

**Kentucky Council of  
Area Development Districts**  
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## MEETING MINUTES

Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts (KCADD)  
Quarterly Meeting | 10:30 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 13, 2025  
Capitol Annex Room 171, LRC | Frankfort, Kentucky

### Members Present

Judge Rick Stiltner (GADD), Chairman  
Judge Matthew Wireman (BSADD), 1st Vice Chair  
Mayor Kevin Cotton (PeADD), 2nd Vice Chair  
Judge George Sparks (BTADD)  
Attorney Jesse Melcher (BTADD)  
Judge Myron Lewis (FIVCO)  
Judge Jerry Summers (KIPDA)  
Judge Dan Ison (KIPDA)  
Mayor Rita Dotson (Purchase ADD)

Mayor Al Botts (GADD)  
Citizen Member Lisa B. Wilson-Plajer (NKADD)  
Judge Adam O’Nan (GRADD)  
Judge Joe Choate (BRADD)  
Past Chair Steve Thurmond (BRADD)  
Judge Steve Henry (GRADD)  
Judge Stan Humphries (PeADD)  
Judge Scott Alexander (KRADD)  
Judge David Fields (NKADD)

### KCADD Staff Present

Casey Ellis, Executive Director

### Call to Order

Chairman Rick Stiltner formally called the quarterly meeting of the Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts (KCADD) Board to order at 10:30 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 13, 2025, in Capitol Annex Room 171 of the Legislative Research Commission building, Frankfort.

### Confirmation of Quorum

Chair Stiltner inquired of KCADD Executive Director Casey Ellis regarding the presence of a quorum. Ellis confirmed that a quorum was established with 18 members present, representing 11 Area Development Districts (ADDs).

### Legislative Update—Sen. Robby Mills

Sen. Mills expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage directly with local officials, emphasizing the importance of hearing firsthand how legislation impacts communities. He thanked attendees for their service and participation.

He noted that one of the session’s key accomplishments was the reduction of the personal income tax, which took effect in January. Looking ahead, the overarching theme for the remainder of the session is fiscal caution. Sen. Mills stressed the need for prudence due to ongoing uncertainty at the federal level, particularly concerning potential changes to Medicaid matching funds. A 5% reduction in the federal match rate could have a significant impact on the state budget, possibly costing billions of dollars. As a result, the legislature intends to protect the state’s Rainy Day Fund, currently valued at around \$4 billion, and is unlikely to approve substantial new spending this session.

However, targeted investments may be made in critical infrastructure, including funding through the W. Waters Fund and improvements to county roads rated “nines and tens.” Sen. Mills encouraged local leaders to ensure their roads are properly rated and that all necessary documentation is submitted through the appropriate channels. He also asked officials to communicate directly with their legislators about any urgent water and wastewater needs, as these one-time funds can be used to make lasting improvements in underserved areas.

The Senator also addressed Kentucky’s growing housing crisis, noting a statewide shortage of approximately 209,000 units. With continued population growth driven by economic expansion, he emphasized the importance of expanding housing options in both rural and urban areas. Several legislative proposals are under consideration, including enabling local governments to create targeted development districts where developers may receive local tax rebates for up to five years. Though Sen. Mills supports supplementing these rebates with state funds, he acknowledged that such measures are unlikely to advance until next year. Other proposals include allowing industrial revenue bonds to be used for large apartment developments and limiting zoning appeals to individuals directly impacted by a project.

In closing, Sen. Mills reiterated his willingness to answer questions and expressed his continued commitment to working alongside county and city officials to meet the needs of their communities.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Stiltner requested approval of the minutes from the meeting held on Nov. 13, 2024. A motion was made by Mayor Kevin Cotton and seconded by Judge Adam O’Nan. The motion carried.

### **Financial Report**

In the absence of Treasurer Penny Robinson, Chair Stiltner invited Executive Director Ellis to present the financial report. Ellis reported that as of the end of December—marking the halfway point of Fiscal Year 2025—KCADD is performing well financially. Payroll expenditures are at 48%, and all other expenditures are tracking at 27%, while 65% of projected revenues have already been collected.

The only notable outlier in the budget is the office supplies line item, which shows increased spending due to additional equipment purchases made as part of recent IT upgrades to the conference room. Aside from this variance, all financials are in good standing. There were no questions from attendees, and a motion was made to approve the financial report by Judge Adam O’Nan and seconded by Mayor Kevin Cotton.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Ellis delivered his report and directed attendees to the memo from Dan Brenyo, KCADD Business Development Manager, included in the meeting packet. He noted that progress has been made on the Aetna contracts with Green River, with access recently granted and referrals expected to begin soon.

Ellis announced that the organization was awarded the 2025 Community Care Hub National Learning Communities Grant, which officially launched earlier this same week. The initiative involves participation from Ellis, KCADD PIO Molly Haines, Sarah from Green River, and Brenyo, in national working groups, offering a valuable opportunity to collaborate with peers from other states and organizations to strengthen program efforts.

He provided an update on the Kentuckians in Washington event, which is progressing well with several Kentucky delegates confirmed to attend during the NADo policy conference in March. From a legislative standpoint, the main area of current focus is on updates to last year’s GRANT program, which, while not yet filed, is expected to be submitted soon. The draft language reflects many of the organization’s previous requests, including waivers for local match requirements, expanded eligibility to include federal agencies such as FEMA and programs like Hazard Mitigation. It also addresses clarification around match requirements for programs like DRA, where a match is not technically required but often included.

KCADD continues to deepen its partnership with the Cabinet for Economic Development and Grant Ready Kentucky. Through this collaboration, directors have been given access to the eCivis grant prospecting software, which enhances their ability to identify and pursue funding opportunities.

Additionally, two important initiatives are underway: one with KIA and DLG focused on upgrading the state’s water resource infrastructure system, and another with DLG to improve and streamline grant reporting and tracking software. Ongoing collaboration with Dell continues in areas such as program waivers and meal support.

Casey also referenced the newly completed legislative one-pagers, which were distributed to directors. These documents are the result of months of data collection and show the local impact of programs on a county-by-county basis. He apologized for the delay in their completion, citing the complexity of data mining efforts. A major highlight from this data was the documentation of 1,887 projects totaling over \$3.3 billion in FY 2024, involving contributions from approximately 100 grant writers statewide. These one-pagers are intended to support legislative outreach and storytelling around the organization's impact. Directors were encouraged to share them with lawmakers and to request any additional information or data refinements as needed.

### **Nominating Committee Report**

Chair Stiltner called on Judge Steve Henry to provide the Nominating Committee Report. The recommendations for the 2025 slate of officers are as follows:

- Judge Matthew Wireman (BSADD), Chair;
- Mayor Kevin Cotton (PeADD), 1st Vice Chair;
- Judge Orbrey Gritton, 2nd Vice Chair (BGADD);
- Citizen Member Penny Robinson (CVADD), Secretary;
- Mayor Harold Slone (FIVCO), Treasurer; and
- Rick Stiltner (GADD), Past Chair

Judge Henry made a motion to approve the slate of officers, seconded by Mayor Rita Dotson. The motion carried.

### **Legislative Update—Rep. Suzanne Miles**

Rep. Suzanne Miles was introduced and thanked for her attendance. She has served in the Kentucky House of Representatives since winning a special election in 2013 and currently represents the 7th District, which includes Daviess, Henderson, and Union counties. In February 2023, she was recognized as the first woman in Kentucky history to serve as both Acting Floor Leader and Acting Speaker of the House. She was first elected as Majority Caucus Chair in 2018, becoming the first woman to serve in Republican leadership in the House, and has since been re-elected to that role in 2020, 2022, and 2024.

Representative Miles began her remarks with a lighthearted reference to the redistricting process, during which she gave up Union and Henderson counties—though, as she noted, “like kids, they never go away.” She expressed gratitude for the local officials in those areas, particularly Judges from Henderson and Union Counties, whom she described as a “breath of fresh air.” With both state and federal responsibilities, she joked that while many counties lay claim to her when seeking support, the dynamic often shifts when she makes requests of her own.

She emphasized her strong support for the ADDs, describing their work as vital to local communities—particularly in the realm of grant writing, which she equated to “finding gold.” She underscored that the success of ADDs is deeply rooted in the support and collaboration of local leaders.

Turning to legislative matters, Representative Miles discussed the formation of task forces within the General Assembly. While many past efforts focused on studying issues without taking action, the current approach aims to prioritize and act on key topics. She highlighted the recent task force on housing as a meaningful example, with valuable findings that are helping to shape future policy. She also served on the Artificial Intelligence Task Force, remarking that while the technology is often intimidating, it also holds exciting potential. She noted generational differences in reactions to AI, with older members expressing more concern and younger participants responding with curiosity and optimism.

### **Recognition of Past Chair and Sen. David Givens**

Following the acknowledgement of Chair Stiltner's service as KCADD Board Chairman, 2025 Chairman Matthew Wireman recognized Sen. David Givens. Sen. Givens expressed his appreciation for the work of the ADDs, noting that he frequently cites them as a model for effective regional collaboration, economic impact, and maximizing return on investment. He also thanked the ADDs for their continued presence and engagement.

**Adjournment**

There being no other business, Chair Wireman called for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Mayor Kevin Cotton and seconded by Judge Dan Ison. The motion carried. The KCADD adjourned at 11:05 a.m.