



GREATER
NASHVILLE
REGIONAL
COUNCIL

10:15 A.M., Wed., October 18, 2023

**Downtown Nashville Public Library
615 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37219
MORE INFO: GNRC.org/Calendar**

MEETING AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER; APPROVAL OF MINUTES (A)** **Bob Rial**
Chair

- 2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

- 3. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**
 - a. Statewide and Regional Emissions Reduction Plans (A)** **Jessica Hill**
Director of Community and Regional Planning
Representatives from the TN Department of Environment and Conservation will join GNRC staff in presenting an overview of Tennessee’s approach to using funds made available by the EPA’s Climate Pollution Reduction Grant program.

 - b. Tennessee Broadband Grant Opportunities (A)** **Michael Mills**
Director of Economic and Community Development
GNRC staff will present an overview of three active grant opportunities to help communities expand local access to broadband.

- 4. ACTION ITEMS:**
 - a. Res. GNRC-2024-04 Proclaiming October as Cybersecurity Awareness Month across Middle Tennessee (A)** **Peter Westerholm**
Director of Policy and Government Affairs

- 5. REGULAR REPORTS:**
 - a. Chair’s Report** **Bob Rial**

 - b. Executive Director’s Report** **Michael Skipper**

- 6. OTHER BUSINESS**

- 7. ADJOURN**

(A) Indicates an attachment is available in the packet

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Agenda Item 1.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes for the Regional Council meeting held on 08/16/23 have been prepared for review and approval.

ACTION: APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

GNRC MEETING MINUTES

Regional Council Body

INFORMATION

DATE: August 16, 2023

LOCATION: TN State Library and Archives, 1001 Rep. John Lewis Way, Nashville, TN 37201

QUORUM: Yes

CALLED TO ORDER: 10:22 a.m.

ADJOURNED: 10:45 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

	Members Present
Cheatham Representatives	Kerry McCarver (County)
Davidson Representatives	Ginger Hausser (County)
Dickson Representatives	Bob Rial (County)
Houston Representatives	<i>None present</i>
Humphreys Representatives	<i>None present</i>
Montgomery Representatives	Lee Harrell (County)
Robertson Representatives	Billy Vogle (County), Gerald Herman (White House), Margot Fosnes (Business Rep)
Rutherford Representatives	Jim Kerr (Murfreesboro)
Stewart Representatives	<i>None present</i>
Sumner Representatives	John Isbell (County), Paige Brown (Gallatin), Jamie Clary (Hendersonville), Mike Callis (Portland), David Leath (Westmoreland)
Trousdale Representatives	<i>None present</i>
Williamson Representatives	Rogers Anderson (County), Lisa Anderson (Fairview), Ken Moore (Franklin), Ken McLawhon (Thompson's Station)
Wilson Representatives	Randall Hutto (County), Rick Bell (Lebanon), Abraham Farias (Mt. Juliet)
TN General Assembly	<i>None present</i>
Board Secretary	Michael Skipper

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council Chair

Council Secretary

AGENDA ITEM 1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Bob Rial called the Regional Council meeting to order at 10:22a.m. and asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 21 meeting.

Mayor Ken Moore moved to approve with Mayor Lisa Anderson seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

AGENDA ITEM 3. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

3a. Brownfield Redevelopment Area Grants

Mr. Evan Spann, TDEC, presented the newly authorized Brownfield Redevelopment Area Grants (BRAG) to the members. He explained that the Rural Brownfield Investment Act that was established on July 1, 2023, created the BRAG to direct funds to investigation, assessment, and remediation to communities, expanded the Brownfield Franchise and Excise Tax credits to include both purchase and remediation costs, and removed geographic barriers to use and expanded eligibility of qualified project costs.

BRAG program highlights included:

- \$5M recurring in grant funds; individual grants are capped at \$500,000 annually per eligible entity.
- Eligible applicants include “political subdivisions of the state, including, but not limited to, a county, municipality, development district, or development board.”
- Complements existing grant offerings administered by TNECD and EPA.
- The tentative BRAG timeline is:
 - Fall 2023: Complete grant manual,
 - Mid-January 2024: Solicitation Announcement and grant period open
 - Mid-April: Applications due
 - April - June: Application review
 - June: Notice of award
 - August: Target start date for grant contracts

Contact information for the initiative:

- TDEC: VOAP/BRAG: Evan Spann, Evan.W.Spann@tn.gov
- TnECD: Site Development Grant: Kirby Lewis-Gill, Kirby.lewis-gill@tn.gov
- Tax Credits: Debbie Clabo, Debbie.Clabo@tn.gov

AGENDA ITEM 4. REGULAR REPORTS

4a. Chair's Report

Mayor Rial thanked Congressman John Rose for being at the meeting.

4b. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Skipper thanked Mr. Spann for his report and TDEC's participation in the regular Environmental Roundtable.

Mr. Skipper reminded members that GNRC was awarded the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Program to analyze strategies to reduce greenhouse emissions across our region. A four-year planning process will be kicking off soon with the Environmental Roundtable and an extended group of partners.

He said that the GNRC has applied to the EDA on behalf of a consortium of 18 individual organizations, including Vanderbilt, Tennessee State University, Meharry Medical College, Fisk, TN Board of Regents, and a host of private industries to formally propose to EDA that Middle Tennessee be designated as a regional technology/innovation hub for a concept which is being called The Healthcare Information Center of Excellence. He explained the significance of this application, and should the proposal be successful, the region would be eligible for upwards of \$80M in EDA funding to develop a globally competitive technology hub in Middle Tennessee.

He said that the GNRC also applied for a related strategy development grant of \$500K with matching funds, which the consortium members would share to hire a regional innovation officer to work with the consortium to optimize the proposed hub further.

He shared an additional EDA grant application that is under development for disaster supplemental area funds to help rebuild and recover in 9 of GNRC's 13 counties. The funding will be used to create a new dedicated full-time position to help locals access funds for assistance to support recovery and mitigate future impacts.

He reminded members that letters of intent to TN ECD's site development program are due August 25. He said this money can be used to prepare certified sites for further infrastructure investment. He said Michael Mills, GNRC's economic and community development director, can assist with the letter of intent and application. For more information, go to:

www.gnrc.org/grants

Mr. Skipper briefly went over the upcoming meetings:

September 20 Transportation Policy Board

- CRP Phase 1 Award Recommendations
- Adopt TIP Amendments
- Project Delivery Task Force Recommendations
- Updates on Regional Planning Activities

September 20 Annual Partnership Luncheon

- Governors Bredesen and Haslam deliver the keynote
- Annual Awards Ceremony
- Release of GMNRC's Annual Report

October 18 Regional Council Body

- Update on Solid Waste Planning
- Cybersecurity Awareness Month
- Information about Available Grant Opportunities

AGENDA ITEM 5. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

AGENDA ITEM 6. ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Agenda Item 3a.

Emission Reduction Plans

The TN Department of Environment and Conservation is leading a statewide effort to develop the **Tennessee Volunteer Emission Reduction Strategy** or **TVERS**. TVERS is an emissions reduction plan currently being developed with funding provided by the U.S. EPA *Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program* that was established by the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022.

CPRG funds have been provided to states, large Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), tribes, and territories to develop and implement plans for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other harmful air pollutants. Tennessee is one of 47 states that accepted allocated funding to participate in this federally funded initiative.

GNRC is serving as lead planning entity for the Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin, TN MSA and working with TDEC to develop a companion plan for the region.

The statewide and regional plans will qualify local governments, public agencies, and other organizations for more than \$4.6 billion in grants being made available by the EPA to fund projects that help reduce emissions.

Additional information is available at
<https://www.tn.gov/environment/policy/tvers>

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Agenda Item 3b.

Tennessee Broadband Grants

GNRC staff will present an overview of three broadband investment opportunities being offered through the TN Department of Economic and Community Development. GNRC is available to assist interested communities and organizations with project scoping, grant applications, and grant administration.

Broadband Ready Communities Grant

The program uses a portion of the Tennessee Emergency Broadband Fund – American Rescue Plan to provide \$10 million in assistance. A non-competitive grant opportunity is available for county and local governments to secure up to \$100,000 dollars for broadband adoption activities. *Application window is from October 2 - November 15, 2023.*

Connected Community Facilities Grant

The program aims to construct and improve digital access through the creation of buildings or rehabilitation of existing facilities. The goal of this program is to enable digital workforce development, virtual health monitoring, virtual education, and broadband access -- all within one building for the community. Units of local government such as counties, municipalities, and entities like schools and libraries as well as organizations applying in partnerships with local governments are invited to apply for this competitive grant. A total of \$30 million is available with a maximum award amount of \$2 million. Grants cover 80% of eligible project expenses with a required 20% match. *Application window is from October 2 - November 15, 2023.*

Digital Skills, Education, and Workforce Development Grant

will distribute \$17 million to fund evidence-based digital skills training programs and workforce development programs that will develop a digitally enabled workforce with market-relevant skills across a wide variety of industries. Eligible applicants include educational institutions, non-profits, public housing authorities, small businesses, and other organizations. *Application window is from October 16 - December 6, 2023.*

Additional information is available at

<https://www.tn.gov/ecd/rural-development/broadband-office/grants>

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Agenda Item 4a.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month

On behalf of the GNRC Information Technology (IT) Directors Roundtable, Scott Augenbaum, a nationally recognized cybersecurity expert, to present information about the state of cybersecurity. Mr. Augenbaum is a cybersecurity prevention trainer, author, and keynote speaker with over 30 years of hands-on experience in investigating and combating cybercrime as a retired FBI Supervisory Special Agent.

About Cyber Security Awareness Month

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of Cyber Security Awareness Month, and the official theme is **“It’s easy to stay safe online.”** Four key elements of safe online behavior are being promoted:

- Enabling multifactor authentication
- Using strong passwords and a password manager
- Updating software
- Recognizing and reporting phishing

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) is providing information and resources to help educate CISA partners and the public, ensuring all individuals and organizations make smart decisions whether on the job, at home or at school – now and in the future. CISA encourages each organization tasked with protecting data to engage in this year’s efforts by creating cyber awareness campaigns and sharing messaging with peers.

Observed every October, Cyber Security Awareness Month was created as a collaborative effort between government and industry to ensure every American has the resources they need to stay safer and more secure online.

Since its original inception under leadership from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the National Cyber Security Alliance, Cyber Security Awareness Month has grown exponentially, reaching consumers, small and medium-sized businesses, corporations, educational institutions and young people across the nation. Now in its 20th year, Cyber Security Awareness Month continues to build momentum and impact co-led by NCSA and the CISA.

ACTION: [Adopt Resolution GNRC-2024-04](#)

RESOLUTION GNRC-2024-04

A RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING OCTOBER AS CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH ACROSS MIDDLE TENNESSEE

WHEREAS, the Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC) was established in 1965 by the Tennessee General Assembly as a public body corporate and politic to serve as the development district for northern Middle Tennessee and was further empowered as a regional council of governments in 1988 to enhance regional planning and coordination in preparation for anticipated growth and development of the region; and

WHEREAS, the GNRC has established an information technology directors' roundtable through which chief information officers and information technology directors from around the region convene on a regular basis to discuss and share best practices regarding cybersecurity and other information technology matters; and

WHEREAS, citizens of Middle Tennessee are increasingly reliant upon the Internet for conducting personal business, entertainment, communication, and education; and

WHEREAS, businesses and government agencies rely on the use of the Internet and other information technology resources to provide efficient, comprehensive, and effective services to their customers and constituents; and

WHEREAS, as information has been collected, stored, and transmitted by information technology resources more frequently and in more places and by more methods, it is increasingly susceptible to breach if not properly handled and protected; and

WHEREAS, the technological environment is replete with hack attempts, viruses, worms, and other malicious attacks designed to obtain information without authorization, which can lead to significant financial and privacy losses; and

WHEREAS, information security is something everyone shares responsibility for, and the best defense against unintended loss of information is strong personal awareness about cyber-attacks and methods on how to reduce their effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Homeland Security, the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC), the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), and the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) have collectively designated October "Cybersecurity Awareness Month."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Regional Council hereby recognizes October as "Cybersecurity Awareness Month" across Middle Tennessee and in the communities served by GNRC.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that GNRC encourages all members, partners, and the general public to learn how to improve their cybersecurity.

ADOPTED, this 18th day of October 2023, the general welfare of the citizens of this region requiring it.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

APPROVED:

Candi Henry
Chief Legal Counsel

The Honorable Bob Rial
Chair

ATTEST:

Michael Skipper
Executive Director and Secretary