

## Economic Development Council

# Executive Committee

## Meeting Minutes

October 11, 2017 • 1:00 PM • Pinetop Country Club • 6734 Country Club Drive • Pinetop, AZ

Attendees	Present/Absent	Number of Absences for 2017
Jodie Filardo, Chairman	Present	1
Paul Watson, Vice-Chairman	Present	0
Rich Bowen, Chair-At-Large	Absent	2
Jesse Thompson	Present	0
Paul Ramsey	Present	0

**Guests:** Ginger Johnson, GPREP

**Staff:** Teri Drew, Regional Director  
 Julia Sawyer, Executive Assistant

### I. Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

Vice Chairman Paul Watson called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM. Introductions were done around the room. Chairman Jodie Filardo was present by phone. A quorum was present.

Ginger Johnson from the Greater Prescott Region Economic Partnership was present as a guest.

### II. Approval of Minutes – June 1, 2017

Vice-Chairman Watson asked for questions or comments on the minutes from June 1, 2017. Hearing none, he called for a motion to approve. **Jesse Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes of June 1, 2017, seconded by Paul Ramsey. The motion carried unanimously.**

### III. Chairman's Report

#### ➤ Assistance to Coal Communities Update

Vice Chairman Watson made the announcement that Navajo County has received preliminary approval for their pre-application for the EDA Assistance to Coal Communities (ACC) Grant. Regional Director Teri Drew commented that if pre-approval is offered, you are considered funded unless the contract is not signed. Vice Chairman Watson said that the next step will involve hiring a consulting firm to spend time evaluating the available resources to attract

other industry to replace jobs lost through the coal industry. Vice Chairman Watson reported that he has been in touch with a firm that recently did a study for the Northwestern New Mexico Council of Governments, similar to the Navajo/Apache County project. He noted that there won't be a need to spend much time or money on an economic impact study, as Arizona State University did one as recently as 2013, as well as other studies that have been done in the recent past. These will need to be updated to reflect current impacts, however. Vice Chairman Watson remarked that he would like the consultant to spend more time evaluating available resources to attract other industry. Vice Chairman Watson noted that another area to be discussed is the lack of resources available. Supervisor Thompson reported that USDA approached him regarding available land for development, and he shared about the free Navajo land within the Winslow city limits.

Ms. Drew congratulated Vice Chairman Watson and Navajo/Apache County, making mention of Navajo County Assistant Economic and Workforce Development Director Stephanie Ray for her work on developing the grant. Ms. Drew asked about the plans for the existing power plants, Navajo Generating Station (NGS) and Cholla, and the decommissioning or donation of those plants. It was noted that disassembly is likely off the plate because of the cost (\$135 million to disassemble) as well as the fact that there is usable infrastructure on site. Vice Chairman Watson replied that there have not been discussions with Arizona Public Service (APS) and Salt River Project (SRP) regarding the Cholla plant officially, but NGS discussions are going on with several parties looking to purchase the plant. Ms. Drew noted that it would be nice for Navajo County to know who might be considering purchasing the power plant, to market it to clean energy industries. He said that the pending grant will include these talks as part of the whole picture. Vice Chairman Watson asked for questions or comments, and concluded his report, noting that the fall colors are in full bloom.

Chairman Jodie Filardo excused herself from the meeting.

#### **IV. Director's Report**

##### **➔ Program Update**

Vice Chairman Watson turned the meeting over to Teri Drew for the Director's Report. Ms. Drew continued to discuss the EDA ACC grant, noting that Coconino County's application for ACC was denied at this time, however, she had reached out to EDA to see if their application could be applied to other EDA funds, to which they replied that it may qualify for Economic Adjustment grant. Ms. Drew also reported that, in total, EDA awarded 10 ACC projects, 2 of which were in Arizona, the Navajo County project and a project for the Hopi Tribe. The Seattle Region received less than \$1 million as the allocation for the region. A question was asked about the Economic Adjustment category, to which Ms. Drew replied that this would involve any project that deals with an economic condition. Job loss in Page is considered an adverse economic condition, making Coconino County's application eligible for Economic Adjustment. Other discussion followed regarding the disbursement of available funding.

Ms. Drew reported that she will be on medical leave for several weeks beginning next week. She asked that communications be directed to Julia Sawyer on her behalf. She noted that Leah Cickavage, Operations Manager, would also offer assistance to Julia as needed.

Ms. Drew then reported on the Tourism Forum, thanking the Tourism Committee for their work and commitment. She noted that the registrations came to around 70 people, and the optional dinners were well received. She noted appreciation for the Pinetop Country Club for the beautiful accommodations, and for the excellent service. Ms. Drew reported that more than 21 prizes were donated for registrants. The Tourism Committee's overall goal was to raise enough money to offer mini grants for the EDC communities as had been done successfully in the past, but the

revenue is not there to offer them this time. The funds will be set aside to offer educational workshops and forums for the EDC as a way to complement the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) goals.

Ms. Drew then reported that, because Tourism Committee Chairman Susan Johnstad is resigning from the Committee in December, the Committee made the recommendation to approve Vice Chairman Michelle Conway as incoming Chairman, and they also recommended Matthew Williams as Vice Chairman. Ms. Drew asked Vice Chairman Watson to call for a motion and a vote.

**Paul Ramsey made the motion to approve the appointment of Michelle Conway as the Chairman of the Tourism Committee and Matthew Williams as the Vice Chairman, effective in December 2017. Supervisor Thompson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### ➔ Membership Considerations

Ms. Drew reported that the Membership Committee met in September to review new applications for EDC membership. She commended the Membership Committee Chairman Carol Curtis and the other committee members, Linda Hatch and Ed Steinback, for their candid discussion regarding one application in particular. Ms. Drew noted that, earlier this summer, Hopi Tribe Economic Development Corporation's president Stephen Puhr had approached NACOG about membership on the EDC. Mr. Puhr was given an application for membership and, because the Hopi Tribe was not a part of the Economic Development District (EDD), Ms. Drew informed him that assessments of \$.07 per capita are required for membership to the EDD. Mr. Puhr sent his application in with an assessment check for over \$1,000. His application was brought before the Membership Committee, and the Committee noted that there were bylaw concerns to accommodate tribal interests. Following the membership committee's discussions and recommendations, the check was returned to Mr. Puhr until such a time that an opening would be made available for an At-Large seat on the EDC. Ms. Drew noted that a Yavapai County seat may be vacant soon, and possibly another At-Large seat may be made available. Concerns expressed by the Membership Committee were to the point that perhaps the Bylaws would need to be revised to accommodate all tribal areas. Ms. Drew asked the Executive Committee for discussion regarding whether to propose to Regional Council to amend the Bylaws to have tribal sector representation on the EDC, or to appoint Mr. Puhr to an At-Large seat when one becomes available. Discussion followed regarding whether it would be adequate to make an At-Large appointment or approach the Regional Council, who, as the Board of Directors for the NACOG Region, has seats available for all tribes. Ms. Drew noted that the EDA actually encouraged Mr. Puhr to contact us for membership. It was noted that there could be a conflict regarding a potential unfair balance in favor of tribal areas, allowing District funds access by the tribes in addition to other federal tribal funding sources. A question was asked if this had happened in the past, to which Ms. Drew replied that it had happened with Kayenta tribal and town council members in the past, who filled At-Large seats on the EDC with no special consideration. There are currently no tribal representatives filling At-Large seats. Ms. Drew clarified that there are currently 6 seats per County (Apache, Coconino, Navajo and Yavapai) on the EDC, and 6 At-Large seats. Following this discussion, **Supervisor Thompson made a motion to hold Mr. Puh's application until such a time as an At-Large seat becomes available, seconded by Paul Ramsey. Vice Chairman Watson called for a vote, the motion carried unanimously.** Ms. Drew noted that further conversation on tribal interests can continue as interest is gained and after everyone can review the membership list, without amending the Bylaws at this time.

Ms. Drew then brought forward the membership application of Bruce Greco, which was evaluated by the Membership Committee at 25 evaluation points for the Private Sector Apache County vacancy. She highlighted the application and qualifications of Mr. Greco, noting his experience in natural resources and forestry/biomass issues. Ms. Drew also noted that we do not currently have anyone representing forestry issues on the Council, yet it is a part of our CEDS. Mr. Greco is contracted with Apache County, and is recommended by Supervisor Doyle Shamley. Vice Chairman Watson commented that he knows Mr. Greco personally, as they both serve on common committees, and noted that he has a lot of respect for Mr. Greco. Ms. Drew also pointed out that Mr. Greco has

actually represented most of Northern Arizona forest land at some juncture in his career. Vice Chairman Watson asked for comments and questions, and called for a motion. **Supervisor Thompson moved to approve the application of Bruce Greco for Apache County Private Sector, seconded by Vice Chairman Watson. The motion carried unanimously.** Ms. Drew concluded her report, thanking the Executive Committee for meeting today and for supporting the Tourism Forum.

**V. Member Comments**

Vice Chairman Watson called for member comments. Paul Ramsey reported that SRP received approval for their St. Johns Coronado Generating Station from the EPA, making it operational through the year 2025. Vice Chairman Watson also commented on conversations he has had regarding Coronado, who is planning to do a 2nd test burn of biomass, increasing the percentage from the initial 2%. He commented that biomass is becoming a bottleneck in the forestry thinning process, so increasing biomass burning in the power plant would be helpful for the watershed.

Ms. Drew noted that a note from Arizona Corporation Commissioner Dunn's office noted that the bioenergy forum that was announced at the August meeting of the EDC has been rescheduled to December.

**VI. Public Comments**

Vice Chairman Watson called for comments from the public. There were none.

**VII. Adjournment**

Vice Chairman Watson called for a motion to adjourn. **So moved by Supervisor Thompson and seconded by Paul Ramsey. The meeting adjourned at 1:42 PM.**

*NACOG EDC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – October 11, 2017*  
Approved: