

GNRC MEETING MINUTES

Regional Council Body

INFORMATION

DATE: April 19, 2023

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

QUORUM: Yes

CALLED TO ORDER: 10:30 a.m.

ADJOURNED: 11:17 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

	Members Present
Cheatham Representatives	Kerry McCarver (County), Jerome Terrell (Business Rep)
Davidson Representatives	<i>None present</i>
Dickson Representatives	Bob Rial (County)
Montgomery Representatives	Lee Harrell (County), Joe Pitts (Clarksville)
Houston Representatives	<i>None present</i>
Humphreys Representatives	Mike Pogreba (County)
Robertson Representatives	Billy Vogle (County), Gerald Herman (White House)
Rutherford Representatives	<i>None present</i>
Stewart Representatives	<i>None present</i>
Sumner Representatives	Josh Suddath (County), Jamie Clary (Hendersonville), Scott Avery (Millersville), David Leath (Westmoreland), Jimmy Johnston (Business Rep), Lynn Bowles (Social Equity Rep)
Trousdale Representatives	<i>None present</i>
Williamson Representatives	Rogers Anderson (County), Lisa Anderson (Fairview), Ken Moore (Franklin), Jessica Salamida (Nolensville), Ken McLawhon (Thompson's Station), Kel McDowell (Business Rep)
Wilson Representatives	Randall Hutto (County)
TN General Assembly	<i>None present</i>
Board Secretary	Michael Skipper

APPROVAL OF MINUTES


Recording Secretary


Council Secretary

AGENDA ITEM 1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Bob Rial called the Regional Council meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. and asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 15th meeting.

Mayor Ken Moore moved to approve with Mayor Joe Pitts seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

AGENDA ITEM 3. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

3a. FY 2022 Independent Audit

Mayor Kerry McCarver presented the summary of the FY 2022 audit. He said the audit was performed by Crosslin CPAs and Ms. Jennifer Manternach with Crosslin was in attendance to answer any questions. He noted that the auditor performs detailed testing on one of GNRC's major federal programs each year. This year's audit focused on GNRC's Revolving Loan Fund which is supported by the U.S. Dept. of Commerce Economic Development Administration.

Mayor McCarver said the audit was presented to the GNRC Board of Directors on April 11 and filed with the appropriate officials shortly thereafter. He said it is a clean audit, there were no findings over internal controls or over financial statements, and no findings over federal programs under the Uniform Guidance.

He said GNRC staff implemented a new accounting system over the last two years, and this was the first audit to be performed from that system. Challenges of implementing the new accounting system contributed to a management letter comment related to the preparation of the grant roll forward and recognition of related revenue. He reinforced that the comment is not a finding, it is a recommendation to improve processes.

He said GNRC has a healthy balance sheet with \$4.8M in cash at fiscal year-end to include revenue in the GNRC's revolving loan fund used for small businesses lending. The line of credit was not used, management was able to use cash on hand to cover expenses until grant reimbursements were received.

Ms. Manternach said that the audit went smoothly, and the team was easy to work with.

Mayor Billy Vogle moved to accept the audit. Mr. Ken McLawhon seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The audit can be found at www.GNRC.org/audit.

2b. Annual Updated to Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Mr. Michael Skipper, GNRC Executive Director, gave a background of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). He said that the mayors, business leaders, and state officials are responsible for cooperatively developing a strategy (plan) to align policy and

infrastructure investments with the region's shared vision for economic growth. A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is required by Federal Law to maintain eligibility for grants through the U.S. Dept. of Commerce Economic Development Administration. As the Economic Development District (EDD) for Northern Middle Tennessee, GNRC must develop a CEDS every five years and review/update it annually.

The required components in the CEDS are:

- Economic profile,
- Strength Weaknesses Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis,
- Goals and Objectives for the region, and
- Action plan and performance measures.

Mr. Skipper said the CEDS is important to Council members because it helps the region when working to attract and retain jobs, leverages public investments in infrastructure to support economic development and prosperity, minimizes natural conflicts between competing objectives associated with growth and conservation, supports a quicker response to economic disruptions, and increases competitiveness for state and federal grant opportunities.

The economic development advisory committee is composed of 13 county business representatives, three social equity representatives, and three mayoral representatives. The purpose of this committee is to frame the discussion, help establish goals and objectives, develop, and prioritize strategies and actions, and serve as an ambassador to increase levels of awareness related to regional coordination, resources, and tools.

Mr. Michael Mills, GNRC Director of Economic and Community Development, said that the four guiding principles of CEDS are:

- 1) *Equitable*: promote equity and inclusion throughout the region,
- 2) *Resilient*: increase local capacity to withstand economic disruptions,
- 3) *Innovative*: incorporate emerging technologies and foster ecosystems for technology-based businesses, and
- 4) *Sustainable*: strike a balance between growth, conservation, and preservation to ensure prosperity for this and future generations.

Mr. Mills said that the four strategic goals are:

- 1) *Prepared and Aligned*: is the key to a strong economy is a workforce that has the necessary education and training to meet current and future employment needs,
- 2) *Invested and Competitive*: competitive regional economies foster the attraction, expansion, and retention of businesses and promote an entrepreneurial spirit,
- 3) *Coordinated and Connected*: the economy must be built upon sound infrastructure that moves people, goods, energy, and resources efficiently throughout the market,
- 4) *Vibrant and Livable*: resilient and thriving regions intentionally plan for economic growth that strikes a balance between conservation and preservation and aims to improve the quality life for all residents.

Mayor Moore asked what the total amount of money from the CEDS and infrastructure bill grant programs was. Mr. Skipper said the CEDS is a way to access a variety of grants not a grant

program itself. Mr. Mills said many of the federal agencies are still trying to figure out how to package the money of the infrastructure bill and make it available to communities.

Mayor Vogle said he understands that under the infrastructure grants cities get a share of the money before funds are made available to counties. Mr. Mills agreed with Mayor Vogle and said that TDEC has hired consultants to help go with questions as cities and counties go through this process. Mayor Vogle asked if there is a timeline for these grant applications. Mr. Mills said that there is a huge volume of grants being called back for editing. Mayor Vogle asked when the projects have to be done given how long it is taking to approve the grants. Mr. Mills said that the closeout is September 2026. Mr. Skipper said that TDEC has done a good job rolling out this money.

Mr. Skipper encouraged members to take the short survey at www.gnrc.org/survey/CEDS23 to indicate preferences for participation.

AGENDA ITEM 4. REGULAR REPORTS

4a. Chair's Report

Mayor Rial said the Solid Waste Strike Force team is hard at work. He provided an update on a recent meeting and explained the committee conducted breakout activities in three different groups, each discussing a different issue impacting solid waste. He thanked the staff for facilitating discussion at the recent meeting.

4b. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Skipper introduced Ms. Carson Cooper, Senior Planner, who said that the EPA has set aside funding for the EPA Carbon Pollution Reduction Grant Program. She said that this program provides new funding to develop and implement plans for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other harmful air pollution and provides a \$1M non-competitive planning grant to large MSAs, but each there is an opt-in process to the program to be eligible. GNRC is leading the effort for the Nashville MSA and is coordinating within interested local governments and the TN Dept of Environment and Conservation to develop an application that is due May 31. She said there will be a second opportunity for a competitive grant for plan implementation available in 2024.

Mr. Skipper briefly went over the upcoming meetings.

- **May 17 Transportation Policy Board:**
 - Adopt RTP and Tip Amendments
 - Adopt Performance Measure Target Updates
 - Present Draft Transportation Planning Work Program
- **June 21 Regional Council Body:**
 - Adopt Annual Budget and work Program
 - Elect Council Officers
 - Announce Appointments to Boards and Committees

- July 19 Transportation Policy Board:
 - Adopt TIP Amendments
 - Adopt Transportation Planning Work Program

AGENDA ITEM 5. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Skipper introduced Ms. Ashley Obel, the new Special Projects Coordinator. There was no further business.

AGENDA ITEM 6. ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:17 a.m.