



Central Pines Regional Council Executive Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 20, 2024

6:00 – 8:00 pm | Virtual

Chair Brett Gantt, Presiding

Delegates & Alternates Attending:

Wilma Laney, Town of Aberdeen
Brett Gantt, Town of Apex
Randee Haven O'Donnell, Town of Carrboro
Heidi Carter, Durham County
Bill Carver, Lee County
Jean Hamilton, Orange County
Rebecca Wyhof Salmon, City of Sanford
Byron McAllister, Town of Selma
Susan Evans, Wake County

CPRC Staff Attending:

Beth Davis, Member Engagement Coordinator

Jenny Halsey, Assistant Executive Director

Lindsay Whitson, Community & Economic Development Director

Lee Worsley, Executive Director

Hope Tally, Chief Finance Officer

Karyl Fuller, Principal Planner

Guests:

George Keller, Customs Advisory Services, Inc.

Ron Radloff, US Flue Cured Tobacco Growers

1. Call to Order

- a. Call to Order and Welcome

Official: Brett Gantt, Chair

- b. Roll Call

- c. Declaration of Quorum

Official: Brett Gantt, Chair

Chair Brett Gantt called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm and went over housekeeping information. He reminded everyone about the virtual meeting guidelines. Beth Davis, Clerk to the Board, called roll and a quorum was met.

- d. Get to Know CPRC

Chair Gantt shared information about CPRC's first federal grant success, which was during 1960-1961 and was for \$34,330 to cover half the cost of a study of the sewerage problem of the Research Triangle Region.

2. Review of Agenda

- a. Review of Agenda
Official: Brett Gantt

Chair Gantt approved the agenda.

3. Presentations and Recognitions

- a. FTZ 93 Presentation – US Flue Cured Tobacco Growers
Presenter: Lindsay Whitson, Community & Economic Development Director, Ron Radloff, Senior Vice President Operations, US Flue Cured Tobacco Growers, and George Keller, President, Customs Advisory Services, Inc.
Potential Action: Place on Consent Agenda

US Flue-Cured Tobacco Growers, Inc. (USFCTG) processes tobacco and manufactures billions of cigarettes each year. Located in Person County, USFCTG has requested sponsorship of their application to the U.S Foreign Trade Zone Board and their request has been approved by the FTZ #93 Board for sponsorship of their application. The Central Pines Regional Council Board of Delegates or Executive Committee provides the final recommendation for sponsorship prior to the applicant completing their application.

Ms. Whitson gave an overview of the Foreign Trade Zone program, which was followed by a presentation from George Keller on the US Flue Cured Tobacco Growers business.

Several Executive Committee members had questions for Mr. Keller.

Chair Gant asked if there were any objections to placing this item on the Consent Agenda. Delegate Randee Haven O'Donnell objected to placing this on the Consent Agenda to be voted on separately. It has been added as Item 4c. Delegate Carter asked for Mr. Worsley's thoughts on whether this should be approved. Mr. Worsley gave several options as to how to proceed.

Delegate Rebecca Salmon gave her perspective on this as a member of the FTZ Board, stating that the approval of the FTZ request isn't necessarily an endorsement of the product. Delegate Susan Evans also shared a similar situation they had in Wake County and how they approached the issue. Delegate Wilma Laney shared that she was struggling with this as well. Delegate Bill Carver asked for more information on the role of the Executive Committee in the FTZ is. Ms. Whitson responded with clarification.

- b. First Look at CPRC Regional Data Center
Presenter: Karyl Fuller, Principal Planner
Potential Action: None – Information Only

Over the last few years, CPRC has been working on the development of a Regional Data Center (RDC). This initiative aims to bring together data, maps, online applications, and other materials to showcase our Region and the work that we do at CPRC. One of our other key goals was to make it easier for the staff and our members to access data that they use regularly.

A draft site is now available [here](#). It includes data, online maps, dashboards, and other apps focusing on the 7-county Region. There is also a blog to discuss new data, how to use data well, and where to find data on diverse topics.

The RDC is a work in progress, and Ms. Fuller wanted to share it with the Executive Committee to gather comments and feedback about anything from data to usability and even blog topics. The goal is to have a site that highlights our work, and that staff can sustainably maintain. Several Executive Committee members had questions and shared that this was a great resource.

- c. 2024 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Interim Report
Presenter: Lindsay Whitson, Community & Economic Development Director
Potential Action: Place on Consent Agenda

Central Pines Regional Council's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a regional blueprint for community and economic development in the region. As the designated Economic Development District (EDD), Central Pines is required by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to update the CEDS every five years, with an interim report approved annually.

Ms. Whitson shared some of the accomplishments achieved over the last year, in alignment with the 2021 to 2025 CEDS. Greater details can be found in the final report [here](#). The Executive Committee was asked to approve the included resolution in support of this year's interim CEDS report.

- d. Recognition of Outgoing Executive Committee Members
Presenter: Brett Gantt, Chair
Potential Action: None – Information Only

The terms of several Central Pines Regional Council Board members who also serve on the Executive Committee end at the beginning of December. As a result, the Executive Committee meeting on November 20, 2024, will be the Board members' final meeting.

Following tonight's meeting, the following members of the Executive Committee will complete their service on the Board of Delegates.

- Delegate Bill Carver, Lee County Commissioner
- Delegate Heidi Carter, Durham County Commissioner
- Delegate Mike Dasher, Chatham County Commissioner
- Delegate Frank Quis, Moore County Commissioner

On behalf of Central Pines, Chair Gantt & Mr. Worsley expressed their appreciation to these board members for their service to the community and to Central Pines. Their service will be officially recognized at the December 4, 2024, End-of-Year Board Celebration at Central Pines.

Delegate Heidi Carter shared that serving on TJCOG/CPRC's Board of Delegates has been a highlight of her career. Delegate Bill Carver echoed what Delegate Carter said and added that he really enjoyed how everyone worked together for the good of the region.

4. Business

a. FTZ Board Nominations

Presenter: Lindsay Whitson, Community & Economic Development Director

Potential Action: Place on Consent Agenda

The Board for Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) #93 has four board members with a term that is expiring on December 31, 2024. The FTZ Nominating Committee has approved the renomination of all four members, which will allow them to serve another three-year term. These four board members include: Angie Stewart (Harnett County Economic Development), Chris Johnson (Johnston County Economic Development), Rebecca Salmon (Mayor for the City of Sanford), and Lori Bush (Councilmember for the Town of Cary). Their terms will run from January 1, 2025, until December 31, 2027.

b. Connected Region 2050 Draft Scope of Work and Funding Strategy – Continuation of Discussion from September Executive Committee Meeting

Presenter: Lee Worsley, Executive Director

Potential Action: None – Information Only

This item is being tabled until the next meeting to give ample time for discussion.

c. FTZ Discussion

Action: Table this item to provide time for additional research and bring it back up at the next meeting. It is requested that staff look at our policy related to FTZ. Staff would come back and answer the issues raised by EC including what the Charter states, what the responsibility of the Executive Committee is in this process, how it affects decisions made in the past, and whether they take a position that has to do with the cultural aspects of this.

Amendment: Delegate O'Donnell added that staff need to look at the economic burden and access data on health burden and costs associated with it.

Motion: Delegate Bill Carver

Second: Delegate Randee Haven O'Donnell

Discussion:

Delegate Carter added that she supports this motion, and it deserves additional thought. She stated that she would like clarity as to what reasons a board member might vote to deny this application. Do they approve based on meeting the requirements or are there other reasons it might be denied? She also echoed Delegate Carver's comment on finding out what the Charter states.

Chair Gantt added that he opposed this motion due to it not being an endorsement of the product. He also noted that this could open Pandora's Box, and it could encourage future Boards to make judgements in a way they wouldn't approve. Delegate McAllister agreed with Chair Gantt, as did Delegate Evans.

Delegate Hamilton shared that she supported tabling because it would clarify what the Charter says and would allow her to feel confident in her decision. Delegate Salmon shared that she agreed with Chair Gantt and gave her perspective as a member of the FTZ Board and how this is not an endorsement of the product. But she also agrees that tabling this item could help in clarifying details for the rest of the Executive Committee.

Delegate McAllister asked how tabling this item would affect US Flue Cured Tobacco Growers, to which Ms. Whitson responded that it would just delay the process.

Yes: 6

No: 3

The motion to table passed.

5. Consent

Items on the Consent Agenda are considered routine and will be enacted by a single motion unless a member of the Executive Committee requests an item be removed. Any item that is removed from the Consent Agenda will be considered individually after the Consent Agenda.

- a. DRAFT Minutes: September 2024
- ~~b. FTZ Approval for US Flue Cured Tobacco Growers, Resolution #2024-11-01~~
- c. CEDS Interim Report, Resolution #2024-11-02
- d. FTZ Board Nominations, Resolution #2024-11-03
- e. Budget Amendment 2, Resolution #2024-11-04

Action: Adoption of amended Consent Agenda as presented (excluding item b)

Motion: Delegate Susan Evans

Second: Delegate Heidi Carter

Vote: Approved unanimously by roll call

6. Items Removed from Consent Agenda

- a. FTZ Approval for US Flue Cured Tobacco Growers, Resolution #2024-11-01

7. Public Hearings

8. Executive Director's Report

- a. Executive Director's Report

Presenter: Lee Worsley

Potential Action: None – Receive as Information

- End of Year Celebration – Wednesday, December 4, 5:00 – 7:00 pm, informal gathering to celebrate the accomplishments throughout the year, including recognizing Board Members rotating off and staff career milestones.
- Regional Day – Friday, February 21, in the morning, for any elected officials. This event is for everyone to connect with each other as well as regional resources available. There will be an Exhibit Hall for partner agencies, programming, and more.
- Transportation Demand Management Award – Shuchi Gupta recently received an Excellence in TDM award (Excellence in MPO Award).
- Mr. Worsley thanked Karyl Fuller for all her hard work on the Regional Data Center.
- Mr. Worsley thanked Delegate Carver and Delegate Carter for their service to the Board.

9. Chair's Report

- a. Chair's Report

Presenter: Chair

Potential Action: None – Receive as Information

- Thank you to the Officers for their work on the formalization of the Executive Director Evaluation process to provide better feedback for the work Lee does.

10. Around the Region

a. Around the Region Reports/Updates

Prompt: What is the one thing you are most excited about before the end of the year?

- Sanford: Excited to break ground on the Sanford Agricultural Market Place. It will be part of the Sanford Central Green will provide more open space. It will be a permanent home for the Farmers Market. Delegate Salmon thanked Delegate Carver for his support of this project.
- Carrboro: Received a 2024 CleanTech Innovation Award for their street resurfacing. This will extend the life of their roads and the maintenance of those roads. It will also help reduce air pollution and the urban heat island affect.
- Lee County: Breaking ground on the new library and the programming this location will provide.
- Apex: Met the 3 finalists for the new Police Chief and gave the public an opportunity to talk to the candidates.
- Durham County: New headquarters for Manufacturing USA Institute in Durham.

11. Closed Session

12. Other Business

a. Other Business

Presenter: Brett Gantt

13. Adjournment

a. Adjourn the Meeting

Action: Move to adjourn

Motion: Delegate Heidi Carter

Second: Delegate Susan Evans

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.

Duly adopted this 26th day of February 2025 while in regular session.



Brett Gantt
Board Chair

ATTEST:



Beth Davis
Clerk to the Board
Central Pines Regional Council