

**SOUTH EAST TEXAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
2210 EASTEX FREEWAY, BEAUMONT, TX 77703
MAYOR HOMER E. NAGEL ROOM
JULY 17, 2024, 12:00 PM**

The South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) Executive Committee met on Tuesday, July 17, 2024. SETRPC President Judge Wayne McDaniel, Hardin County, called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm. A roll call of Executive Committee members to establish a quorum was conducted by Ms. Suzanne Carver, Executive Assistant, SETRPC. Mr. Fred Jackson, Jefferson County, gave the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, led by 1st Vice-President Commissioner Johnny Trahan, Orange County.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

Judge Wayne McDaniel, Hardin County
Judge Mark Allen, Jasper County
Judge Jeff Branick, Jefferson County
Commissioner Eddie Arnold, Jefferson County
Mr. Fred Jackson, County Assistant (Representative for Judge Jeff Branick), Jefferson County
Commissioner Johnny Trahan, Orange County
Councilmember Chris Durio, City of Beaumont
Mayor Anderson Land, Jr., City of Jasper
Councilmember Kimberly Cline, City of Lumberton
Mayor Cathy Nagel, City of Pine Forest
Mayor Danny Reneau, City of Silsbee
Councilmember Jay Odom, City of West Orange
Mr. Billy Ted Smith, Commissioner, Jasper County Emergency Services District #1 (ESD #1)
Ms. Laura Moore, Director, Jasper County Hospital District
Ms. Risa King, Information Specialist, Lower Neches Valley Authority (LNVA)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES NOT PRESENT

Commissioner L.W. Cooper, Jr., Hardin County
Commissioner Chris Kirkendall, Hardin County
Commissioner Ernie Koch, Hardin County
Commissioner Amanda Young, Hardin County
Commissioner Kevin Holloway, Jasper County
Commissioner Dennis Marks, Jasper County
Commissioner Seth Martindale, Jasper County
Commissioner Willie Stark, Jasper County
Commissioner Everette "Bo" Alfred, Jefferson County
Commissioner Cary Erickson, Jefferson County
Commissioner Michael Shane Sinegal, Jefferson County
Judge John Gothia, Orange County
Commissioner Kirk Roccaforte, Orange County
Commissioner Chris Sowell, Orange County
Commissioner Robert Viator, Orange County
Mayor Roy West, City of Beaumont
Mayor Cheri Mitchell, City of Bevil Oaks
Councilmember Jim Wright, City of Bevil Oaks
Mayor David Rutledge, City of Bridge City
Councilmember Terri Gauthier, City of Bridge City
Mayor Matt Lopez, City of China
Councilmember (Vacant), City of China
Mayor Chris Borne, City of Groves
Councilmember (Vacant), City of Groves
Councilmember Angel McCroskey, City of Jasper
Mayor Frank George, City of Kirbyville
Councilmember Amanda Gates, City of Kirbyville
Mayor Fred Williams, City of Kountze
Councilmember Barbara Greer, City of Kountze
Mayor Don Surratt, City of Lumberton
Mayor Don Albanese, City of Nederland
Councilmember Sylvia Root, City of Nederland
Mayor Kerry Abney, City of Nome
Councilmember (Vacant), City of Nome
Mayor Larry Spears, Jr., City of Orange
Councilmember Brad Childs, City of Orange
Councilmember James McCullar, City of Pine Forest

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES NOT PRESENT, Continued

Mayor Sarah McClendon, City of Pinehurst
Councilmember Michael Shahan, City of Pinehurst
Mayor Thurman "Bill" Bartie, City of Port Arthur
Councilmember (Vacant), City of Port Arthur
Mayor Glenn Johnson, City of Port Neches
Councilmember Robert Arnold, City of Port Neches
Mayor Tony Wilcoxson, City of Rose City
Mayor Pro Tem Sheila Faske, City of Rose City
Mayor David Lang, City of Rose Hill Acres
Mayor Pro Tem Cindy Mason, City of Rose Hill Acres
Mayor Pro Tem Mark Muckleroy, Representative for Mayor Danny Reneau, City of Silsbee
Councilmember (Vacant), City of Silsbee
Mayor Bruce Robinson, City of Sour Lake
Councilmember (Vacant), City of Sour Lake
Mayor Phil Owens, City of Taylor Landing
Vacant, City of Taylor Landing
Mayor Misty Songe, City of Vidor
Councilmember (Vacant), City of Vidor
Mayor Randy Branch, City of West Orange
Mr. Nicholas Carter, President, Lumberton Municipal Utility District (MUD)
Mr. Brad Haeggquist, General Manager, Mauriceville Utility District (MUD)
Mr. Jeremy Walton, Assistant General Mgr., Representative for Mr. Brad Haeggquist, Mauriceville Utility District
Vacant, Jefferson County WCID #10
Mr. Frank Inzer, Director, Orange County WCID #1 (Vidor)
Mr. Tom Woolley, President, Orange County WCID #2 (West Orange)
Mr. Leroy McCall, Jr., Commissioner, Jefferson County Drainage District #3 (DD3)
Mr. Joshua Allen, Sr., President, Jefferson County Drainage District #6 (DD6)
Mr. Richard Beaumont, Commissioner, Jefferson County Drainage District #7 (DD7)
Mr. Don Carona, General Manager, Orange County Drainage District
Mr. Fritz Erbeling, President, Hardin County Emergency Services District #2 (ESD #2)
Mr. Steve Hyden, Commissioner (President), Representative for Billy T. Smith, Jasper County ESD #1
Mr. Sam Job, Commissioner, Jasper County Emergency Services District #4 (ESD #4)
Chief Chris Gonzales, Jefferson County Emergency Services District #1 (ESD #1)
Mr. Daniel J. Diaz, Administrator, Jefferson County Emergency Services District #3 (ESD #3)
Vacant, Orange County Emergency Services District #3 (ESD #3)
Ms. Lorrie Taylor, Port Director & CEO, Orange County Navigation & Port District
Ms. Georgine Guillory, President, Port of Beaumont
Mr. John Comeaux, Commissioner, Port of Port Arthur
Ms. Sheri Arnold, Commissioner, Sabine-Neches Navigation District
Mr. Zach Johnson, Director of Government Affairs, Sabine River Authority
Mr. Rob Starr, Board Member, Southeast Texas Ground Water Conservation District
Dr. Shannon Allen, Superintendent, Beaumont ISD
Dr. Mike Kelly, Superintendent, Bridge City ISD
Dr. Dwaine K. Augustine, Superintendent, Hamshire-Fannett ISD
Dr. Mark Porterie, Superintendent, Port Arthur ISD
Ms. Julie Gauthier, Deputy Superintendent, Port Neches-Groves ISD

STATE DELEGATION EX-OFFICIO REPRESENTATIVES (Non-Voting) PRESENT

Mr. Cole Michalk, District Director, Texas Speaker Dade Phelan
Ms. Jennifer Harris, District Services, State Senator Robert Nichols

STAFF PRESENT

Ms. Shanna Burke, Executive Director, SETRPC
Ms. Suzanne Carver, Executive Assistant, SETRPC
Ms. Glenda Lacy, Director, Disaster Recovery Division (DRD) / HR Manager, SETRPC
Mr. Jim Borel, Director of Finance, SETRPC
Mr. Jeff King, Deputy Finance Director, SETRPC
Mr. Steve Curran, Director, Criminal Justice & Homeland Security Division (CJHSD)
Mr. Bob Dickinson, Director, Transportation & Environmental Resources Division (T&ER)
Mr. James Moore, T&ER, Senior GIS Analyst
Ms. Rachael Robinson, Planner, T&ER
Ms. Connie Grimm, Accountant, T&ER
Ms. Halie Smith, Director, Area Agency on Aging Division

STAFF PRESENT, Continued

Mr. Pete De La Cruz, Director, 9-1-1 Emergency Network Division
Ms. Lori Correa, Administrative Assistant, 9-1-1 Emergency Network Division
Mr. Jeff Wilmore, Program Specialist, 9-1-1 Emergency Network Division
Ms. Sara Torres-Garcia, Director, Community Services Division
Ms. Tyronna McKenzie, Director, SETX Foster Grandparent Program Division (FGP)
Ms. Hannah Klauss, Director, Golden Triangle RSVP Division

GUESTS PRESENT

Mr. Jay Guerrero, Regional Director, U.S. Senator John Cornyn
Mr. Kelly Waterman, Regional Director, U.S. Senator Ted Cruz
Ms. Felicity Newby, Intern, U.S. Senator Ted Cruz
Mr. Dylan Henry, Intern, U.S. Senator Ted Cruz
Ms. Cydnye Robinson, Community Outreach Coordinator, Texas General Land Office (GLO)
Mr. Kelvin Knauf, Planning Director, City of Orange
Ms. Michelle Bobo, Client Services Manager, GrantWorks
Ms. Hannah Trautwein, Assistant Director Fellows, SBP
Ms. Michelle Bohrson, Fellows Group Manager, SBP
Mr. Will McCrory, Texas Resilience Fellows, SBP

24-049 APPROVAL OF JUNE 18, 2024 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

➤ Mayor Anderson Land, Jr., City of Jasper, made a motion to approve the June 18, 2024, Executive Committee Minutes. Commissioner Johnny Trahan, Orange County, seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

24-050 APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT FOR MAY 2024

➤ Commissioner Billy "Ted" Smith, Jasper Emergency Services District 1 (ESD #1), made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report for May 2024. Mayor Anderson Land, Jr., City of Jasper, seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

24-051 ADMINISTRATION

➤ Mr. Jeff King, Deputy Finance Director, SETRPC, presented the proposed budget and indirect cost plan for fiscal year 2025 for approval. The Budget Committee met on July 8, 2024, to review and discuss the upcoming fiscal year's budget. (A draft copy of the budget was posted on the SETRPC website at www.setrpc.org for review on July 12th.) Highlights of the budget are shown below.

- There were no changes in the dues and assessments. It remains at \$.12 per capita for general purpose government.
- There is a fixed fee of \$150 for special purpose governments.
- There is an estimated direct service return of \$39.59 for every \$1.00 of membership fees and assessments.
- It provides for 53 full-time and 5 part-time staff members, for a total of 58 staff members.
- It reflects an organizational wide salary increase of 5.26%.
- It allows for an estimated Indirect Rate of 31.7%, along with a Fringe Benefit Rate of 56.9%.
- And, it includes total estimated expenditures of \$14 M, which in total is relatively stable compared to the current fiscal year.

Mr. King noted that pages 29 – 63 of the budget proposal contain program summaries with a brief description of the services offered by each division and their estimated expenditures for the coming year. During a very brief discussion, Mr. King confirmed that the \$.12 per capita for general purpose government has been in effect for 20 years.

Mayor Anderson Land, Jr., City of Jasper, made a motion to approve the proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2025 as presented and recommended. Councilmember Kimberly Cline, City of Lumberton, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

➤ Ms. Shanna Burke, Executive Director, SETRPC, introduced Ms. Hannah Trautwein, Ms. Michelle Bohrson, and Mr. Will McCrory from the SBP Recovery and Resilience Programs to discuss and share opportunities for our communities. Ms. Trautwein, along with her colleagues, shared that the SBP Fellows Program started as a rebuilding organization that started after Hurricane Katrina. Ms. Trautwein shared information about two of their programs.

The first program presented is called the Disaster Assistance Program which helps train disaster case managers in communities to help individuals appeal their FEMA awards after a disaster. In the last two years, cumulatively, the program has accessed over a million more dollars for survivors.

The second program addressed is called the Fellows Program. The SBP Fellows Program is excited to announce that they have the opportunity to place a Fellow in the region who would be hired from the community to help access more resilience and mitigation funds from both a state and federal level. SBP is excited to work with the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission to see where the Fellow would be best placed, what communities need some of that attention, and the Fellow would be able to work in this region to help write proposals for more grant opportunities in the future.

In conclusion, Ms. Shanna Burke shared further information about the SBP Fellows Program. The U.S. government has created Community Disaster Resilience Zones (CDRZ) of which some are in Orange County and Jefferson County. Those areas would be the priority, and they would have flexibility to work with other communities to find the resources and help gain those resources, as well. The program is for two years with hopes that after the initial two years, the program would be funded locally.

24-052 TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES DIVISION (T&ER)

➤ Mr. Bob Dickinson, Director, T&ER, presented the contractor selection for Broadband Services Expansion for approval. SETRPC staff prepared the Request for Proposal (RFP): Broadband Service Expansion RFP which complied with the SETRPC's procurement policy. Public notice of the RFP was published in the *Beaumont Enterprise* on April 19, 2024, and April 26, 2024, and was posted on the SETRPC website at www.setrpc.org and sent to firms that were thought to have the right qualifications. Proposals were due on May 24th, and one firm, Charter Spectrum Gulf Coast LLC., responded to the RFP.

The SETRPC Broadband Selection Committee met with and interviewed Charter Spectrum Gulf Coast, LLC, and its proposal was evaluated and scored on Monday, July 8, 2024. From the results of that meeting, the Committee recommends Charter Spectrum Gulf Coast, LLC, on the following basis:

1. Charter provided a complete and effective Scope of Services in its proposal. Charter has been providing broadband services to municipalities across the State of Texas.
2. Charter staff's recent experience working on similar projects gives Charter a comprehensive knowledge to successfully complete the project on time and in accordance with the RFP.
3. Charter's proposed project methodology utilizes proven, efficient techniques for conducting project tasks to ensure accurate and quality work for completing the services expansion.
4. Charter presented a cohesive and organized team to work as a collaborative partner. The project manager presented a good understanding of the project and a demonstrated ability to direct contractor staff to meet the SETRPC's expectations for this project.

Charter Spectrum Gulf Coast LLC staff have experience in implementing broadband services not only in the State of Texas, but all around the country. They implemented over \$1.6 billion worth of improvements for the State of Texas last year, and they already have a footprint in all four of our region's counties. Therefore, on behalf of T&ER staff, Mr. Dickinson requested approval to negotiate an agreement with Charter for obtaining funds and taking all action which may be necessary for the implementation of a Broadband Service Expansion Project to bring or improve high speed internet services to unserved and underserved households, businesses and institutions in our southeast Texas Region in accordance with the RFP.

Judge Mark Allen, Jasper County, made a motion to approve the contractor selection of Charter Spectrum Gulf Coast, LLC for Broadband Service expansion as presented and recommended. Commissioner Billy "Ted" Smith, Jasper ESD #1, seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

24-053 FUTURE CALENDAR

➤ Ms. Suzanne Carver, Executive Assistant, SETRPC, informed the committee that the Jasper County Stand Down scheduled in August has been rescheduled for November 15, 2024, due to the Jasper County Court Annex housing FEMA and other agencies assisting in recovery from Hurricane Beryl. The Stand Down at the Beaumont Civic Center is scheduled for September 20, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Ms. Carver also reminded the committee the next Executive Committee meeting will be held on August 21, 2024, in the Homer E. Nagel conference room.

24-054 OTHER, OLD, AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

➤ Tell Me Something Good:

Judge Wayne McDaniel, Hardin County, opened the floor up to anyone who would like to share something good about their county, community, city, or organization.

First, Ms. Shanna Burke, Executive Director, brought attention to the National Weather Service flyer in the handouts. It provides information on what happens before, during, and after a storm, what to do, how many days out you are and what citizens should be focused on.

Second, Ms. Burke turned her attention to the flyer on how to register for the Coastal Resilience and Adaptation Conference that will be held virtually on September 18th and 19th from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. through the Texas Sea Grant.

Third, Ms. Burke, introduced a “new” 9-1-1 Emergency Network Division staff member, “Cell Phone Sally”. Sally (9-1-1-1 Emergency Network Division staff member, Ms. Amy Laird) will go out in the community and be used for public events that the 9-1-1 Emergency Network participates in. Mr. Pete De La Cruz, Director, 9-1-1 Emergency Network Division, added that Sally (Ms. Laird) will be used to inform children on dialing 9-1-1 and when it’s appropriate to do that.

Fourth, Mr. Kelly Waterman, Regional Director, U.S. Senator Ted Cruz, informed the committee that Senator Cruz has been tracking all the damage, etc. from Hurricane Beryl. Anything that may be needed with the federal government, he along with his colleagues at Senator Cornyn’s office, Congressman Babin’s office, and Congressman Weber’s office are here to help with anything one may need from the federal government for disaster response or disaster recovery.

In conclusion, Ms. Michelle Bobo, Client Services Manager, GrantWorks, shared information from the Texas Department of Agriculture concerning the 2025-2026 Community Development round. The maximum reward went from \$500,000 to \$750,000. The deadline for the application for round one will be the end of December, and she suggests looking in August at authorization. Ms. Bobo encourages all to think about their budget and what that would mean for their match amount and their communities.

➤ There being no other, old, and unfinished business, the meeting adjourned at 12:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Commissioner Cary Erickson, Jefferson County
Secretary