

## MEETING MINUTES

### 1.) **Welcome and Introductions**

Marty Wieder, NCTEDD Chair, opened the meeting at 10:01 and welcomed everyone. He recommended utilizing the chat feature to ask questions during the presentations. He thanked Prit Patel for sending out the speaker resumes which he recommended in advance of the meeting. Marty recommended the NCTEDD Board review the speaker resumes. Prit Patel took attendance.

### 2.) **Introduction of New Board Members**

Marty introduced new Board member Alexis Jackson from the City of Celina. Alexis is the Director of Economic Development for the City of Celina. She is filling a vacant seat as a representative in the category of cities with a "less than 25,000 population". Alexis' career includes 15 years of experience in Economic Development and Planning in both the public and private sectors.

### 3.) **Approval of December 14, 2020 Minutes**

Minutes of the December 14, 2020 meeting were approved unanimously, upon a motion by Pamela Mundo, second by David Bristol.

### 4.) **Guest Speaker, Stacey Webb, Economic Development Representative, Economic Development Administration**

Marty introduced Stacey Webb, US Department Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) Representative for Oklahoma and North Central Texas as a return speaker.

Stacey provided an update on EDA's budget and future funding that will be received through the American Rescue Plan Act. Regarding EDA's regular Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant Funds, EDA received their 2021 money on October 1, 2020. They received supplemental funding from the CARES Act last Spring. Regular EDA program funds will not be available until October 1, 2021. That said, EDA accepts applications year-round. However, if you have a possible project, please start working with Lucille and Prit – do not wait until October to apply. Projects are currently being submitted and reviewed, and EDA is building a pipeline of projects that will be ready to go when they receive the funds.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into law about a month ago. Part of bill provides EDA with \$3 billion in supplemental funding in addition to regular program funds. That is twice the amount that was received for CARES, but CARES only took about 6 months to spend \$1.5 billion and they expect this (ARPA) money to move quickly as well. All regional offices like Austin are in a holding pattern awaiting guidance from headquarters as to how the funds will be divided amongst the regions, how the money is going to be provided, and how it is going to get to the communities. They are hearing the money may come in separate pots of money that applicants can apply for. EDA may have to navigate which is best for each submitted project. They are assuming all communities will be eligible and not have to meet distressed threshold, similar to CARES Act. They are expecting an 80/20 grant ratio again, 80% EDA, 20% match (assumed). As soon as the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is available, Stacey will send it to Lucille and Prit. It is important to work with NCTCOG staff, Lucille and Prit, it will be critical to submit complete and competitive applications.

Stacey will be working with Lucille and Prit on each project as it develops to provide further guidance.

5.) **Guest Speaker, Bridget Moon, Small Business Administration**

Marty introduced Bridget Moon, the Economic Development Specialist and Veteran Business Development Officer with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Dallas/Fort Worth District Office. Her office serves 72 counties in North Texas.

Many times, businesses downplay their economic injury as a result of natural disaster and do not apply for assistance. SBA encourages those that might have had closings or lost access to their business, which is a form of economic injury, to apply for loans. You don't have to have physical damages to apply for those disaster loans. Even though the Disaster Loan Program is for physical damages, economic injury is also a qualification to apply. These loans are also available to homeowners and renters.

Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program, as result of COVID19, includes 30-year term loans at 2.75% for nonprofits and 3.75% for-profit. Some changes to the programs, prior injury to determination based on 6 months with a maximum loan of \$150,000. Tomorrow, the SBA will open up a \$500,000 loan option with a 24-month review of injury. You can apply for these loans through the end of this year, December 31<sup>st</sup> is deadline for application. This is an online application and not through the banks like Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). Go to SBA.gov to find COVID19 funding options and see the EIDL (Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program). The statutory limit is \$2 million for economic injury. However, it is uncertain when that will roll out and be available. Businesses that have applied for the \$150,000 and who have maxed out the use of those funds, do not have to reapply for the \$2 million funds when they become available. They can just ask for a reconsidering of increasing their loan amount.

Question: How is this impacted by the PPP loan? If someone has received EIDL, they will be asked for the amount they received from the EIDL. There are two parts to the EIDL. (1) The EIDL advancement that was given subtracted out the PPP. However, that is no longer the case of being forgiven. (2) There was a grant advancement that was given based on the number of employees. For example if you had 10 employees, you received \$10,000.

Question: Is special consideration given to micro or macro businesses or what is the definition of small business (500 or less)?

The definition of small business is based on NICS code and factors in the number of employees. The EDA website states how that determination is made. SBA.gov has the most up to date information on this topic and others. The website is many times updated daily. You can also contact Bridget for any questions you have.

An update on disaster loans that were made in 2020: the 1<sup>st</sup> payment was deferred to 12 months has now been extended to 24 months before 1<sup>st</sup> payment is due. However, interest still accrues even through deferment period. Loans made in 2021 have been deferred from 24 months to 18 months from date of note.

Up and Coming: Shutters Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) supports theaters, movie theater, acting, box office/tickets and will be rolled out on April 8<sup>th</sup>. Nonprofits may apply for funding. Funding is

available up to \$10 million for a venue. Details for SVOG are available on the SBA website. Bridget recommends still applying for PPP while waiting for the SVOG program to open up.

SBA's biggest program is PPP. Currently they have an extension on the program through May so there is still time for businesses to get application submitted. Businesses applying for PPP should try to use a lender they bank with or are familiar with. They can check the [SBA.gov/ppp](https://www.sba.gov/ppp) website for lenders in their area that are participating in the PPP.

Bridget Moon: [bridget.moon@sba.gov](mailto:bridget.moon@sba.gov)

6.) **Guest Speaker, Evelyn McKinney, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)**

Evelyn McKinney is a Program Officer at Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), a national nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing community development work in communities across the country. Her role to support economic development involves traveling to rural communities in the U.S., supporting the development of workforce development ecosystems through Rural Works and building a network of business development organizations (BDO) who provide technical assistance and supports to rural small business.

LISC pools private and public dollars and raise funds them to then work with local partners "boots on the ground" to get work done and support local communities. Primarily works with communities at a population size at or below 50,000 and in a non-metro area, but that is not set in stone. The 16-counties in North Texas are eligible for LISC program funds.

As an organization, LISC works with a network of 87+ partners across 44 states plus Puerto Rico. They have 37 urban offices and rural team that is out spread across the country. They have five key pillars that provide technical support, and building capacity: access to capital, broadband and infrastructure, workforce development, disaster response and resilience planning, and placemaking.

LISC has variety of flexible lending products designed to help local groups. Their loans cover every phase of development from acquisition to working with capital, and steps in between. LISC also has small business loan for >\$100,000. They recently partnered with Southern Opportunity Resilience Fund which includes Texas. It is a consortium of lenders pooling dollars to support small business loans with <\$100,000. Evelyn will provide a link to the program after the meeting today.

LISC has partnered with Kiva Trustee program which works with business development organizations to identify small businesses that would be eligible for loan. As the trustee, they would provide technical support and consultation to be able to help the business raise dollars through Kiva which is a crowd funding platform.

Most recently in the last year, private funders have provided Rural LISC the opportunity to push out over \$26 million in small business grants. A Business Development Organization (BDO) network has been created to support that work. There are 42 BDO's in rural America that help provide small business technical assistance and resource information in their area, and also be a trusted valued committed local partner. The North Central Texas Council of Governments is one of LISC's BDOs.

Broadband Initiative. LISC is working to map high speed internet and availability. They are helping communities understand local connectivity challenges and helping them develop a plan to address that. LISC has a program called the Digital Navigator Program which works with community based organizations to become digital navigators.

Question from David Bristol: Can you address specifically what you are doing to create affordability and speeds as well as how communities can access the digital navigator program? Krista Vincent, from LISC, is standing up entire broadband infrastructure space and is the point person for the Digital Navigator Program. Evelyn can connect us with Krista if we are interested in the program. In terms of increasing connectivity, there is a large scale advocacy piece in how that is being addressed. LISC is also looking at CDBG-CV (Community Development Block Grant – Coronavirus) dollars to help support that endeavor as well.

Workforce development is a huge issue that has existed for many years. With a greater skill set and prepared residents, that should increase the economy because the work is better, it is faster, it is more informed, and they are doing bigger things.

Rural Works is a national community of practice where they aim to scale localized solutions at a systems level for everyone to really understand the work. LISC also understand that creating pathways, in specific communities, leading to greater credentials will contribute to a livable wage. It will also strengthen markets. So right now, Rural Works has a pilot in the Mississippi delta and have plans for expansion as well.

LISC also has Financial Opportunity Centers (FOC) as part of their workforce programming. They are place-based organizations that have trained and certified financial and employment coaches. They work with individuals and small businesses one on one around financial coaching, employment supports, connectivity to any kind of income support for private and public benefits. We have over 100 in the LISC network.

Question from Mary Ann Moon: Is there a program that provides transportation for workforce training and daycare?  
At present, LISC does not have one. Evelyn will check to see if there are any national level programs.

Question: Lucille asked in regard to the Rural LISC program, are there dollars for indefinite period of time. Last year, LISC was able to push out over \$26 million to small businesses and work with business development organizations like ourselves to provide small business technical supports. LISC continues to search for dollars and have conversations with potential funders.

Marty suggested bringing Evelyn back to do a session for rural counties and communities in the NCTCOG region.

#### 7.) Pamela Mundo Update: Entrepreneurial Training Tool

Pamela Mundo introduced the committee: Pamela Mundo, Michael Grace, David Bristol, Mary Ann Moon, Orlando Compos, Robert Sterns, and NCTCOG staff which includes Lucille Johnson, Prit Patel, and Stephanie Cecil. The committee has been meeting monthly since January in developing a training tool. The tool is a PowerPoint which any member of the Board can utilize in working with

their communities on building an entrepreneurial ecosystem in their city. The next Zoom meeting is on May 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am. At the meeting, we expect the PowerPoint to be in the preliminary stages with a goal to finalize it for the June meeting. This provides an opportunity with APA TX, and the American Planning Association which has a call out for speakers at their upcoming conference.

**8.) Craig Hulse, Director Economic Development, North Richland Hills – CARES Act Award from EDA**

Craig gave a summary of an EDA grant through CARES Act that was applied for by City of North Richland Hills (NRH). NRH has a roadway that is home to three major that were all deemed essential soon after the Pandemic started. The roadway had deteriorated past it's useful life creating issues for truck traffic and a disincentive for future business investment. The main beneficiary of the project is a company called Prestige Ameritech. They are the largest domestic mask manufacturer that very quickly became critical during COVID19. On same road, Iron Horse Boulevard, there are two additional primary employers that stand to benefit from the grant project, an aerospace company, and Tyson Prepared Foods.

Scope of project covers a 4,000 linear foot stretch of roadway that connects Prestige Ameritech to Rufe Snow Drive. Summary of the project in the area of the project: 550 combined jobs, over \$23 million in wages. Prestige Ameritech prior to the Pandemic had 100 jobs.

EDA awarded NRH with just over \$4 million with a match of just over \$1 million locally for a total project cost that exceeds \$5 million. Craig recognize Stacey Webb who helped to facilitate this project and provide NRH the guidance it needed to apply for funding. Also Lucille Johnson, with NCTCOG, who provided city guidance in order to make this application competitive.

**9.) Jennette Espinosa, Executive Director, Little Elm – Economic Development Cooperation – CARES Act Award from EDA**

Little Elm's EDA project is also tied to COVID19. Retractable Technologies (RTI) is a manufacturer of syringes located in Little Elm. RTI's administrative offices as well as manufacturing warehouse are at this location. RTI is only one of only three domestic suppliers of syringes in the U.S. Little Elm secured \$1.4 million in EDA grant. The building construction has already started even though Little Elm just got the notice of funding in the last couple of weeks. The infrastructure supporting the fire lanes, and the masonry wall between the manufacturing facility and the residential development next to it will begin now with the EDA funds. This expansion has increased RTI's employee numbers from 137 to 188 employees as of March 2021. By the end of 2021, that number is expected to be 313. That is an increase of 175 employees overall.

Lucille shared that the City of Corsicana has also received funding. Their project is located in an Opportunity Zone.

**10.) District Update – Prit Patel**

Prit updated the members on the progress and activities of the NCTEDD, including:

- a) CEDS 2021 Update. She explained current the CEDS was adopted in 2016 and currently being updated as required every five years. In updating the CEDS, the region has been divided into clusters. She gave a layout of the representation for each cluster and explained the need to add additional members to Cluster 2 which included Erath, Hood, and Somervell counties. On the University Cluster, NCTCOG has reached out to some folks to grow the

membership of the cluster. Lucille reiterated the need for volunteers to help with Clusters 1, 2, 3, and 4. Cluster kickoff meetings have taken place, and will be followed by SWOT analysis meetings for each cluster. We hope to complete the SWOT cluster meetings by the end of May. NCTCOG departments are also actively participating in the CEDS update to help ensure it aligns with already existing regional plans.

- b) Board In-Kind Hours. Prit displayed some categories for submitting in-kind hours and asked for feedback via email.
- c) Board Vacancies. Prit explained that we currently have 18 vacancies to fill. We would like to fill the open seats on the Board.

Lucille mentioned that they will be requesting Board members to assist with the SWOT analysis. She thanked Prit for her presentation. She also mentioned that Stephanie Cecil will be retiring and thanked her for all her assistance. She also introduced Jerri Watson as a new member to the team. Marty thanked Stephanie Cecil for her service.

**11.) Next Meeting Dates**

Marty mentioned meeting more frequently. He recommended bi-monthly meetings and would love feedback from the NCTEDD Board.

**12.) Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

**Attendance**

**Board Attendees**

Alexis Jackson  
John Boswell  
David Bristol  
Kassandra Carroll  
Chris Dyser  
Michael Grace  
Janie Havel  
Mickey Hillock  
Craig Hulse  
Leslie Leerskov  
Mary Ann Moon  
Pamela Mundo

**Board Attendees**

Bruce Payne  
James Quick  
Nika Reinecke  
Jeff Sandford  
Kevin Shatley  
Shane Shepard  
Erica Sullivan  
Michael Talley  
Phil Wagner  
Marty Wieder

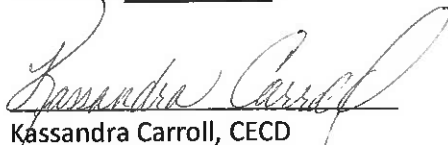
**Guests Speakers**

Stacey Webb  
Bridget Moon  
Evelyn McKinney

**NCTCOG Staff:**

Lucille Johnson  
Prit Patel  
Molly McFadden  
Rick Norman  
Anabel Castillo-Soto  
Stephanie Cecil  
Jerri Watson

I hereby certify that these minutes were approved by the North Central Texas Economic Development Board on June 7, 2021.



Kassandra Carroll, CECD  
Secretary-Treasurer, North Central Texas Economic Development District  
Board Economic Development Coordinator, City of Waxahachie