

Land of Sky Regional Council
April 26, 2017
Annual Meeting



Please mute all electronic devices, including cell phones, laptops, tablets, and recorders. Also, Delegates are requested to state their names when moving on orders of business. Thank you!

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Invocation
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
- IV. Roll Call
- V. Modification and Approval of Agenda
- VI. Public Comment
- VII. Recognition of Special Guests
- VIII. Chairman's Comments and Roundtable
- IX. Approval of Minutes from the March Regular Meeting
- X. Annual Meeting
 - A. Nomination and Election of 2017/18 Council Officers and Executive Committee
- XI. Consideration and Approval of Consent Agenda Items
 - A. March FY2017 Treasurer's Report
- XII. Presentations/Recognition
 - A. Workforce Development Initiative: Backpacks to Briefcases – Nathan Ramsey, Director. Mountain Area Workforce Development Board (MAWDB)
- XIII. Old Business
- XIII. New Business
- XIV. Executive Director's Report
- XIV. Important Dates
- XV. Adjournment



BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

- Subject:** March Board of Delegates Meeting Minutes
- Item Number:** IX. Approval of Minutes from the March Regular Meeting
- Responsible Party:** Zia Rifkin, Administrative Services
- Attachment(s):** Minutes from the meeting of March 2017
- Background:** Attached is the March 2017 Board of Delegates meeting minutes
- Staff Recommendation:** Recommend acceptance of the March meeting minutes.
- Suggested Motion(s):** Move to approve the March meeting minutes as submitted

Meeting of
Land of Sky Regional Council Board of Delegates
March 29, 2017

Minutes

- I. Call to Order - Larry Harris called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.
- II. Invocation - Charles Dickens gave the invocation.
- III. Pledge of Allegiance - All stood as Larry Harris led the Delegates in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- IV. Roll Call – Justin Hembree called the roll. The following members were present: Larry Rogers, Larry Harris, Anne Coletta, Bob Davy, Brenda Mills, Shelia Norman, George Morosani and Charles Dickens. The following guests were present: Matt Settlemyer, Dean Luebbe, and Hunter Goosman. Justin Hembree announced there was not a quorum present to conduct business. Delegate Patrick Fitzsimmons arrived after roll call.
- V. Modification and Approval of Agenda - No action taken.
- VI. Public Comment - The public comment period opened. No one made any public comments.
- I. Recognition of Special Guests
- II. Chairman's Comments and Roundtable – Ken Cramer - As the Executive Director for Givens Highland Farms, he shared that the community has a lot going on with many additions to the original campus. The biggest project is Meadowmont an 18-acre development of new independent living homes. Phase I is currently under construction with additional homes planned in Phases II and III. Highland Farms' Health Center provides 5-star care and is the original development on the campus. Givens purchased the site in 2012. Currently there are 350 residents on the campus with a substantial waitlist. Givens employs just over 200 workers at the site. Ken Cramer shared that Givens is excited to have become a part of Highland Farms. The Master Plan for the campus includes plans for a new assisted care facility and other developments. He invited Delegates to drive through the community after the meeting, if they were interested. Dean Luebbe – The Assistant Town Manager/Financial Services Director and Matt Settlemyer, the Town Manager for the Town of Black Mountain shared that the Town has some projects of regional interest including the Greenway Project, funded by a \$2 Million NCDOT grant. The funding will extend the greenway to make the connection with the two greenways already in place. Regionally, the project will tie into Buncombe County's vision for their greenway system. In addition, the Town is involved in the 9-Element Watershed Project. The Town owns a golf course and works to mitigate the effects of the course on surrounding waterways. The project includes a hand-full of stormwater quality projects including street improvements. The Town is excited about the impact the projects can have on the water quality of the Swannanoa River and hopes that these projects will generate interest in other communities looking to bring economic development, improve quality of life and reduce impacts on fragile watersheds. The Town appreciates Land of Sky and Erica Anderson for grant administration and project development concerning the Avadim project and the Liberty Road Interchange, which will eventually bring hundreds of jobs to the region and will be where the new Health Campus for Montreat College is located. Larry Harris – Shared that the 80 acres, owned by Montreat College for about 20 years has not been utilized as the school never had the funds to develop it. The stated plan that college leadership and their board has is that they think they need 2500 students to be a viable institution- they cannot do that in Montreat but they can do it on this property. Bob Davy – Shared that the Town of Fletcher is working on the budget and has had a number of discussions about the water consolidation currently under consideration by Henderson County. Larry Rogers – Shared that Henderson County has quite an aggressive building program going with plans for a new high school, a new Early College (on the BRCC campus), and the BRCC expansion with Wingate and Pardee Hospital. He mentioned discussion with Hendersonville about the water system as there is currently some

disagreement with how decisions are made. Anne Coletta – Shared that the Village of Flat Rock has started its budget process and has received a grant from Duke to put in electric charging stations. Mentioned that at this point the Village feels the same way as Fletcher. Charles Dickens – Shared that the Regional Advisory Council on Aging will meet on April 13th in Madison County on the campus of A-B Tech and the spotlight will be on the county with presentations by Beacon of Hope and other agencies serving elders in that jurisdiction. He made mention of the President's proposed budget and shared that the current list of activities to be eliminated includes SHIP, SCSEP, SCP and FGP and many others. The AAA staff will be providing information regarding how these programs relate to the jurisdictions in the LOSRC region. He urged Delegates not to ignore the information received, but to make contact with members of the Congress to call to their attention what is happening in localities with these programs and the benefits those provide. Brenda Mills – Shared that the City of Asheville is planning the fifth annual Government – Business Connect exhibition happening on April 19th at the US Cellular Center. The City in collaboration with other local agencies is hosting the event, which will include training and opportunities for businesses to present information to regional government and public agencies. The City has reached out to purchasing contacts across the state. She also shared that the region is experiencing a boom with all of the Connect NC funding and the City's \$74 Million dollar bond. The City has also approved funding for a disparity study to review the City's contracting process. The intended outcome of the study is to encourage more minorities and women-owned businesses to connect with the City. Shelia Norman – Shared that in Transylvania County, Rise & Shine/Neighbors in Ministry is getting ready to do a collaborative project with the Boys & Girls Club. She also shared that the non-profit is hosting a fundraiser, "Motown Memories", that will be held on April 29th at the Brevard Music Center. George Morosani – Shared that everything is buzzing along in Buncombe County and price rates are going up on industrial space.

III. Approval of Minutes from the January Regular Meeting – No action taken.

IV. Consideration and Approval of Consent Agenda Items – No action taken.

V. Presentations/Recognition -

A. Broadband Infrastructure in the LOSRC Region – Hunter Goosmann, Executive Director of ERC Broadband shared with Delegates that ERC is a non-profit broadband network and works to support a number of things including the development of additional network space. ERC creates a fast-lane highway throughout the region (from Franklin to Sparta). The greater network, though, is coordinated from Washington DC to Charlotte. He informed the Board that ERC has purchased super-paths called Lambda and provides connection points for carrier networks.

Larry Harris asked about the infrastructure and was informed that most of the networks are aerial due to the topography of the mountains. ERC has many fiber highways and the state has a lot of those, too. He shared that the North Carolina Next Generation Network (NC-NGN) provides high-speed broadband in the Research Triangle Area. West NGN is the local project that is working to expand opportunities in the LOSRC region. The West NGN effort is led by six municipalities and universities with support from LOSRC.

George Morosani asked how to connect and Hunter Goosman shared that ERC serves networks (Charter, Frontier, Verizon, etc.). He mentioned that ERC also has dark fiber availability. The advantages to internet provider companies is they save money as their main concern is getting from point a to point b. Companies like Charter, and others, are using ERC to expand their businesses. Larry Harris asked how would it work to bring high-speed internet to the citizens of Buncombe and Madison Counties and it was explained that the first step is to put out a request for information (RFI) for the high-speed broadband services. Currently, under state law, municipalities cannot operate broadband networks. Ultimately, at the end of the day, ERC wants to enable competition, which would bring more competition and lead to better services and better prices. West NGN and LOSRC are working with a multitude of people to develop the RFI to bring this type of high-speed internet to the municipalities in the region. The initiative is trying to encourage those with money to invest funds in the high-speed network and an RFI may assist in finding an internet service provider and is planned for release in the near future. This is a tremendous opportunity. Hunter Goosman provided history on the

high-speed broadband network in the greater Raleigh area. He also explained how megabytes per second works- a 60 mbps network is shared by all consumers on the network so individual customers do not receive that 60 mbps speed. He also shared that one really neat thing going on Mitchell/Yancey Counties is Dr. North who can connect over the internet with the school systems and check out students who are sick without having to leave his office.

George Morosani inquired if ERC connects to every carrier separately and Hunter Goosmann explained that ERC can serve its customers directly (6% of ERC's business is to commercial groups). He continued that ERC was not created with the expectation of being here 12 years-in as the expectation was that the incumbent groups would have developed the capability to take over those connections. The majority of groups that ERC connects to are government entities in the Federal Building in downtown Asheville. Internet service providers such as Charter, Verizon, etc., do not come to ERC to purchase bandwidth. Concerning the "orange line" that runs from Asheville down to Hendersonville ERC and Morris Communications have legal agreements to share the fibers on each other's networks. He shared that at the end of the day, if there is competition, everyone wins.

Hunter Goosmann shared that we are at this point because FCC data shows censor blocks on high-speed data (internet service providers have to self-report to the feds). The data is showing that the choice for those living in rural areas is one or none broadband internet service providers. He also noted that DSL network service degrades as it moves away from the central office.

Bob Davy asked how a carrier connects and was informed that ERC provides those fibers. The only way to distribute broadband is to utilize fibers over existing infrastructure. A fiber optic network is cheaper to maintain and more manageable.

Discussion occurred that 20% is commercial the rest is education and government. ERC is putting fiber down major pathways. Cable providers purchase IRU (through a 20-year lease) from ERC. Larry Harris shared that ERC has just put fiber down to Montreat. Potentially, homes in Montreat could get high-speed internet. Hunter Goosmann shared that carrier companies would only have to put fiber from Montreat outward. Places like Spruce Pine, McDowell and Mitchel Counties, etc., that those last mile connections could be made by carriers. IRU is a lease (20 years at a time) that cable providers purchase from ERC. A goal of the West NGN project is the overall growth of internet technologies.

Justin Hembree explained that if through the RFI we get some providers or a provider that wants to be very aggressive, lines could be laid out to homes within a month. We will also continue to push for and ensure that there is some type of funding available that local governments can use to put that infrastructure in place. Hunter Goosmann clarified that commercial groups will build out the network; however, commercial groups are unable to secure government funding. He shared that the first phase of the West NGN project is to work with those areas that have a lot of fiber and then build out to the more rural areas. Commercial groups will not pay to build out to the rural areas. In WNC, we want to build out and then keep building out further and further. ERC works with other groups to help them document the fiber resources that are already available.

Discussion occurred regarding actions that jurisdictions can take when looking at the project from the town/governmental side and how LOSRC can help promote the proliferation of broadband in the region. Hunter Goosmann shared that ERC provides information to help people make informed decisions.

Delegates can contact Justin Hembree or Erica Anderson and request to be a part of West NGN Phase II. ERC is a facilitator collaborating on the project and working to put that fiber in place to extend service outward.

VI. Old Business

XIII. New Business –

A. Election of Officers – Justin Hembree, Executive Director shared that the Nominating Committee is working to get the slate of officers out by the April meeting. He also reminded board members that the April meeting is on the 26th and the meeting location is in Hendersonville. More information will be provided on the meeting location in Hendersonville for the April meeting.

XIV. Executive Director's Report –

A. Federal Legislative Update – Justin Hembree shared that he was in Washington, DC all last week; a lot of stuff was going on there. The NC League of Municipalities hosted a luncheon for the congressional contingency from our state. Congressman Meadows Chief-of-Staff attended. Discussion occurred about what impacts could happen, if the President's proposed budget blueprint happens. The budget proposal transfers \$54 Billion from the domestic budget to the defense budget, which would mean numerous cuts to domestic discretionary spending. The President's budget proposes to eliminate ARC, EDA, TIGER Grants, and other programs mentioned earlier today, as well as cuts to the EPA, CSBG, HUD, Senior Corp, and CDBG. The NC Congressional Delegation received the message that we want to be partners through this process as there is certainly a need, as we understand it; that there is Defense spending that needs to be done. The way that LOSRC is going to do that is by telling stories. We are going to have to show results – tell the story (results) from the standpoint of economic/community investments. If that funding- as an example, SCP goes away; it will be important to show the state how much more funding will be needed to meet the needs of those whose support programs have gone away. Other events going on in DC included NADO On the Hill and a lot of ARC folks were in town for their event. Kentucky's Senator McConnell has made it very clear that ARC is not going away and actually proposed a \$50 Million dollar spending increase and to move ARC's DC offices to somewhere in the ARC region. Justin Hembree continued that we do not want to be obstructers in this process- we want to talk about the impact those cuts could have and tell the story about how these programs affects the wellbeing of our region. We are still working on pulling information together and then email blasts will start to go out to both congressional offices that serve the LOSRC region and who are very willing to work with us. He also mentioned that Representative Mark Meadows would be at CIBO, which will be held at the Sherrill Center this Friday at noontime.

XV. Important Dates – The next Council meeting will be Wednesday, April 26, 2017.

XIV. Adjournment – Larry Harris adjourned the meeting.



BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

- Subject:** Annual Meeting – Nomination and Election of 2017/18 Council Officers and Executive Committee
- Item Number:** X.Annual Meeting; Item A.
- Responsible Party:** 2017 Nominating Committee, Justin Hembree
- Attachment(s):** N/A
- Background:** The Nominating Committee recommends the following slate for the 2016/17 Council Officers and Executive Committee:
- Chair – **Larry Harris**, Black Mountain
Vice Chair – **Wayne Brigman**, Madison County
Secretary – **Patrick Fitzsimmons**, Weaverville
Treasurer – **Mike Hawkins**, Transylvania County
Past Chair – **George Goosmann**, Biltmore Forest
County Delegate – **John Mitchell**, Henderson County
Municipal Delegate – **Open** and Seeking Nominations
Aging/Volunteer Services Representative – **Charles Dickens**
At-Large Representative – **Sheila Norman**
- Staff Recommendation:** N/A
- Suggested Motion(s):** Motion to accept Nominating Committee’s recommendation and elect Council Officers/Executive as recommended. Or, nominations may be made from the floor. It should be noted that officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer) must be elected officials per the Council Bylaws.



BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

- Subject:** March FY2017 Treasurer's Report
- Item Number:** XI. Consent Agenda, Item A
- Responsible Party:** Vickie Thomas, Finance Director
- Attachment(s):** March FY2017 Treasurer's Report
- Background:** Attached is the March FY2017 Treasurer's Report. The report outlines year-to-date revenues and expenditures. Also included is cash balance information, fund balance reporting, and member dues information.
- Staff Recommendation:** Recommend acceptance of March's FY2017 Treasurer's Report.
- Suggested Motion(s):** The Treasurer's Report, if not pulled, will be accepted as part of the motion to approve the consent agenda.

**Land of Sky Regional Council
Treasurer's Report
March, 2017**

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
<u>YTD Report of Receipts & Expenditures</u>		
Total Annual Budget	\$ 15,156,906	
Year-to-Date Revenues	\$ 8,343,430	55.05%
Year-to-Date Expenditures	(8,269,933)	54.56%
Grant/Contract Cash Balance	\$ 73,497	
Year-to-Date Target Percent		75.00%

Cash Balance Report

Total Cash Balance at beginning of month	\$ 2,324,157
Cash Received during month	953,363
Cash Expenditures for month	(1,143,485)
Total Cash Balance at end of month	\$ 2,134,035

Fund Balance Report at 6/30/16 (Audited)

Unassigned	\$ 895,868
Restricted-Stabilized by State Statute	899,274
Total Fund Balance	\$ 1,795,142

Assessments (Dues) Report

YTD Billed to Member Governments, 3rd quarter	\$ 163,719
Collected to Date	(163,719)
Balance Due	\$ -



BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

- Subject:** Workforce Development Initiative: Backpacks to Briefcases (B2B)
- Item Number:** IX. Presentations/Recognition; Item A.
- Responsible Party:** Nathan Ramsey, Director of Workforce Development
- Attachment(s):** "B2B" Flyer, Employer List, Talent Jam College Edition flyer, and op-ed from News & Observer by Tom White with NC State on B2B
- Background:** Backpacks to Briefcases is an initiative to assist recent two-year and four-year college graduates who remain unemployed or underemployed after receiving their degree. The program matches graduates with local employers for a paid internship of up to 12 weeks. The interns must be a resident of Buncombe, Henderson, Madison or Transylvania Counties.
- Staff Recommendation:** None
- Suggested Motion(s):** N/A

B2B

#backpacksto briefcases



Backpacks to Briefcases helps 2016 and prior college graduates (four-year and two-year colleges and universities) secure professional internships that may lead to permanent employment opportunities. The internships are for up to twelve weeks, 32 hours per week. Interns will earn \$12 per hour. The participating recent graduates must be a resident of Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, or Transylvania Counties. As a requirement of participating in this program, the recent college graduate must enroll in a job readiness, soft skills class to participate in the program. There is no obligation by participating host businesses to permanently hire the individual following the internship. To participate, the recent graduate must visit a local NCWorks Career Center in the four county region (Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania Counties) and meet with a career advisor who will determine if the recent graduate meets income and eligibility qualifications and will enroll them in NCWorks.gov as a job seeker. To locate your nearest NCWorks Career Center, please visit: www.ncworks.gov

The recent graduate must be unemployed or under-employed and have a valid driver's license or state issued ID. There are a limited number of internships, around 30 due to funding availability. Recent graduates will go through a competitive process to be considered for an internship opportunity. The deadline to apply for a **Backpacks to Briefcases internships** at the local NCWorks Career Center is Monday, April 10 at 5:00 pm. To apply, the recent graduate must visit the NCWorks Career Center in person and bring their completed B2B application and resume.

The purpose of **Backpacks to Briefcases** is to provide the recent graduate with real world job experience and the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and abilities. The program creates a new pathway to help recent graduates find employment opportunities that will take advantage of their earned degrees. Interns will attend a networking event to match them with the right host business. Businesses who need the assistance with current projects gain the benefit of a free, qualified intern. To participate, businesses must complete a work-site agreement, monitor time sheets and provide the intern with an evaluation at the end of the internship. There are almost 40 local businesses and organizations participating in B2B as a potential host offering over 60 internships.

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Participating Local Businesses and Organizations



Alicia Sisk-Morris, CPA
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wcca
WESTERN CAROLINA
COMMUNITY ACTION

For more information, contact nathan@landofsky.org. **Backpacks to Briefcases** is funded through the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA). Mountain Area Workforce Development Board, an agency of Land of Sky Regional Council, is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider of Career Development, Training and Employment Services.

MOUNTAIN AREA
workforce
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OP-ED

SEPTEMBER 09, 2016 4:33 PM

Backpacks to Briefcases helps millennials launch careers

BY TOM WHITE

It is, unfortunately, an increasingly common story for millennials: graduating with a bachelor's degree only to find a soft labor market coupled with a supply-side horde of experienced dislocated workers competing for scarce entry-level jobs in a post-recession economy.

So what does a millennial do when faced with this dilemma? In many cases, the answer is to take a temporary job in the service industry or with a community-based organization while remaining vigilant for career openings in fields of interest.

These graduates often need just a modicum of targeted support to make the connections that can propel them to personal and career success and fulfillment. But without that support, there's tremendous risk that a starter job slides into underemployment that can deflate the most ambitious young grad.

For some North Carolina residents facing this situation, there's an answer. The Backpacks to Briefcases program provides paid internships and access to job openings that better align with career aspirations, enabling underemployed grads to launch their professional careers.

The program accepts recent college grads – unemployed or underemployed and out of school for six to 24 months – who are residents of Wake or Johnston counties; the Cape Fear region encompassing New Hanover, Columbus, Brunswick and Pender counties; and the Kerr Tar region, which includes Warren, Vance, Granville, Franklin and Person counties. Students work 30 hours per week for \$11 per hour. Internships last eight weeks and include a mandatory weeklong orientation of enhanced career development exercises including resume preparation, soft-skill development and interview and career-fair preparation.

Bitu Asgari is one prime example of the power of Backpacks to Briefcases. After graduation, she secured an administrative support position with a community-based organization in Raleigh. The bachelor's degree that Bitu earned from N.C. State in political science was nicely complemented by a very impressive quantitative analytical skill set. So it was really no surprise when her Backpacks to Briefcases enrollment produced an internship at international investment bank Credit Suisse in Research Triangle Park. She capitalized upon that introduction to the world of finance to secure a permanent, full-time management position as a risk management/profit and loss analyst with Bank of America in Charlotte, a logical progression from her internship experience.

With aggregate student education loan debt at roughly \$1.3 trillion, projected to rise to an astounding \$2 trillion by 2020, it certainly would be fortuitous to see a new focus on this looming debt bubble and the havoc it could wreak. An initiative such as Backpacks to Briefcases, currently funded by a grant from Duke Energy Foundation, produces a plethora of public-policy benefits, some labor market exchange efficiencies, some productivity enhancement and some relieved parental co-signers on loan obligations. It also has the propensity to make employers happy that they have another mechanism to bridge the insidious skills gap.

Backpacks to Briefcases' quintessential feature just might be the power, potential and promise of the millennial generation. We all have a stake in their personal and professional success. We can do more to help bring that about. With broad-based support, Backpacks to Briefcases can be scaled up across the state – and eventually across the Southeast and the nation – to become a true force for millennials and for the world they will soon lead.

Tom White is director of economic development partnership at N.C. State University.

MORE INFO

Backpacks to Briefcases is a partnership between N.C. State, EDSI and the Capital Area Workforce Development Board and funded by a grant from Duke Energy. For more information, visit nando.com/backpacks or email tjwhite3@ncsu.edu.



SUGGESTED FOR YOU