

**Kentucky Council of  
Area Development Districts**  
501 Capital Avenue  
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

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**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts**  
Quarterly Board Meeting  
1:30 p.m. EST, Thursday, Feb. 15, 2024  
Room 149, Capitol Annex | Frankfort, KY 40601

**Board Members Present**

Chair Steve Thurmond (BRADD)  
Judge Rick Stiltner (GADD), 2nd Vice-Chair  
Judge Matthew Wireman (BSADD), Sec.  
Judge Joe Choate (BRADD)  
Mayor Kevin Cotton (PeADD)  
Judge Shane Gabbard (CVADD)  
Judge Stan Humphries (PeADD)  
Judge Dan Ison (KIPDA)  
Mr. David Johnston (GRADD)

Judge Kris Knochelmann (NKADD)  
Judge Myron Lewis (FIVCO)  
Mr. Craig Lindon (KRADD)  
County Attorney Jesse Melcher (BTADD)  
Ms. Penny Robinson (CVADD)  
Mayor Harold Slone (FIVCO)  
Judge George Sparks (BTADD)  
Mayor Les Stapleton (BSADD)  
Judge Jerry Summers (KIPDA)

**Staff Present**

Casey Ellis, KCADD Executive Director  
Bill Cooper, Business Development Manager  
Molly Haines, KCADD Public Information Officer/Executive Assistant

**Guests**

Rocky Adkins, Senior Advisor to Gov. Andy Beshear

**Call to Order**

Chair Thurmond called the Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts quarterly board meeting to order at 1:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 15, 2024, in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex.

**Confirmation of Quorum**

Chair Thurmond inquired of Haines if a quorum was present. She confirmed a quorum existed with 18 members present and 11 ADDs represented by board members.

**Approval of Minutes**

Chair Thurmond called for approval of the Nov. 15, 2023, minutes. A motion was made by Mayor Les Stapleton and seconded by Mayor Kevin Cotton. The motion carried.

**KCADD Financial Report**

In the absence of Treasurer Obrey Gritton, Chair Thurmond turned to KCADD Executive Director Casey Ellis to deliver the financial update. Copies of the report were distributed to all attendees in today's meeting folder. Ellis shared that KCADD has utilized 30.3% of its revenues, with expenditures accounting for only 19.6%. He mentioned that the revenue figures might appear slightly higher due to the ACL grant being listed at 0, which is a carryover from previous records. Ellis assured that he is

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actively working with the CPA firm to rectify this discrepancy. With no queries from the floor, Chair Thurmond proceeded to seek approval for the financial report. Mayor Kevin Cotton motioned for approval, seconded by Mayor Les Stapleton, and the motion carried.

### **Business Development Manager Report**

Chair Thurmond invited Bill Cooper to deliver an update on his recent activities and the progress of the Kentucky Healthcare Connection Initiative. Cooper shared that he has primarily participated in webinars focusing on contracts and negotiations with healthcare providers, hospitals, and related updates on national initiatives and regulatory changes. Regarding collaborations with health plans, there have been positive updates with Aetna. However, efforts on IT security assessments were halted when Aetna decided to pursue a different approach. Subsequently, weekly meetings have been established between Aetna, Mr. Cooper, and the Green River Area Development District staff, with additional communications occurring two to three times per week.

Currently, the focus is on a newly approved scope of work and the formulation of a new contract with Aetna, anticipating program implementation within the coming months. Cooper is also exploring opportunities for partnerships and services in conjunction with the introducing of new PACE programs statewide. Additionally, national webinars on Community Care Hubs have been attended, with ongoing monthly updates to assess various models and initiatives across different states.

Cooper emphasized the exploration of innovative assessment methods facilitated by Aetna, collaborating with similar agencies in other states to identify evidence-based programs suitable for adoption. These efforts aim to enhance the effectiveness and scope of services provided by the initiative.

### **Introduction of Guest Speaker**

Chair Thurmond introduced Mr. Rocky Adkins, who serves as a senior advisor to Gov. Andy Beshear. Thurmond highlighted Adkins' extensive tenure as a member of the Kentucky House of Representatives from 1987 to 2019, during which he held positions as Majority Leader from 2013 to 2016 and Minority Floor Leader from 2016 to 2019.

Expressing gratitude to the Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts and attendees from all 15 Area Development Districts for their presence and engagement in the legislative proceedings, Adkins emphasized the significant economic progress experienced by Kentucky. He cited a record-breaking \$29 million in private-sector investments over the past four years, accompanied by a notable shift in Kentucky's credit ratings to a "positive outlook" by all major credit rating agencies in the U.S.

Adkins further highlighted the fiscal achievements, including consecutive budgets surpassing \$1 billion above appropriations, sustained revenue growth exceeding \$1 billion for 16 consecutive months, and the establishment of the largest rainy-day fund in Kentucky's history, totaling \$3.7 billion. Additionally, he noted the state's historically low unemployment rate, underscoring the overall positive trajectory of Kentucky's economy.

### **Marketing and Branding Update**

Chair Thurmond invited Executive Director Ellis to present an update on marketing and branding efforts. Prior to the meeting, all KCADD board members received three handouts: examples of a 15-week social media campaign highlighting each ADD, the January 2024 KCADD newsletter, and informative one-pagers outlining the functions of the ADDs.

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Upon joining KCADD in March 2023, Ellis was tasked with revitalizing the organization's branding and marketing initiatives. As part of this endeavor, Haines was hired as the Public Information Officer. Since assuming her role in September 2023, Haines has collaborated closely with Ellis and ADD executive directors to develop effective storytelling strategies for the ADDs.

The monthly KCADD newsletter, crafted by Haines and distributed electronically via ConstantContact, is released on the first Monday of each month. It reaches all 120 county judge/executives and KCADD board members. Ellis encouraged board members to share the newsletter with their respective networks. Additionally, Ellis highlighted the ongoing 15-week social media campaign, which showcases one ADD per week, totaling 75 posts. Each week, the ADD is introduced alongside its executive director, with four featured programs chosen by the ADD.

The provided one-pager serves as a valuable tool for Ellis in narrating the stories of the ADDs. For example, during a recent presentation at the Main Street Directors meeting in Frankfort, Ellis distributed the one-pager, offering an overview of ADD programs and their significance to Kentucky communities. Ellis encouraged the board to share these items with their colleagues and offer any suggestions they may have for moving forward.

### **Legislative Update**

Chair Thurmond called upon Ellis and Joanna Shake, Legislative Chair of the Kentucky Association of District Directors, to provide a legislative update. Shake briefed the KCADD on the priorities outlined during their November meeting:

- **Joint Funding Agreement (JFA)**—The Legislative Committee advocated for the continuation of the \$4 million investment in JFA. This request was included in both the governor's budget and the House's budget, marking significant progress acknowledged by the committee.
- **Kentucky Infrastructure Authority (KIA)**—The committee aimed to secure increased investment in water management and sewer projects through KIA. There has been a rise in the KIA budget, and the committee anticipates these funds will be allocated for water planning projects.
- **Aging**—Both the governor's budget proposal and the House's budget included the requested \$10 million for the Department of Aging and Independent Living, reflecting a successful advocacy effort by the committee.
- **Waiver**—While not a budgetary item, the committee engaged in productive discussions with Rep. Kim Moser and Sen. Meredith, chair of the Family and Human Services committee, regarding waiver-related matters. Progress has been made, and conversations are ongoing.
- **Ombudsman**—Added as a late addition to the legislative priority list, an additional \$1 million has been allocated in both the governor's and House's budgets for ombudsman expansion, supported by the KCADD.

Shake also mentioned a joint legislative committee meeting held on Feb. 7, during which Mayor Stapleton urged the groups to broaden their scope and expand legislative priorities, notably through House Bill 142. Additionally, she invited suggestions from the KCADD board for further advocacy efforts, emphasizing the willingness of the ADDs to support additional priorities as directed.

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

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Chair Thurmond invited Executive Director Ellis to deliver his report. In addition to updating the board on the progress of marketing and branding initiatives, Ellis highlighted a new responsibility assigned by the 15 ADD executive directors: overseeing repairs and maintenance at the KCADD office located at 501 Capital Avenue. Ellis acknowledged that visitors to the office during the December inauguration may have observed the structural needs of the building.

Ellis emphasized that the Kentucky Association of District Directors (KADD) is collaborating with KCADD to invest in enhancements for the conference room and address other office requirements. However, he noted that significant structural repairs are looming in the near future. To expedite decision-making on these matters, the KCADD executive committee may need to convene outside of the regular meeting schedule.

### **Nominating Committee Report**

Chair Thurmond called on Mayor Harold Slone to provide the Nominating Committee Report. The committee, consisting of Mayor Slone, Judge Shane Gabbard, Judge Jerry Summers, and Executive Director Ellis, met Jan. 30. The recommendations for the 2024 slate of officers are as follows: Judge Rick Stiltner, Chairman (GADD); Judge Matthew Wireman, 1st Vice-Chair (BSADD); Mayor Kevin Cotton, 2nd Vice-Chair (PeADD); Judge Obrey Gritton, Secretary (BGADD); Ms. Penny Robinson, Treasurer (CVADD), and Mr. Steve Thurmond, Past Chair (BRADD). Mayor Slone moved to approve the 2024 officers, with a second from Mayor Stapleton. With no further discussion, the motion carried.

### **Adjournment**

Following recognition of Chair Thurmond's service as KCADD Board Chairman, 2024 Chairman Rick Stiltner called for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Judge Kris Knochelmann and seconded by Mayor Les Stapleton. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m. EST.