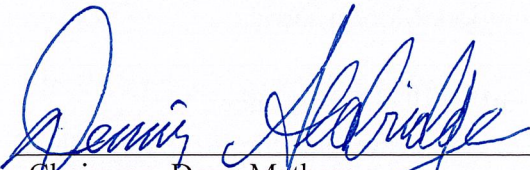
Todd McNeill thanked the presenters and their teams for the work they are doing to aid recovery in WNC. McNeill also thanked Holly Jones with Governor Stein's office for always being present in the region.

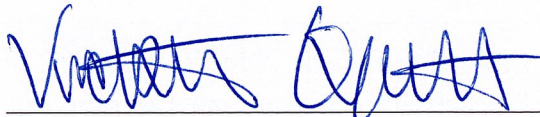
**CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

Chairman Matheson noted that the High Country region was very well represented at the recent recovery meeting in Asheville and mentioned that Dennis Aldridge did a great job speaking at the event.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no other comments or business, Todd McNeill made a motion to adjourn. Brenda Lyerly seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:18 pm.

  
 Chairman, Doug Matheson  
 Vice-Chairman, Dennis Aldridge

  
 Clerk to the Board, Victoria Oxentine

Date 5/19/25