

**Kerr Tar Regional Council of Governments  
Board of Directors  
September 24, 2020**

**Members Present**

John Alston	Carolyn Faines	Kenneth Perry
Mary Anderson	Walter Gardner	Walter Powell
Wayne Aycok	Wanda Henderson	Jeff Tingen
Quon Bridges	Reggie Horton	David Smith
Kechia Brustmeyer-Brown	Zelodis Jay	Danny Wright
Jimmy Clayton	Leo Kelly	Betty Wright
Francine Chavis	Philip Meador	
Sidney Dunston	Tom Lane	

**COG Staff:**

Diane Cox  
Katie Conner  
Lou Grillo  
Donna Lee  
Michael Kelly

**Others:**

Jim Wrenn, COG Attorney  
Lucette Mercer, Deputy Director, GRRO  
Gabriel Cumming Ph.D., Associate Director, Working Landscapes  
Abbey Piner, Program Director, Community Food Strategies

**Roll Call**

As the meeting was conducted virtually, a voice roll call was requested and a quorum confirmed.

**Call to Order**

As a quorum was present, Chairman Dunston called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**Approval of the Consent Agenda**

Chairman Dunston asked for the pleasure of the Board with regard to the Consent Agenda, which contained:

- A. August 25, 2020 Executive Committee Minutes
- B. August 27, 2020 Board Minutes
- C. August Finance Report
- D. August Budget Amendments
- E. Executive Director's Report

**Motion #1**

A motion was made by Zelodis Jay to approve the Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by David Smith. A full roll call vote was conducted and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Comments from the public**

Chairman Dunston asked if there were any comments received from the public on issues concerning the COG. Members of the public were asked to register in advance. There were no comments registered.

### **Appointment to the Revolving Loan Fund Committee**

Chairman Sidney Dunston recognized Executive Director Diane Cox, who shared that a request to fill the current Warren County vacancy on the Revolving Loan Fund Review Committee has been received. She asked the Board to consider appointing Charla Duncan, Senior Assistant to the Warren County Manager and Interim Economic Development Director to the committee.

### **Motion #2**

Walter Gardner made a motion that Ms. Duncan be appointed. John Alston seconded the motion. A full roll call vote was held, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Regional Food Policy**

Chairman Dunston recognized Planning Director Michael Kelly to present the proposed Regional Food Policy. Mr. Kelly then introduced the other presenters, Gabriel Cumming and Abbey Piner. Together, the group presented, for consideration of the Board, a strategy that would provide guidance to local governments, non-profits and businesses in growing a sustainable Regional Food System that was a goal in the Kerr-Tar Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Abbey Piner of Community Food Strategies presented an introduction of Food Councils and the benefits of a Regionalized approach to addressing economic, food security, and health needs. She noted that a Regional approach helps better connect Rural Markets with Urban ones, supports farmers and communities, and also presents opportunities for collaboration and co-learning. The presentation was turned over to Gabriel Cumming, Ph.D.

Dr. Cumming began with overview of the Regional Food Policy project development and project timeline. He discussed how the project was deeply rooted in the community, with the team having spent over a year gathering and compiling feedback from over 200 stakeholders in the Kerr Tar Region in a series of forums and community meetings. He noted that the timing for the project was aligned with the intersection of two trends in farming: the first, a long-term decline of farming locally, and the second an emerging trend of new involvement.

Cumming then reviewed the Regional Food Policy Milestones, Priorities and Key Metrics. He then invited questions from the Board. Questions were answered in partnership with Lucette Mercer of GRRO.

Walter Gardner inquired about the involvement of the Cooperative Extension, and was assured that the Extension had been a key player in development of the policy.

Danny Wright commented on the thorough nature and execution of the Policy Project as a whole.

Lucette Mercer also noted that the project was made possible through a grant from the NC Rural Center and BB&T (now Truist) Bank.

There being no further questions, Chairman Dunston called for a vote.

### **Motion 3#**

Danny Wright moved that the Regional Food Policy be approved as presented. Kechia Brustmeyer-Brown seconded the motion. A full roll call vote was held, and the measure passed unanimously.

### **Outgoing Chairman's Remarks**

Chairman Dunston offered his remarks as outgoing Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kerr Tar Regional Council of Governments. He noted that as he had made a personal decision not to run for re-election as a Franklin County Commissioner he would be departing from the Board. He thanked esteemed Executive

Director Diane Cox and his fellow board members for allowing him to serve. He made note of fellow Board Members past and present who were of assistance to him during his tenure and supported him as he assumed the Chairmanship twice. These were: Jimmy Clayton, Representative Terry Garrison, Pete Averette and Danny Wright, as well as long time staff member Gina Parham.

Chairman Dunston noted that he will cherish his memories of service with the COG, and that of all boards he has served on in his capacity as a public servant, her cherishes most his time at the COG. With well wishes her then recognized incoming Chairman, Leo Kelly.

### **Incoming Chairman's Remarks**

Incoming Chair Leo Kelly of Vance County thanked Chairman Dunston for his many years of service, and noted that he looks forward to working with the Board for the next year. He added that he is consistently amazed by what the Kerr-Tar Regional COG staff is able to accomplish in service to the Region, and pledged every effort to keep former Chairman Dunston engaged and involved in KTCOG activities and initiatives, as he is and has been a role model of service to his community.

Chairman Kelly concluded his remarks by inviting members of the board to share memories and thoughts with Mr. Dunston, which various members did happily and with many well wishes.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Kelly adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia S. Cox  
Secretary to the Board of Directors