

Minutes
BRADD Executive Council
Wednesday, December 18, 2024
BRADD Office Center

Regular Members in Attendance: Mayor Michael Bowe, Judge/Executive Joe Choate, Judge/Executive Dennis Harper, Mayor Dwayne Hatcher, Mayor Mike Hughes, Mayor Billy Phelps, Mr. Michael Stoyonovich and Mr. Steve Thurmond. (See attached sign-in sheet).

Guests in Attendance: Ms. Jennifer O'Connor and Mr. Andrew Tolbert of CRI

Staff in Attendance: Mr. Eric Sexton, Ms. Emily Hathcock, Mrs. Amy Carroll, Mrs. Hong Nguyen, Mr. Erick Roy and Mr. Caleb Speck.

1. Call to Order

The Executive Council meeting was called to order by BRADD Vice Chair Judge/Executive Joe Choate. It was determined a quorum was present. Vice Chair Choate expressed sympathies in the recent, unexpected passing of Chairman Gary Dillard.

2. Approve Minutes

Vice Chair Choate reported the minutes from the October 30, 2024 Executive Council meeting were previously emailed to the members for prior review.

Motion: Judge/Executive Dennis Harper made a motion to approve the October 30, 2024 Executive Council minutes. The motion was seconded by Mayor Billy Phelps. Motion carried.

3. Review and Approval of Clearinghouse Projects

Vice Chair Choate called on Ms. Emily Hathcock who presented five regional clearinghouse projects. Ms. Hathcock informed the Council's packet contains a description of all projects. The selection included a variety of projects throughout the region including Allen Co. Water District line improvements, Warren Co. Water District gravity sewer, City of Edmonton weather embankment installation, First National Bank of Oklahoma cell tower placement, and The City of Bowling Greens road share path. Ms. Hathcock informed all projects were reviewed by BRADD staff for conflicts or duplications, of which there were none.

Motion: Mr. Steve Thurmond made a motion to approve the five regional clearinghouse projects as presented; the motion was seconded by Mayor Dewayne Hatcher. Motion carried. (See attached)

4. Financials

- **Review of Executive Director's Timesheets and Travel for October and November 2024**

Vice Chair Choate informed the Council the timesheets and travel forms for Executive Director, Mr. Eric Sexton, had been previously emailed for prior review. Vice Chair Choate asked for any questions concerning the documents.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Michael Stoyonovich to approve the Executive Director October and November timesheets and travel forms as presented. The motion was seconded by Judge/Executive Dennis Harper. Motion carried.

- **FY 24 Audit**

Vice Chair Choate called on guest presenter, Mr. Andrew Tolbert of Carr, Riggs and Ingram (CRI), BRADDs Independent Audit firm. Mr. Tolbert informed the independent audit report resulted in a clean audit opinion. The review of internal controls resulted in no findings and the independent compliance review resulted in an unmodified, clean opinion. Mr. Tolbert commended the BRADD finance staff for their hard work, resulting in the good audit review. Mr. Tolbert provided a position summary of the past five years for comparison. BRADDs positive financial trend continues. Mr. Tolbert provided a general overview for the members' understanding. Mr. Tolbert's report included the net position of governmental activities, the fund balance and fund statements, as well as a comparison of the revenue and support funds. Further, expenditures and uses were provided as well as general fund and special revenue fund, compared with revenues over expenditures. Overall, BRADD saw an increase of \$6.5 million due to various program expansions. In expenditures, there was no major offsetting for the year with a correlation of funds being applied directly to services.

Motion: A motion was made by Mayor Michael Bowe to approve the FY 24 Audit as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Thurmond. Motion carried.

- **FY 25 Salary Schedule Update**

Vice Chair Choate called on Mr. Eric Sexton who reported consideration has been given to staff salaries in efforts to maintain competitive wages in the ever-changing market. After review of the budget's availability, Mr. Sexton provided a proposal which included salary percentage increases. The scale is awarded based on current market trends by department. Mr. Sexton noted that higher management salaries were adjusted down, since this is a mid-year adjustment. Mr. Sexton further requested increasing the designated salary increase for the completion of a master's degree. The current amount awarded is \$1,500 and has been for some time now. Mr. Sexton proposed increasing the amount to \$2,000 effective January 1, 2025. Mr. Sexton reported the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) is currently conducting a salary study with results expected in February or March. The FY 26 budget will be presented in May with hopes to use the salary study for updated data comparison of BRADD salaries. The board was supportive of this mid-year adjustment proposal and expressed interest in reviewing again for FY 26 schedule.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Steve Thurmond to approve the mid-year salary increases as presented. The motion was seconded by Mayor Mike Hughes. Motion carried. (See attached)

5. Agreements and Contracts

- **RFQ Anchor Project**

Vice Chair Choate called on Mr. Eric Sexton, who provided an update from the recent Request for Qualifications (RFQ) received for the Anchor Project. Upon re-issuing a new submission deadline, BRADD was in receipt of three bids for the Anchor Project's design phase. Bids were received from the same three who initially submitted. The BRADD Policy and Review committee met and completed a thorough bid review process. Stengel Hill Architecture Firm was selected to receive the bid, based on being the highest score of the review process. The firm will work with local contractors throughout the project. Mr. Sexton expressed thanks to the review committee. The next step will be to issue a notice to proceed.

Motion: Mayor Billy Phelps made a motion to accept the Policy and Review Committee's recommendation of Stengel Hill Architecture for the Anchor Project RFQ. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Thurmond. Motion carried.

6. Personnel

- **Economic Development**

Mr. Sexton reported Mr. Ethan Bates has completed his master's degree and will now transition from part-time to regular full-time Regional Transportation Planner, further Mr. Sexton informed Mr. Bates will be awarded a salary increase for his Masters degree. The Public Administration Specialist vacancy resulted in two qualified candidates obtained from the interview process. Ms. Paige Hadden will fulfill the PAS role and Mr. Julien Hodge will be hired as a Community Development Specialist for the CED Department.

- **Aging**

Mr. Sexton reported two case manager roles have been filled by Mrs. Lauren Key and Mrs. Zoe Lambert. The BRADD DASH driver, Mr. Alex Witty received increased hours to perform intern tasks.

7. Other

- **Pension Plan Update**

Chairman Dillard called on Ms. Michelle Hines who reported the BRADD Trustees met after the Executive Council recommends to increase the employer match from the proposed two percent to three percent. After one year of service, regular full-time staff can begin participating in the optional 401k plan. Finance staff provided a budgetary report informing the annual cost to BRADD would increase from \$17,000 to \$35,000 for two percent and \$52,000 for three percent. With current budget trends, this increase could be sustained. The Trustees unanimously voted to approve the increase from two percent to three percent as a further incentive to retain employees and encourage participation in the additional investment opportunity. Mr. Sexton thanked Michelle for her service as Chair of the BRADD Trustees.

Motion: Mayor Michael Hughes made a motion to approve the BRADD employer 401k match percent increase to three percent. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Thurmond. Motion carried.

- **2025 Board Meetings**

Vice Chair Choate called on Mr. Eric Sexton who reported the members packet contains a copy of the proposed 2025 BRADD Board of Directors monthly meeting schedule. Mr. Sexton informed the scheduled follows similarly to last year. Meetings continue to primarily be held on the fourth Wednesday of the month with exceptions noted. There would be no meetings in February, July or November. The annual meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 30, 2025 in Hart County. Mr. Sexton asked for approval to adopt the schedule.

Motion: Judge/Executive Dennis Harper made a motion to approve the 2025 BRADD Board of Directors meeting schedule as presented. The motion was seconded by Mayor Dewayne Hatcher. Motion carried.

- **2025 Executive Director Out of State Travel**

Vice Chair Choate called on Mr. Caleb Speck who reported proposed out of state overnight travel projected in 2025 for Executive Director, Mr. Eric Sexton. There were seven possible trips which include travel for SERDI, NADO and ATVG. Mr. Sexton is on the SERDI and ATVG boards.

Motion: Mayor Michael Hughes made a motion to approve the 2025 Executive Director out of state, overnight travel, as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Michael Stoyonovich. Motion carried.

- **Conflict of Interest**

Vice Chair Choate called on Mr. Caleb Speck who reported on two new hire's conflict of interest statements received from Mrs. Zoe Lambert and Mrs. Lauren Key. Both reported no conflicts.

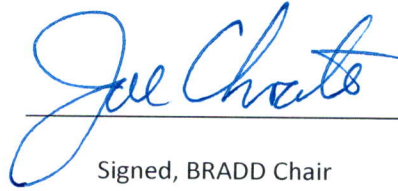
Motion: Mayor Dewayne Hatcher made a motion to approve the two staff conflict of interests as presented. The motion was seconded by Mayor Michael Hughes. Motion carried.

- **Other Updates**

Vice Chair Choate called on Mr. Eric Sexton who provided additional announcements and updates. Mr. Sexton informed the BRADD nominating committee has met for the the consideration of BRADD Officers. All currently serving officers rotated up a position and Mr. Michael Stoyonovich was voted to be added to fill the role of Treasurer and Mr. Steve Thurmond was voted to remain in the office of past Chair. The new slate of officers will be presented in the full board meeting. Further the committee reviewed and considered the award criteria for the Tim Lee Carter service award. Members unanimously agreed that removing the exception of staff, board and special advisors would open the criteria to include more deserving honorees. Mr. Sexton reported the next Executive Council and Board Meeting would be held Wednesday January 22, 2025.

8. Adjourn

Motion: With no further business to consider, Mayor Michael Hughes made a motion to adjourn, and the motion was seconded by Mayor Dewayne Hatcher. Motion carried.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Julie Chate", is positioned above a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Julie" and last name "Chate" clearly legible.

Signed, BRADD Chair