



**Executive Board Virtual Meeting Minutes  
March 9, 2022**

Officers Present	Board Members Present	Board Members Not Present	Centralina Staff and Guests Present
Bobby Compton, Chairman Jay McCosh, Vice Chairman William Morgan, Treasurer	Karen Alexander Peter Ascitutto Cathy Davis Larken Egleston Martha Sue Hall Darrell Hinnant Corinthia Lewis-Lemon Pedro Morey Christine Poinsette Elaine Powell Jennifer Stepp Amelia Stinson-Wesley	Brittany Barnhardt Gene Houpe Bob Hovis Lynn Shue David Williams Jarvis Woodburn, Secretary	Nina Barrett Christina Danis Geraldine Gardner David Hollars Linda Miller Sherika Rich Denise Strosser Jason Wager Kelly Weston Venecia White  <b>Guests</b> Leslie Mazingo, Strategics Consulting Chris Wall, EQV Strategic

**Call to Order**

Chairman Bobby Compton, Town of Mooresville, called the meeting to order.

Kelly Weston, Clerk to the Board, called roll and noted that a quorum was present.

**Moment of Silence**

Chairman Compton called for a moment of silence.

**Amendments to the Agenda.**

There were no amendments to the agenda.

**Consent Agenda**

**1. Approval of the January 12, 2022 Executive Board Meeting Minutes**

Treasurer William Morgan, City of Statesville made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mayor Karen Alexander, City of Salisbury, seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**2. Executive Board Kick-Off and Key Initiatives Update**

Geraldine Gardner, Executive Director, explained that the Executive Board’s role is to serve as decision-makers, collaborators, networkers, and advocates. She also presented a forecast of the Executive Board meeting schedule for the remainder of 2022. She noted that because construction issues have delayed Centralina’s office move, the April Executive Board and May Board of Delegates meetings will be held virtually.

David Hollars, Centralina Workforce Development Board Executive Director, explained that the NC Works Commission conducted a study to examine the opportunities for realigning the

state's workforce system. He further explained that the Commission is interested in consolidating the local workforce development boards for efficiency. He noted concerns about the loss of local control and influence over the workforce system. He encouraged the continued participation of Anson, Cabarrus, Iredell, Lincoln, Rowan, Stanly, and Union Counties in the Centralina Workforce Development Board, noting that Gaston and Mecklenburg Counties have their own workforce boards.

Jason Wager, Assistant Planning Director, provided an update on the implementation of the CONNECT Beyond regional mobility plan, noting that Centralina is supporting the region's metropolitan planning organizations and transit agencies as they incorporate CONNECT Beyond into their long-range plans. He noted that Centralina is also meeting with members of the General Assembly to provide them with implementation updates. He also noted that priority activities for Centralina include establishing a transportation demand management (TDM) program to help employers address transportation issues for commuters; coordinating a funding and partnerships working group to present a unified voice to the state legislature; conducting a regional fare and scheduling study to coordinate human service and fixed route transit connections; and analyzing regional governance models and recommendations. He forecasted that at its April meeting, the Executive Board will be asked to consider a resolution authorizing Centralina to provide matching funds for an NCDOT grant to fund the TDM program.

Linda Miller, Area Agency on Aging Director, provided an update on the Area Agency on Aging's (AAA) implementation of \$4.55 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. She noted that AAA is using a Request for Funding process to identify innovative approaches for responding to new needs that arose during the pandemic, connecting with hard-to-reach populations, and building infrastructure to increase capacity. She also noted that Centralina has issued a Request for Funding to current service providers to distribute \$2.8 million for nutrition support services. She congratulated AAA staff for receiving the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Champion award from the American Society on Aging for Pride in Care, an LGBT cultural competency training program.

Ms. Gardner presented an update on the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). She explained that a steering committee comprised of Centralina Economic Development District (CEDD) board members and county economic development stakeholders will help guide the development of the CEDS plan. She noted that the plan will be developed over the next six to eight months and will focus on economic development and existing industry clusters as well as provide key recommendations for infrastructure, quality of life and other factors that impact the region's ability to attract and maintain economic activity. She also noted that the Executive Board will be asked to provide input into the plan at its September meeting.

### **3. Federal Relations Update**

Leslie Mazingo, Strategics Consulting, presented highlights from the performance report of federal relations activities. She noted that Congress is developing an omnibus bill that will include all funding for FY22. She added that this action will release all the funding that has been authorized in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and will allow for increases in regular, cyclical federal grants. She noted that the US Treasury expects to release the second tranche of ARPA funds by May 10<sup>th</sup>. She encouraged Executive Board members to share with their members of Congress the positive stories about how their communities are planning to spend their ARPA allocations. She noted that Centralina provides grant services including reviewing applications and providing feedback and hosting grant writing training webinars.

Chairman Compton noted that he will attend the National League of Cities conference in Washington, DC next week.

Mayor Alexander made a motion to approve the Strategics Consulting performance report for January through February 2022. Mayor Darrell Hinnant, City of Kannapolis, seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

#### **4. Raleigh Relations Update**

Ms. Weston explained that Raleigh Relations is a three-part approach Centralina implemented two years ago to improve the organization's engagement with the state government.

Chris Wall, EQV Strategic, presented a report of the General Assembly's activities, noting that the legislature is currently wrapping up its long session and the short session will begin on May 18<sup>th</sup>. He noted that both the House and Senate are expected to pass a technical corrections bill to clean up errors in the budget passed in November 2021. He also noted that the voting maps have been finalized for local, state, and federal elections. He further noted that the field of legislative candidates is set following the filing deadline, adding that the General Assembly will likely maintain a Republican majority in 2023. He noted that the General Assembly will have \$100 million in BIL funds to allocate outside of programmatic funding and encouraged Executive Board members to begin identifying projects for which their communities would like to seek funding. He also noted that \$637 million in opioid settlement funds the state is receiving will go to counties and municipalities to fight the opioid epidemic. He further noted that the state will have a \$3.5 billion surplus after this year's tax collections. He also reported that Centralina's direct engagement with the General Assembly began last year and involved educating legislators on CONNECT Beyond and building relationships with them. He noted that those efforts have paid off as staff conducts another round of project briefings with legislators.

Ms. Gardner presented the legislative priorities of the NC Association of Regional Councils of Government (NCARCOG), adding that the focus is on building relationships and solidifying the position of COGs as the regional organizations to steward conversations, develop strategies, and implement services at the regional level. She reported that NCARCOG was able to secure appropriations in the state budget, including \$10 million to help support local governments in implementing ARPA funds. She explained that Centralina is providing this ARPA support to its members by leading a peer consortium, offering monitoring services, and coordinating a regional information exchange. She also reported that NCARCOG received \$6 million in state funds to support disaster relief and recovery and regional resilience. She explained Centralina will use its allocation to continue the Regional Resilience Collaborative project and work on housing and infrastructure resilience.

Ms. Weston explained that Centralina is proposing hosting a legislative networking event to bring together Delegates and members of the region's state legislative delegation. She added that the event would be held in person within the region and would include a briefing session on regional issues as well as time for elected-to-elected engagement on community-specific matters.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall suggested grouping the counties together in threes instead of holding one large event for all counties.

Council Member Corinthia Lewis-Lemon, Town of Morven, also suggested keeping the event to a smaller scale.

#### **5. Chairman's At-Large Appointments to the Executive Board**

Chairman Compton explained that Centralina's bylaws allow the Chair to appoint up to two Delegates to serve as at-large members on the Executive Board. He reported that he is re-appointing Council Member Jennifer Stepp, City of Gastonia, and Mayor Karen Alexander, City of Salisbury to the at-large seats.

## **6. Secretary and Treasurer Installation**

Chairman Compton noted that Secretary Jarvis Woodburn, Anson County, was unable to attend the meeting because he was participating in the CLT Aviation Academy that evening. He also noted that Treasurer Morgan was traveling and had to sign off the meeting early. He explained that the Secretary Woodburn and Treasurer Morgan would be sworn in at the next Executive Board meeting.

## **Comments from the Executive Board and Centralina Staff**

There were no comments from the Executive Board or Centralina Staff.

## **Comments from the Executive Director**

Ms. Gardner reported that the Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition is working with NCDOT to update the state's electric vehicle infrastructure plan and will also work to update the region's electric vehicle readiness plan. She added that these plans will create a pathway for utilizing BIL funding to build the infrastructure for electric vehicles. She noted that there will be a series of meetings on Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup> in Rowan and Anson Counties to discuss funding opportunities available for electric vehicle charging and transit buses through the Volkswagen settlement.

## **Comments from the Chair**

Chairman Compton noted that nominations for Centralina's Region of Excellence Awards are due March 28<sup>th</sup>.

## **Adjournment**

With no further business to be discussed, Chairman Compton adjourned the meeting at 6:13 p.m.