

MINUTES
BRADD BOARD OF DIRECTORS
December 17, 2025

TIME & PLACE:

The Barren River Area Development District Board of Directors met at 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 17, 2025 at the BRADD Conference Center.

Chairman Joe Choate called the meeting to order.

Mayor Henry Royse led the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

ATTENDANCE:

It was determined a quorum was present. (See attached attendance record).

MINUTES:

With no corrections or additions, the minutes of the October 22, 2025 meeting were approved as emailed. (See attached)

Motion was made by Judge/Executive Phil Baker, seconded by Mayor Randall Curry to approve the October 22, 2025 board minutes as emailed. Motion carried.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Chairman Choate introduced guest speaker, Mr. J.D Chaney, Executive Director and CEO for the KY League of Cities. Mr. Chaney began by sharing expectations for the upcoming 2026 Legislative Session. Considerable attention will be given to state budget restraints and funding with additional emphasis on overcrowding issues related to jails. Mr. Chaney further spoke about the housing crisis and new bills related to land use. Mr. Chaney also discussed the proposed centralized collection of local taxes at the state level. Mr. Chaney encouraged members to continue to maintain working relationships with Senators and Representatives to ensure their communities' needs are relayed to Frankfort. Mr. Chaney mentioned the changing dynamics of politics over the coming months due to the upcoming election year. He encouraged local officials to continue with the mindset of collaboration over combative responses, returning a tone of civil discourse. Mr. Chaney emphasized the issues we face are faced together, as we're all working towards the same goal.

NEW BUSINESS:

Executive Council Reports:

1. Clearinghouse Projects

Chairman Choate called on Mayor Billy Phelps who reported the BRADD Executive Council met prior to the board meeting and considered four regional clearinghouse projects. A project description is included in the member packet. Upon review the Executive Council recommended approval.

Motion: Mayor Billy Phelps made a motion to approve the four regional clearinghouse projects as presented. The motion was seconded by Judge/Executive Mason Barnes. Motion carried. (See attached)

2. Directors Report

Chairman Choate called on Mr. Eric Sexton, Executive Director who introduced a new staff member, Mr. Garrett Ashley, part time administrative assistant in Economic Development Department. Mr. Sexton recognized staff anniversaries for one year of service: Mrs. Zoe Lambert, Mrs. Lauren Key, and Mr. Ethan Bates. A five year anniversary recognition was given to Mr. Christian Stanley. Mr. Sexton announced three BRADD citizen member renewals for another three year term. Mr. Sam Terry, Barren Co., Mr. Mike Stoyonovich, Edmonson Co., and Mr. Steve Thurmond, Simpson Co. Mr. Sexton reported the Opioid Advisory Committee met recently to collaborate on the Anchor project which included an update of ongoing ground work for the facility. Mr. Sexton encouraged the members to consider allocating their opioid abatement funds towards the Anchor project. Mr. Sexton announced 100 Christmas bags were collected for seniors through BRADDs recent donation drive. Mr. Sexton informed the members' packet contains a copy of the 2026 BRADD Board of Directors meeting schedule, noting a correction of the start time of 12:30 pm. A copy of the BRADD strategic plan is also included in the member packet which contains six strategies incorporated with the BRADD mission to serve as a guide for the work of the agency. Mr. Sexton reported the BRADD audit would be presented in January this year due to delays with federal OMB guidance. Mr. Sexton invited members to meet in the lobby after the board meeting for a tour of Warren County Schools Impact Center.

REPORTS:

Water Management Council

Chairman Choate called on Judge/Executive Mason Barnes, who reported the BRADD Water Management Council met on December 3, 2025 and heard from guest speaker, Casey Greer from DOW, concerning SRF and how she could be of assistance. She also explained four points of attention needed when filling out the WRIS applications. Those being, include every aspect, the Budget tab needs to list all funding sources, check every applicable box, and make sure components and narrative match. She also explained that systems should upload Audits every now and then. The Council also approved the county project rankings & prioritization list. Mr. Julien Hodge explained to the Council that he and Mr. Ty Foster were finished with informal system visits and would start official visits in Feb-April. The last day to submit mapping for SRF is 12-16-2025. The next WMC meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2026, at 12:30.

Regional Transportation Council

Chairman Choate called on Judge/Executive Doug Gorman, who reported the BRADD Regional Transportation Committee met on December 3rd. A presentation from Gresham Smith Consultants was provided concerning the Bowling Green to Mammoth Cave Trail Feasibility Study. Additionally, a presentation on the Regional Safety Action Plan being developed for the BRADD region. The committee reviewed and approved BRADD's annual update of Rail Freight Loading and Unloading Locations. The committee was given a review of open and upcoming grant application windows and training opportunities from BRADD's Regional Transportation Planner, as well as an update on road projects from Joe Plunk with KYTC District 3. The next meeting of the BRADD RTC is scheduled for March 4th, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. in the BRADD conference center, which will also be the annual Coordinated Transit Meeting for the region.

Regional Economic Development

Chairman Choate called on Judge/Executive Tim Flener who reported the committee met on December 3rd, with a presentation by Nick Grinstead, Ph.D., MPP, the HMA Planner/Planning Grants Manager with the University of Kentucky Hazard Mitigation Grants Program Office. An overview of FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan Requirements and what is needed from each participating jurisdiction for the upcoming Regional Multi-Hazard, Multi-Jurisdictional Mitigation Plan. He noted that there are two key changes from the previous plan update: 1) all jurisdictions (city, county, and special districts) must now identify unique assets in each jurisdiction and how those assets may be impacted by each hazard; and 2) each jurisdiction must identify 1-2 specific examples of hazard events within their jurisdiction (e.g. flood events with

location, depth, and damages). Committee members were presented with an update on the objectives in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) and Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) to date, noting of the total 1125 objectives, 350 have been completed. Members were encouraged to take extra Steering Committee Membership Flyers for their county to promote local participation. Representatives are needed from each city, county, and special district to participate in the planning process over the next year in order to meet FEMA requirements. All interested parties are encouraged to get involved with their local steering committee, and a schedule of committee meetings is included in the BRADD events calendar, sent out with the monthly newsletter (sign up for the newsletter at bradd.org). The next regular meeting is Wednesday, March 4th at the BRADD Conference Center at 10:00am.

Community & Economic Development

Chairman Choate called on Ms. Emily Hathcock, CED Director, who reported the members packet contains a project impact report. Ms. Hathcock also recognized four CED staff for their accomplishment of becoming CDGB certified, Mr. Ethan Bates, Mr. Julien Hodge, Mr. Ty Foster and Mr. Tyler Hopkins.

ADVISOR REPORTS:

Sandy Simpson, Congressman Comer's Representative, spoke about the importance of Community Action, and the Congressman issuing a letter of support to increase funding for the valuable services they provide. She spoke about the bi-partisan crack down on the increased healthcare costs related to drug costs. In 2026 there will be a hearing of the Surface Bill related to roads and buildings. Mrs. Simpson expressed thanks to BRADD staff for their work and dedication this year.

Hunter Whitaker, Senator McConnell's Field Representative, spoke about the federal budget and continued work from Continuing Resolutions since the government shutdown. The Senator is advocating for a 3 percent pay raise for Armed Forces. She further spoke about the NDAA fund and support for the Pentagon and defense.

Mark Lord, Congressman Guthrie's Representative, spoke about the continued need to improve transparency and the work needed to drive down costs in healthcare and the healthcare reforms, with return to consumer. Mr. Lord discussed the Take it Down Act, related to online abuse and safety related to minors. Mr. Lord wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Greg Meredith, KYTC, Rural and Municipal Aid, \$12 million of \$25 million allocation is still available for this Fiscal Year, Mr. Meredith is hopeful the program will continue to be renewed for next fiscal year.

Molly Schroer, Mammoth Cave National Park, reported a decrease in visitation this month related to the government shutdown. She spoke about the well attended Cave Sing event which drew over 1,000 visitors to the cave. Ferry work continues.

Chairman Choate wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN

With no further business, a motion was made by Judge/Executive Mason Barnes and seconded by Mayor Mike Hughes to adjourn.



Signed, Chairman



Approved, Secretary