ANNUAL MEETING
OF
NORTHWEST ARKANSAS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, INC.

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING

MARCH 23, 2017

Secretary Bill Witty welcomed and called to order the Annual Meeting of the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc., at 10:10 a.m., Thursday, March 23, 2017, at the Durand Center, North Arkansas College Center Campus, Harrison, Arkansas. Secretary Witty stated that today’s meeting was the first meeting since the passing of the Chairman Wes Fowler on February 1, 2017.

The following entities of government and business were represented:

Baxter County
  Judge Mickey Pendergrass, Baxter County
  Mayor Jeff Braim, Gassville
  Mayor Joe Dillard, Mountain Home

Benton County
  Mayor Pete Christie, Bella Vista
  Mayor Jackie Crabtree, Pea Ridge
  Mayor John Mark Turner, Siloam Springs

Boone County
  Judge Robert Hathaway, Boone County
  Mayor Dan Sherrell, Harrison
  Mr. Bill Witty, Harrison

Carroll County
  Judge Sam Barr, Carroll County
  Mayor Tim McKinney, Berryville
  Mayor Butch Berry, Eureka Springs

Madison County
  Judge Frank Weaver, Madison County
  Mayor Nina Selz, St. Paul

Marion County
  Judge Terry Ott, Marion County
  Mayor Jerald Marberry, Flippin
  Mayor Shawn Lane, Yellville
  Mr. Layton Lee, Yellville
Chairman Joe Dillard called to order the Board of Directors Meeting of the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc., at 10:30 a.m., Thursday, March 23, 2017, at the Durand Center, North Arkansas College Center Campus, Harrison, Arkansas.

Board Members present were:

**Baxter County**  
Judge Mickey Pendergrass  
Mayor Joe Dillard, Mountain Home  
Mr. Jeff Pipkin, Mountain Home Chamber of Commerce

**Benton County**  
Mayor Peter Christie, Bella Vista  
Mayor Jackie Crabtree, Pea Ridge

**Boone County**  
Judge Robert Hathaway  
Mayor Dan Sherrell, Harrison  
Mr. Bill Witty, Harrison

**Carroll County**  
Judge Sam Barr  
Mayor Tim McKinney, Berryville  
Mayor Butch Berry, Eureka Springs

**Madison County**  
Judge Frank Weaver

**Marion County**  
Judge Terry Ott  
Mayor Shawn Lane, Yellville  
Mr. Layton Lee, Yellville

**Newton County**  
Mayor Jan Larson, Jasper  
Mr. Neal Gibson, Western Grove
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Searcy County
      Mr. Woodie Methvin, St. Joe

Washington County
      Judge Joseph Wood

Board Members absent were:

Judge Barry Moehring, Benton County
Mr. David Pemberton, Huntsville
Judge Warren Campbell, Newton County
Judge Jim Harness, Searcy County
Mayor Kevin Elliott, Marshall
Mayor Doug Sprouse, Springdale
Mr. Steve Clark, Washington County

Guests present were:

Mayor Jeff Braim, Gassville
Mayor John Mark Turner, Siloam Springs
Mayor Nina Selz, St. Paul
Mayor Jerald Marberry, Flippin
Johnny James, USDA-Rural Development
Neal Hodges, USDA-Rural Development
Matt Hudson, USDA-Rural Development
Britni Rexwinkle, USDA-Rural Development
Greg Nation, AHTD
Matt Twyford, AEDC
Kathryn Gough, Field Representative for Senator Boozman
Teri Garrett, Field Representative for Congressman Womack
Scott Miller, Anstaff Bank, NWACDC Chair
Bobby Ballinger, Field Representative for Congressman Westerman
Mike Collins, IEA
April Campbell, IEA
Michael Pakko, IEA
Jim Whalen, North Arkansas East/West Corridor Association
Gil Losurdo, North Arkansas East/West Corridor Association
Ross Parker, Workforce Board Member
John Dyess, Altronic Research, Inc., Workforce Development Board Chairman
Carol Short
Steve Lawrence, AHTD
Kim Willis
Joe Willis, NWAEDD
Jeremy Ragland, NWAEDD
Janie Wheeler, NWAEDD
Jay Stallard, NWAEDD
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Libby Robinson, NWAEDD  
Tina M. Cole, NWAEDD  
Eddie Treece, NWAEDD  
Janine Swirsky, NWAEDD  
Kindall Brewer, NWAEDD  
Susan Sangren, NWACDC  
Donna Carney, NWACDC  
April Turner, NWACDC  
Karen Henry, NWACDC  
Michelle Ryan, NWACDC  
Beverly Taylor, NWACDC  
April Plunk, NWACDC  
Roger Rorie, NWACDC  
Taff Grice, NWACDC  
Jo Anna Cartwright, NATS  
Greg LaBonte, NATS  
Aaron Groen, NATS  
Orval Carter, NATS  
Ricky Bray, NATS  
Poxanna McCullough, NATS  
Debbie Waters, NATS  
Corey Dart, NATS  
Richard Crow, NATS  
Ron Schoborg, NATS  
Bob Mills, NATS  
Alta Watson, NATS  

Minutes of the September 21, 2016 meeting were presented and approved on a motion by Mayor Dan Sherrell, seconded by Mr. Bill Witty, and the motion unanimously carried.

The next item of business was discussion of the locality contribution report.

Director Joe Willis discussed the Financial Statements and the NWAEDD 2017 budget. The Executive Committee recommended that the 2017 budget be approved. The budget was approved on a motion by Mr. Woodie Methvin, seconded by Judge Terry Ott, and the motion unanimously carried.

Chairman Dillard said the next item of business was Resolution No. 3066 authorizing the submission of the District’s updated five-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to the Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce. Motion to approve Resolution No. 3066 was made by Judge Frank Weaver and seconded by Mayor Butch Berry and the motion carried unanimously.
Chairman Dillard stated that the next item of business was Resolution No. 3067 certifying that the Northwest Arkansas Revolving Loan Fund is operated in accordance with the policies and procedures of the RLF plan.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 3067 was made by Judge Terry Ott and seconded by Judge Robert Hathaway. Motion carried.

The next agenda item was Resolution No. 3068 authorizing the amending of the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc., Equal Opportunity Compliance Program.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 3068 was made by Mr. Neal Gibson and seconded by Judge Terry Ott. Motion carried.

The final resolution agenda item was Resolution No. 3069 urging the State of Arkansas to repeal Arkansas Act 1050, which prohibits local governments from providing broadband internet services and TO REPEAL OR AMEND ARKANSAS CODE §23-17-409(b), §14-200-101, §14-200-103 AND §14-200-104 WHICH HINDER LOCAL GOVERNMENT FROM PROACTIVELY MANAGING PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY AND MANAGING LOCAL FRANCHISE AGREEMENTS AND to recognize the role of local governments in the deployment of broadband services for the benefit of economic development of this State.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 3069 was made by Mayor Jan Larson and seconded by Mayor Peter Christie. The motion carried but was opposed by Mayor Shawn Lane.

April Campbell, Institute for Economic Advancement (IEA), and Mike Collins, Institute for Economic Advancement (IEA) spoke about Arkansas Cultural and Community Economic Strength System (ACCESS). This is a program being implemented by IEA to assist smaller communities with an assessment of their most pressing needs and barriers to success.

Keynote Speaker – Chief Economist and State Economic Forecaster, Dr. Mike Pakko, Institute for Economic Advancement (IEA) provided an update on the Northwest Arkansas Economy.

Chairman Dillard stated that the review of General Improvement Grant applications submitted to NWAEDD was the next order of business.

After review and discussion of the GIF 2015 applications 196-235 (list attached), Mr. Neal Gibson made a motion to approve the General Improvement Fund applications as presented. Judge Frank Weaver seconded the motion. Motion carried with Mayor Tim McKinney, Mayor Jackie Crabtree, and Mayor Peter Christie abstaining.

Dates for the following Board of Directors meetings were scheduled for July 19, 2017, October 18, 2017 and January 17, 2018.
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There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 12:24 p.m. on a motion by Judge Frank Weaver and seconded by Mr. Woodie Methvin. The motion carried unanimously.

[Signature]
Chairman

Date: 7/19/2017

[Signature]
Secretary

Date: 7-19-17
Chairman Joe Dillard called to order the Board of Directors Meeting of the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc., at 11:08 a.m., Wednesday, July 19, 2017, at the John Paul Hammerschmidt Conference Center, North Arkansas College South Campus, Harrison, Arkansas.

Board Members present were:

**Baxter County**
- Judge Mickey Pendergrass
- Mayor Joe Dillard, Mountain Home
- Mr. Jeff Pipkin, Mountain Home Chamber of Commerce

**Benton County**
- Mayor Jackie Crabtree, Pea Ridge

**Boone County**
- Judge Robert Hathaway

**Carroll County**
- Mayor Tim McKinney, Berryville
- Mayor Butch Berry, Eureka Springs

**Madison County**
- Judge Frank Weaver

**Marion County**
- Mayor Shawn Lane, Yellville

**Newton County**
- Mayor Jan Larson, Jasper
- Mr. Neal Gibson, Western Grove

**Searcy County**
- Mayor Kevin Elliott, Marshall
- Mr. Woodie Methvin, St. Joe
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Washington County
Judge Joseph Wood
Mayor Doug Sprouse, Springdale
Mr. Steve Clark, Fayetteville

Board Members absent were:

Judge Barry Moehring, Benton County
Mayor Peter Christie, Bella Vista
Mayor Dan Sherrell, Harrison
Mr. Bill Witty, Harrison
Judge Sam Barr, Carroll County
Mr. David Pemberton, Huntsville
Judge Terry Ott, Marion County
Mr. Layton Lee, Yellville
Judge Warren Campbell, Newton County
Judge Jim Harness, Searcy County

Guests present were:

Mayor Bill Edwards, Centerton
Matt Twyford, AEDC
Kathryn Gough, Field Representative for Senator Boozman
Travis Flower, Field Representative for Senator Boozman
Teri Garrett, Field Representative for Congressman Womack
Jim Whalen, North Arkansas East/West Corridor Association
Gil Losurdo, North Arkansas East/West Corridor Association
Murry Witcher, FTN Engineering
Stetson Painter, Field Representative for Congressman Crawford
Johnny Hinchey, AR Secretary of State – Outreach Coordinator
Patty Methvin, Harrison Chamber of Commerce
Dr. Randy Esters, Northark
Jeremy Gillam, Speaker of the House of Representatives
Roy Ragland, Chief of Staff – Arkansas House of Representatives
Gretchen Sawyer, NTI
Tom Freking, NTI
Robin Barrett, Baxter County IRT Volunteer
Bronwyn King, Searcy County IRT Volunteer
Marie Morgan, Searcy County IRT Volunteer
Joe Willis, NWAEDD
Jeremy Ragland, NWAEDD
Janie Wheeler, NWAEDD
Jay Stallard, NWAEDD
Libby Robinson, NWAEDD
Tina M. Cole, NWAEDD
Janine Swirsky, NWAEDD
Kindall Brewer, NWAEDD
Judy Diffie, NWAEDD
Jo Anna Cartwright, NATS
Greg LaBonte, NATS

Minutes of the March 23, 2017 meeting were presented and approved on a motion by Judge Frank Weaver, seconded by Judge Mickey Pendergrass, and the motion unanimously carried.

The next item of business was discussion of the locality contribution report.

Next item on the agenda was a presentation by Mr. James Whalen and Mr. Gilbert Losurdo regarding the North Arkansas East/West Corridor – “How Each of Us Can Bring about Change”. Mr. Whalen and Mr. Losurdo are spearheading an effort to revitalize interest in the Highway 412 corridor and presented a summary of their efforts as well as a plan for moving forward to bring this issue to the forefront.

Director Joe Willis introduced Jeremy Gillam, Speaker of the Arkansas House of Representatives, as the guest speaker for the meeting. The Speaker discussed the present state of the legislature and took questions from the audience regarding current events.

Director Joe Willis discussed the amended NWAEDD 2017 budget. The budget was approved on a motion by Judge Weaver, seconded by Judge Robert Hathaway, and the motion unanimously carried.

Next item on the agenda was a presentation by Ms. Janie Wheeler regarding the combining of the Northwest Arkansas Certified Development District with the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District as of July 1, 2017. It was reported that the transition has gone smoothly even though there are items that have to be addressed and resolved as we move forward.

The Executive Director’s Report was the next item of business on the agenda. Director Willis discussed honoring the late Wes Fowler at the October 18, 2017 meeting and inviting his family to attend the meeting. The board was in full support of this effort. Next, Director Willis stated that the District has received the draft of the 2016 audit on June 19, 2017. It is being reviewed by the audit committee and should be available to present at the October board meeting. Director Willis discussed the NWACDC organization’s status after the hiring of its employees by the District on July 1st. The decision was made by its governing members to dissolve and resign and as a result the company will be available should NWAEDD choose to assume the corporation. The executive committee voted to retain the NWACDC Corporation and shelve it for future use as needed.

Presentation of the plaques for the volunteers for their great work with the coordinating of the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) – June 5-12, 2017 in Baxter, Marion and Searcy counties were made to Robin Barrett from Baxter County and Marie Morgan and Bronwyn King both from Searcy
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County. Tina Cole stated that the IRT value of serving 3,818 citizens was $675,930. Chairman Dillard thanked the District staff for all its help in coordinating the IRT.

Chairman Dillard stated that the review of General Improvement Grant applications submitted to NWAEDD was the next order of business.

After review and discussion of the GIF 2015 applications 236-270 (list attached), Judge Pendergrass made a motion to approve the General Improvement Fund applications as presented. Judge Frank Weaver seconded the motion. Motion carried with Mayor Tim McKinney abstaining.

Chairman Dillard requested that the board of directors pass a verbal resolution in support of the efforts of Mr. Gil Losurdo and Mr. James Whalen regarding the Highway 412 corridor project. The motion was made by Mr. Woodie Methvin and seconded by Judge Joseph Wood. Motion carried.

The date for the next Board of Directors meetings is scheduled for October 18, 2017.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m. on a motion by Judge Weaver and seconded by Judge Pendergrass. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman
Date: 10/18/2017

Bill Witty
Date: 10-18-17
Secretary
Chairman Joe Dillard called to order the Board of Directors Meeting of the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc., at 11:07 a.m., Wednesday, October 18, 2017, at the John Paul Hammerschmidt Conference Center, North Arkansas College South Campus, Harrison, Arkansas.

Board Members present were:

**Baxter County**
- Judge Mickey Pendergrass
- Mayor Joe Dillard, Mountain Home
- Mr. Jeff Pipkin, Mountain Home Chamber of Commerce

**Benton County**
- Mayor Peter Christie, Bella Vista
- Mayor Jackie Crabtree, Pea Ridge

**Boone County**
- Mayor Dan Sherrell, Harrison
- Bill Witty, Harrison

**Carroll County**
- Mayor Tim McKinney, Berryville
- Mayor Butch Berry, Eureka Springs

**Madison County**
- Judge Frank Weaver

**Marion County**
- Judge Terry Ott
- Mr. Layton Lee, Yellville

**Newton County**
- Judge Warren Campbell
- Mr. Neal Gibson, Western Grove

**Washington County**
- Mayor Doug Sprouse, Springdale
- Mr. Steve Clark, Fayetteville
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Board Members absent were:

Judge Barry Moehring, Benton County
Judge Robert Hathaway, Boone County
Judge Sam Barr, Carroll County
Mr. David Pemberton, Huntsville
Mayor Shawn Lane, Yellville
Mayor Jan Larson, Jasper
Judge Jim Harness, Searcy County
Mayor Kevin Elliott, Marshall
Mr. Woodie Methvin, St. Joe
Judge Joseph Wood, Washington County

Guests present were:

Mayor Bill Edwards, Centerton
Mayor John M. Turner, Siloam Springs
Rose Fowler
Michelle Fowler Thomas
Lori Fowler Taylor
Kaden Taylor
Madisyn Thomas
Kenndra Thomas
Leslie Rutledge, Arkansas Attorney General
Sam Montgomery, Arkansas Attorney General’s Office
Jeremiah Terrell, Arkansas Attorney General’s Office
Janet Ptacek, Frost PLLC
Drew Williams, AEDC
Sharon Lloyd, Washington County
Donna Braymer, Harrison Daily Times
Lee Dunlap, Harrison Daily Times
Teri Garrett, Field Representative for Congressman Womack
Johnny Hinchey, AR Secretary of State – Outreach Coordinator
Bobby Ballinger, Field Representative for Congressman Westerman
Joe Willis, NWAEDD
Jeremy Ragland, NWAEDD
Janie Wheeler, NWAEDD
Joel Espinoza, NWAEDD
Susan Sangren, NWAEDD
Libby Robinson, NWAEDD
Tina M. Cole, NWAEDD
Janine Swirsky, NWAEDD
Kindall Brewer, NWAEDD
Judy Diffee, NWAEDD
Taff Grice, NWAEDD
JoAnna Cartwright, NATS
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Minutes of the July 19, 2017 meeting were presented and approved on a motion by Judge Frank Weaver and seconded by Judge Mickey Pendergrass.

The next item of business was discussion of the locality contribution report. Director Joe Willis stated we should start seeing 2018 dues start to trickle in as the District will be sending out the locality letters during the month of October.

Chairman Dillard said the next item of business was Resolution No. 3071 authorizing the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc., to file an application with the Arkansas Department of Transportation for continuation of funding for the North Arkansas Transportation Service (NATS) programs in Baxter, Boone, Carroll, Fulton, Izard, Madison, Marion, Newton and Searcy Counties, for the period January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018. Motion to approve Resolution No. 3071 was made by Mayor Butch Berry and seconded by Judge Terry Ott and the motion carried unanimously.

The next Resolution was No. 3072 authorizing the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc., to use local funds to match with the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, for funding of the EDA Planning Grant. Motion to approve Resolution No. 3072 was made by Mayor Jackie Crabtree and seconded by Mayor Berry and the motion carried unanimously.

The next Resolution was No. 3073 amending the NWAEDD 401(k) Plan Vesting Policy Effective December 1, 2017. A motion to approve Resolution No. 3073 was made by Judge Ott and seconded by Judge Weaver and the motion carried.

The next Resolution was No. 3074 – Governing Board Resolution Adopting Agency’s Substance Abuse Testing Policy. Motion to approve Resolution No. 3074 was made by Judge Warren Campbell and seconded by Judge Ott and was carried unanimously.

Chairman Dillard stated that the next item of business was the presentation of the NWAEDD 2016 Independent Auditor’s Report given by Janet Ptacek with FROST LLC. Discussion followed.

Chairman Dillard asked Mr. Bill Witty, Audit Committee Chairman, to provide a report of the Audit Committee August 8, 2017 meeting. Mr. Witty discussed the committee’s position that the District has done well with the engagement process and with the establishment of various oversight committees. The committee members are very pleased with the work that the audit committee and the executive committee have done quarterly. He confirmed for the board that the engagement process and audit process through completion has been very smooth compared to prior years.

Chairman Dillard called for a motion to approve the NWAEDD 2015 Independent Auditor’s Report. The motion was made by Mayor Dan Sherrell and seconded by Mayor Peter Christie and was approved without dissent.
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Director Joe Willis introduced Leslie Rutledge, Arkansas Attorney General, as the guest speaker for the meeting. Attorney Rutledge discussed that she is proud of the fact her office has held “round-table” discussions around the state so they can speak with people face-to-face. Another crusade her office has taken up is the opioid epidemic with the Prescription for Life program. This program is for 9-12 graders and shows them they have an entire life ahead of them. She wants schools to know about this program and get involved. She encouraged families to take their left-over pills to a drop off point and not put them in the water system, but to get them out of the house. She also thanked law officials who keep our schools safe and crime down in our communities. Chairman Dillard thanked Attorney General Rutledge for taking the Attorney General’s Office out into the general public.

Chairman Dillard stated that a very special family was present, the late Wes Fowler’s family. Chairman Dillard stated that Mr. Fowler left evidence of his influence not only in Madison County and Boone County, but the whole State of Arkansas. Chairman Dillard asked Judge Frank Weaver to present the plaque of Honor/Recognition of the late Wes Fowler to his family. Judge Weaver stated that Wes had told him to put God first in your life, family second and your job third. He then introduced the family present; Wife - Rose Fowler; daughters - Michelle Fowler Thomas & Lori Fowler Taylor; grandchildren - Madisyn Thomas, Kenndra Thomas and Kaden Taylor. Judge Weaver read the inscription on the plaque followed by a standing ovation in honor of Wes Fowler by all present.

Director Willis discussed the Financial Statements for period ending August 31, 2017.

Chairman Dillard stated that the next item of business was the report from the Executive Committee from its meeting held September 19, 2017. Chairman Dillard reported the committee’s actions, including its recommendation to the board of directors to reinstate the practice of serving meals at the district meetings. A motion to approve and affirm the recommendations and actions of the executive committee was made by Judge Ott and seconded by Mayor Sherrell. The motion carried.

The Executive Director’s Report was the next item of business on the agenda. Director Willis introduced Mr. Joel Espinoza who has been hired for the Business/Special Projects position. Director Willis stated that the Supreme Court’s GIF Ruling wherein the current practice was unconstitutional. It is anticipated that any remaining funds that will have to be returned to the State of Arkansas.

Chairman Dillard stated that the next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2018.
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There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 12:08 p.m. on a motion by Judge Campbell and seconded by Judge Ott. The motion carried unanimously.

Date: 1/23/2018

Date: 1-23-18