

**BURNSVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
AGENDA**

**Organizational and Regular Meeting - Thursday, December 7, 2023, 5:30pm
Burnsville Town Hall**

Organizational Meeting 5:30pm

1. Adoption of Agenda
2. Oath of Office - Councilor-elect Judy Buchanan, Councilor-elect Denise Collier
3. Election of Mayor pro tempore
4. Confirmation of Regular Meeting Schedule (1st Thursday of each month at 6pm, Town Hall)

RECESS AND RECEPTION

December Regular Meeting 6pm

5. Public Comment
6. Consideration of Minutes
 - a. Regular Meeting held on November 2, 2023
7. Public Hearings
 - a. Amendment to CDBG-I project #20-I-3604, W Main Sewer Interceptor
 - b. Application for additional CDBG-I funds
8. Presentations
9. Manager's Update - Heather Hockaday
 - a. Call for a special meeting on December 11.
 - b. Meadow Road update
 - c. Residential Solid Waste Service Agreement Amendment
 - d. Tax Report
10. Clerk's Update
 - a. Appointment to the High Country RPO's Rural Transportation Advisory Committee
11. Department Updates
 - a. Public Works - Shane Dale
 - b. Finance - Leslie Crowder
 - i. Budget vs. Actual, previously provided to Council
 - ii. SDF program update
 - c. Fire Department - Niles Howell
 - d. Police Department - Brian Buchanan
 - e. Zoning/Code Enforcement - Brian Buchanan

f. Burnsville Town Center - Corbin Cooper

12. Council Members' Reports

13. Updates from Advisory Boards and Non-Profits

- a. Yancey/Burnsville Chamber of Commerce
- b. High Country Council of Governments

14. Closed Session

15. Next Town Council Meeting - January 4, 2024

16. Adjourn

BURNSVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
Regular Meeting - Thursday, November 2, 2023, 6pm
Burnsville Town Hall

On Thursday, November 2, 2023, 6pm, the Burnsville Town Council with Mayor Russell Fox and members Judy Buchanan, Denise Collier, Bill Wheeler, and Randy Ollis present, held a regular meeting at the Burnsville Town Hall. Also in attendance were town staff members Heather Hockaday, Shane Dale, Brian Buchanan, Niles Howell, Leslie Crowder, Chad Fox and Corbin Cooper; and several visitors. Mayor Fox who presided, called the meeting to order at 6pm and stated that the purpose of the meeting was to conduct regular business for the month of November 2023.

The Mayor began by thanking everyone that reached out to him and his family with prayers and well wishes during his recovery from an ATV accident. He said that he was very grateful to be back.

Adoption of Agenda - Bill Wheeler moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried.

Public Comment

- Joe Ventrice with the American Red Cross gave an update, pointing out that with a recent fire, the homeowner did not have a smoke detector. He reminded everyone how important smoke detectors are and that the Red Cross provides them for free. He also mentioned upcoming blood drives.
- Danny McIntosh said that Riddlefest went well and was very entertaining, he mentioned the upcoming Elisha Mitchell play by Dillon Wilson, and invited everyone to the West Burnsville Church Christmas Pageant. He also spoke about the passing of Zeb Phillips, saying that Yancey County is better because he and his family moved here.
- Lucy Doll commented on invasive plants, mentioning a workshop she attended. She reviewed several invasive plants and trees and said that she is trying to encourage a similar seminar to come to Burnsville.

Consideration of Minutes - Minutes from a regular meeting held on October 5, 2023 were considered. Randy Ollis made a motion to approve the minutes as read. Bill Wheeler seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

Presentations - There was none.

Manager's Update

W. Main Sewer Interceptor project, CDBG-I additional funding - Town Manager Heather Hockaday explained that in order to apply for the additional \$500,000 in 2019 de-obligated DEQ funds, a public hearing would be necessary. Judy Buchanan moved to call for two public hearings on December 7th, 2023, one for the submission of a grant application for approximately \$500,000 in CDBG-I funds to complete the Town's 2020 West Main Sewer Interceptor project and another to amend the original project description, reducing the scope of work caused by inflation in construction costs. Bill Wheeler seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

Water Treatment Plant project, McGill Construction Administration & Construction Observation agreement - Mrs. Hockaday gave background on the evolution of funding for the project where ARPA recently allowed a conversion for loan funding into a grant. She said that engineering services, ongoing since 2017 and mostly paid for, were not procured under current federal guidelines, preventing ARPA money from covering it. She said that the Town had to go back

and issue a new RFQ for the remainder of the engineering work, resulting in the new agreement with McGill. Judy Buchanan made a motion to authorize Mayor Fox to sign the Construction Administration & Construction Observation agreement with McGill. Randy Ollis seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

Discuss Golden Leaf stormwater application - Mrs. Hockaday met with Corey Osborne from High Country about an opportunity to apply for a portion of Golden Leaf's \$13 million for stormwater projects. She said that they discussed applying to help with costs on piping issues near the stream daylighting project at the Town's maintenance shed. Bill Wheeler moved to authorize Mayor Fox and Manager Hockaday to sign the application for Golden Leaf funds. Denise Collier seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

Tax Report - Mrs. Hockaday previously provided a tax report to the Council and mentioned progress on the 2022 collections, which are close to complete. She presented a release on taxes for four personal property items, totaling \$56.08, where the owners have moved outside of Town or gone out of business. Mayor Fox moved to release the \$56.08 from the tax rolls. Judy Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Randy Ollis recognized Mrs. Hockaday for being awarded the High Country Council of Government's Manager of the Year at their annual banquet.

Clerk's Update

Town Clerk Chad Fox updated the Council on a East Main Sidewalk Feasibility Study Steering Committee public input meeting that happened earlier in the day, where engineers from AECOM were on hand to present two possible options for a sidewalk on East Main street. They heard input from the committee and public which they will incorporate into their study. He also mentioned the upcoming Christmas parade that Councilors always take part in.

Department Updates

1. Public Works - Public Works Director Shane Dale reported that he is working with contractors to repair a water issue at Galley and McCracken Street. Public Works have temporarily restored water while a new 2-inch waterline can be bored. The project is expected to be completed soon.

Mr. Dale also mentioned that the raw water intake generator is ready to ship and has an install date of December 4th.

2. Finance - Finance Officer Leslie Crowder previously provided a budget vs actual and overtime report.
 - a. Capital project ordinance amendment
 - i. FEMA, Fixed Cost Option on Multiple Culverts and Erosion and Management Costs - Mrs. Crowder presented the amendment that changed the scope of work, reducing the amount that FEMA would contribute.
 - ii. ARPA, Bakers Creek Pump Station improvements project - Mrs. Crowder said that the amendment reflected the fact that the project came in over budget. She recommended going ahead and spending the amount to complete the project.

Judy Buchanan moved to approve both project ordinance amendments. Bill Wheeler seconded the motion, which carried. All were in agreement.

- b. Budget amendment - Mrs. Crowder presented the budget amendment that acknowledged a sales tax refund, the new raw water intake generator, and the

Town's contribution to the Baker's Creek Pump Station improvements project. Randy Ollis moved to approve Budget Adjustment #3 FY 23/24. Mayor Russell Fox seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

- c. SDF program update - Mrs. Crowder said that the report, updated every five years, will be on the website in mid-December during an advertised public comment period.
3. Fire Department - Fire Chief Niles Howell presented a call summary for the month of September with two structure fires, but overall, the smallest call volume the department had seen in several months. He commended Noah Pauley for his help getting a recent fire under control and said that automatic aid with other departments is helping.
4. Police Department - Police Chief Brian Buchanan presented an activity log and mentioned the Chamber's successful Halloween on the Square event. He said that a new vehicle is on the road and how all officers now have all-wheel-drive vehicles.
5. Zoning/Code Enforcement - Zoning Administrator Brian Buchanan mentioned that several projects are moving along but none have reached the permitting stage.
6. Burnsville Town Center - Town Center Manager Corbin Cooper updated the Council on a number of events including several upcoming crafts shows and concerts.

Council Members Report

- Randy Ollis mentioned the Summit Street fire and how quickly the fire was extinguished.
- Judy Buchanan expressed how grateful she is that Mayor Russell Fox was back and healthy. A sentiment shared by all.

Updates from Advisory Boards and Non-Profits

- Yancey/Burnsville Chamber of Commerce - Interim director Pete Krulder was present and said that visitation was up. He mentioned Leadership Yancey and thanked Town Manager Heather Hockaday for participating. He thanked the Town for their help with events and welcomed the Town to participate in the Christmas Parade. He said that the search for a new Executive Director has received one resume.

Closed Session - There was none.

Next Town Council Meeting - December 7 , 2023, 6pm.

Adjourn - With there being no further business, Randy Ollis moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:40pm. Denise Collier seconded the motion, meeting adjourned.

J. Chad Fox, Town Clerk

T. Russell Fox, Mayor

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
AMENDMENT TO CDBG-I PROJECT #20-I-3604
BURNSVILLE MAIN SEWER INTERCEPTOR (WEST) IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Burnsville will conduct a public hearing on December 7, 2023 at 6:00 PM, or as soon thereafter as the agenda will allow, at the Burnsville Town Hall, located at 2 Town Square, Burnsville, relative to the intention to amend the Burnsville Main Sewer Interceptor (West) Improvements Project CDBG-I #20-I- 3604.

The Town plans to amend the original project description to reduce the scope of work caused by inflation in construction costs.

Citizens will be given the opportunity to provide oral and written comment on the town's past and proposed use of CDBG funds at the public hearing. All interested citizens are encouraged to attend.

If additional information is needed, please contact the Town of Burnsville at (828) 682-2420. Formal written complaints or comments concerning the amendment process that are submitted to the Town prior to or following the public hearing will be responded to within ten working days by December 21, 2023.

Persons with disabilities or who otherwise need assistance should contact Heather Hockaday, at (828) 682-2420 or hhockaday@townofburnsville.org or Relay North Carolina #711 by November 30, 2023. Accommodations will be made for all who request assistance with participating in the public hearing.

This information is available in Spanish or any other language upon request. Please contact Heather Hockaday, at (828) 682-2420 or at the Burnsville Town Hall for accommodations for this request.

Esta información está disponible en español o en cualquier otro idioma bajo petición. Por favor, póngase en contacto con Heather Hockaday, al (828) 682-2420 o en Burnsville Town Hall, de alojamiento para esta solicitud.



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
RELATIVE TO APPLICATION
BY THE TOWN OF BURNSVILLE
FOR FUNDING UNDER THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1974, AS AMENDED

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Burnsville will conduct a public hearing on December 7, 2023 at 6:00 PM, or as soon thereafter as the agenda will allow, at the Burnsville Town Hall located at 2 Town Square, Burnsville, relative to the intention of the Town of Burnsville to apply for additional 2019 CDBG funding under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act.

The Town of Burnsville intends to submit an application for a grant of approximately \$500,000 in CDBG Infrastructure funds to complete the Town's 2020 CDBG-I project – Main Sewer Interceptor Project (West).

The following is a tentative list of proposed activities and an estimated budget. The final application will be reviewed at the public hearing.

Public Sewer Improvements	\$500,000.00
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The proposed project will provide benefits to the entire town, 55.67% of whom are low and moderate income individuals based on U.S. Census data. No individuals will be displaced, nor will any require temporary relocation assistance as a result of the proposed project.

Citizens will be given the opportunity to provide oral and written comment on the Town's past and proposed use of CDBG funds at the public hearing. All interested citizens are encouraged to attend.

If additional information is needed, please contact Heather Hockaday, Town Manager at 828-682-2420. Formal written complaints or comments concerning the application process that are submitted to the Town Administrator prior to or following the public hearing will be responded to within ten working days by the administrator. A copy of the completed project application will be available for public review after January 1, 2024, at the Burnsville Town Hall.

Persons with disabilities or who otherwise need assistance should contact Heather Hockaday, at (828) 682-2420 or hhockaday@townofburnsville.org or Relay North Carolina #711 by November 30, 2023. Accommodations will be made for all who request assistance with participating in the public hearing.

This information is available in Spanish or any other language upon request. Please contact Heather Hockaday, at (828) 682-2420 or at the Burnsville Town Hall for accommodations for this request.

Esta información está disponible en español o en cualquier otro idioma bajo petición. Por favor, póngase en contacto con Heather Hockaday, al (828) 682-2420 o en Burnsville Town Hall, de alojamiento para esta solicitud.



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF YANCEY

RESIDENTIAL SOLID WASTE SERVICE AGREEMENT

FIRST AMENDMENT

THIS IS AN AMENDMENT to a service contract, dated 11 February, 2020, between the Town of Burnsville, a North Carolina corporate body politic (hereinafter, "Town") and McKinney Lawn and Garage Service, LLC, DBA, McKinney Garbage Service a Limited Liability Company organized and doing business in the State of North Carolina (hereinafter, "Contractor").

WHEREAS, the Town and Contractor are currently operating under a residential solid waste and recycling service agreement for residential garbage collection and disposal and collection of residential recyclable materials in the incorporated areas of the Town of Burnsville; and,

WHEREAS, this agreement has been set on a calendar year schedule. The agreement is set to expire on December 31, 2023 and the parties through previous discussions have agreed to extend the current contract and agreement for an additional six (6) month period until June 30, 2024 under the same terms and conditions contained in the current agreement. This amendment will allow the parties time to negotiate new terms and conditions based upon a local government fiscal year of July 1 through June 30; and,

WHEREAS, the parties agree that all the remaining terms and conditions of the 2020 contract shall remain in full force and effect and the same are incorporated herein as if set forth fully herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, Town and Contractor, for consideration of the mutual covenants and compensation herein duly acknowledged, hereby agree to the following amendment to the term of the contract:

1. The terms and conditions of the Residential Service Agreement dated 11 February, 2020 are extended and remain in full force and effect for an additional six (6) months from December 31, 2023 through June 30, 2024.
2. Nothing in this amendment binds either party to continue in a contract beyond June 30, 2024 if any future terms cannot be agreed upon.
3. That the Mayor and Town Manager, or either of them, are hereby authorized to execute this amendment.
4. That all acts and doings of officers, employees and agents of the Town, whether taken prior to, on, or after the date of this Amendment, that are in conformity with and in the furtherance of the purposes and intents of this Amendment as described above shall be, and the same hereby are, in all respects ratified, approved and confirmed.
5. This Amendment shall become effective at 12:00 a.m. EST on January 1, 2024.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have set their hands and executed in their corporate names by their duly authorized officers this First Amendment to the Service Contract dated 11 February, 2020.

This the ____ day of December 2023.

SIGNATURE PAGE:

McKINNEY LAWN AND GARBAGE SERVICES, LLC.

ATTEST:

BY: _____
TRACY McKINNEY, Member

BY: _____
JULIE McKINNEY, Member

TOWN OF BURNSVILLE

ATTEST:

TOWN CLERK

BY: _____
T. RUSSELL FOX, Mayor

This instrument has been pre audited in the manner required by The Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act.

BY: _____
Leslie Crowder, Finance Director

Todd McNeill
Chair of the Board

Doug Matheson
Vice-Chair



Dennis Aldridge
Secretary

Larry Fontaine
Treasurer

468 New Market Blvd.
Boone, NC 28607

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Executive Board Meeting
November 20, 2023 | 7:00 p.m.
High Country COG Board Room

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Todd McNeill, Executive Board Chairman

II. CONSIDERATION OF OCTOBER 2023 MINUTES AND ACTION ITEMS LISTED THEREIN (TO REACH FINAL RESOLUTION WITH QUORUM) [ACTION]

Todd McNeill, Executive Board Chairman

III. FINANCIAL MATTERS

Julie Page, Finance Officer

- Financial Highlights as of October 31, 2023 [ACTION]
- Budget Amendment #2 [ACTION]

IV. HCCOG AUDIT PRESENTATION

Alan Thompson, TPSA CPAs

5 minutes

V. LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

- Senator Ralph Hise, District 47
- Senator Eddie Settle, District 36

45 minutes

VI. CONSIDERATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN [ACTION]

Julie Wiggins, Executive Director

VII. REPORT FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Julie Wiggins, Executive Director

VIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

IX. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

X. OTHER BUSINESS

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

XII. ADJOURNMENT [ACTION]

**HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 16, 2023
MINUTES**

The Executive Board of the High Country Council of Governments (HCCOG) met October 16, 2023, 6:00pm, in the HCCOG Board Room in Boone. The following members were present at the meeting: Charles E. Vines, Timmy Evans, Otis Church, Bill Wheeler, Dennis Aldridge, Larry Fontaine, Steve Pitman, JoAnn Royal, Wes Brinegar, Tom Hartman, Tim Futrelle, Doug Matheson, and Todd McNeill. The following staff and guests were present at the meeting: Jim Youngquist, Wendell Lawrence, Julie Wiggins, Julie Page, Cory Osborne, Zack Green, and Victoria Oxentine.

There being insufficient members in attendance to reach a quorum, the members by consensus determined to nevertheless proceed, recognizing that all actions taken by vote would be only conditionally effective, pending subsequent approval or ratification at a meeting with a quorum present.

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Chairman McNeill welcomed everyone to the High Country Council of Governments October Executive Board meeting. Chairman McNeill led the board in the Pledge of Allegiance and called on Dennis Aldridge to lead the invocation.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Charles E. Vines made a motion to approve the September 18, 2023 Executive Board minutes. Otis Church seconded the motion. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Financial Highlights

Finance Officer, Julie Page presented the Financial Highlights as of September 30, 2023 (Attachment A) and reviewed year to date revenues versus expenditures and balances.

Budget Amendment #1

Finance Officer, Julie Page presented Budget Amendment #1 (Attachment A1) which is an increase of \$23,937 in Planning & Development for NC Transportation, a decrease in the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) of \$106,758, and an increase of \$68,139 in Workforce Development. In total, \$14,682 decrease in the total budget.

Wes Brinegar made a motion to approve the Financial Highlights as of September 30, 2023 and Budget Amendment #1. Tom Hartman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

REPORT FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Julie Wiggins, Executive Director noted that the Strategic Planning process has been very helpful and that she looks forward to working on the goals with the Executive Board and staff. Ms. Wiggins discussed recent meetings she has been a part of pertaining to our space in the medical world with the AAA and The Flood Coalition with Economic Recovery and Resilience (ER&R). Cory Osborne, ER&R Director will be scheduling meetings soon pertaining to The Flood Coalition.

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

Jim Youngquist and Wendell Lawrence from SERDI presented their preliminary recommendations (Attachment B) for the Strategic Plan. Mr. Youngquist and Mr. Lawrence reviewed 6 goals they recommended based on the focus group sessions and online surveys held in September. Board members discussed certain goals in further detail. Mr. Youngquist and Mr. Lawrence will add the notes from this discussion to the final goals and send back to Julie for the board to adopt.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Tom Hartman asked the board to remember the family of Rennie Brantz. Dennis Aldridge announced that he will be having shoulder surgery in November and that he participated in a Drug Crisis Roundtable meeting recently. Doug Matheson discussed a recent Risk Management retreat and ETNA insurance rollout in 2025. Wes Brinegar thanked HCCOG staff for hosting a wonderful Annual Banquet.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no other comments or business, Wes Brinegar made a motion to adjourn. Larry Fontaine seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm.

Chairman, Todd McNeill

Clerk to the Board, Victoria Oxentine

Date _____

**HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 18, 2023
MINUTES**

The Executive Board of the High Country Council of Governments (HCCOG) met September 18, 2023, 6:00pm, in the HCCOG Board Room in Boone. The following members were present at the meeting: Charles E. Vines, Stoney Greene, Jeff Whitson, Timmy Evans, Otis Church, Bill Wheeler, Dennis Aldridge, Larry Fontaine, Steve Pitman, JoAnn Royal, Jim Blevins, Rocky Buchanan, Tom Hartman, Tim Futrelle, Larry Turnbow, Paul Robinson Jr., Doug Matheson, and Todd McNeill. The following staff and guests were present at the meeting: Jim Youngquist, Wendell Lawrence, Chandler Reece, Mason Reece, Jeff Hedrick, Julie Wiggins, Julie Page, and Victoria Oxentine.

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Chairman McNeill welcomed everyone to the High Country Council of Governments September Executive Board meeting. Chairman McNeill welcomed new board member from the Town of Ronda, JoAnn Royal. Chairman McNeill called on Stoney Greene to lead the invocation and Jeff Whitson to lead the board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Charles E. Vines made a motion to approve the July 17, 2023 Executive Board minutes. Stoney Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Financial Highlights

Finance Officer, Julie Page presented the Financial Highlights as of August 31, 2023 (Attachment A) and reviewed year to date revenues versus expenditures and balances. Mrs. Page noted that everything has been submitted to the auditors and they should be able to present in November. Otis Church made a motion to approve the Financial Highlights as of August 31, 2023. Stoney Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried.

REPORT FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Julie Wiggins, Executive Director announced that the building restoration has finished up and we are just waiting on a few more furniture items. Ms. Wiggins noted that the search is underway for the Planning and Development Director. Ms. Wiggins also reminded board members that the Annual Banquet will be held on October 6th and RSVPs are due Friday, September 22nd. We received \$5,000.00 in sponsorships for this year's banquet. Lastly, Ms. Wiggins announced that the Fall ReCOgnition will be published in November.

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

Jim Youngquist and Wendell Lawrence from SERDI facilitated a Strategic Planning Focus Group session. HCCOG staff left for this portion of the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no other comments or business, Charles E. Vines made a motion to adjourn. Stoney Greene seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:34 pm.

Chairman, Todd McNeill

Clerk to the Board, Victoria Oxentine

Date _____

Todd McNeill
Chair of the Board

Doug Matheson
Vice-Chair



Dennis Aldridge
Secretary

Larry Fontaine
Treasurer

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FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS – OCTOBER 2023 MEETING

SEPTEMBER 30, 2023					
		2022			
Total Fund Balance - Governmental Funds		\$ 1,888,108			
Restricted Fund Balance - GF		\$ 71,514			
Assigned Fund Balance - GF		\$ 517,457			
Unassigned Fund Balance - GF		\$ 1,300,137			
	2024				
Total Expenditures - YTD	\$ 1,366,351	\$ 6,027,596			
Total Fund Balance as % of General Fund Expenditures*	31.49%	31.34%			
Unassigned Fund Balance as % of General Fund Expenditures*	21.68%	21.57%			
*FY2024 Budget Expenditures \$5,998,296					
	FISCAL YEAR 2024				
	BUDGET	ACTUAL			
Total Revenue					
General	\$ 322,301	\$ 307,260			
Planning/Development	\$ 1,227,703	\$ 257,980			
Area Agency on Aging	\$ 2,778,878	\$ 448,336			
Workforce Development	\$ 1,669,414	\$ 124,739			
	\$ 5,998,296	\$ 1,138,315			
Total Expenditures					
General	\$ 322,301	\$ 357,456			
Planning/Development	\$ 1,227,703	\$ 404,241			
Area Agency on Aging	\$ 2,778,878	\$ 315,679			
Workforce Development	\$ 1,669,414	\$ 288,975			
	\$ 5,998,296	\$ 1,366,351			
Revenues over (under) expenditures		\$ (228,036)			
FY2024 PROJECT ORDINANCES					
DESCRIPTION	FISCAL YEAR	BUDGET	REVENUE	EXPENSE	VARIANCE
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)	2022	\$ 593,750.00	\$ 144,177.64	\$ 179,475.90	\$ (35,298.26)
CDC VACCINE GRANT	2022	\$ 41,765.00	\$ 41,764.00	\$ 41,524.15	\$ 239.85
DISASTER RECOVERY NCARCOG	2023	\$ 331,250.00	\$ 58,779.02	\$ 64,434.22	\$ (5,655.20)
DOGWOOD HEALTH TRUST	2023	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 96,808.73	\$ 3,191.27
ASU FALLS PREVENTION	2023	\$ 251,959.00	\$ 91,418.80	\$ 106,506.81	\$ (15,088.01)
ARPA FCSP	2023	\$ 125,769.00	\$ 13,393.00	\$ 20,329.20	\$ (6,936.20)
ARPA P&A		\$ 147,189.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ARPA OMB		\$ 10,456.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ARPA EBHP		\$ 39,013.00	\$ 712.00	\$ 4,320.27	\$ (3,608.27)
ALLEGHANY COUNCIL ON AGING ARPA		\$ 58,120.00	\$ 473.00	\$ 473.00	\$ -
GENERATIONS ASHE ARPA		\$ 114,666.00	\$ 64,326.00	\$ 60,915.00	\$ 3,411.00
AVERY SENIOR SERVICES ARPA		\$ 71,006.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
MITCHELL SENIOR CENTER ARPA		\$ 66,601.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
WATAUGA PROJECT ON AGING ARPA		\$ 146,001.00	\$ 65,320.00	\$ 63,613.00	\$ 1,707.00
BROC ARPA		\$ 154,860.00	\$ 55,130.00	\$ 26,061.00	\$ 29,069.00
WILKES SENIOR RESOURCES ARPA		\$ 107,181.00	\$ 23,982.00	\$ 20,932.00	\$ 3,050.00
RUBY PARDUE BLACKBURN ADC ARPA		\$ 13,792.00	\$ 7,214.00	\$ 7,214.00	\$ -
YANCEY COMMUNITY CENTER ARPA		\$ 77,944.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
LEGAL AID OF NC ARPA		\$ 27,000.00	\$ 5,220.00	\$ 5,220.00	\$ -
		\$ 1,159,598.00	\$ 235,770.00	\$ 209,077.47	\$ 26,692.53
NCWORKS SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER RECOVERY GRANT	2023	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 20,898.73	\$ 23,588.37	\$ (2,689.64)
NCWORKS SMALL BUSINESS WORK-BASED LEARNING GRANT	2023	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 62,891.70	\$ 82,115.58	\$ (19,223.88)
TOTALS		\$ 3,178,322.00	\$ 755,699.89	\$ 803,531.23	\$ (47,831.34)
Cash Balances					
Operating Account		\$ 161,005			
NCCMT Account		\$ 1,375,256			
		\$ 1,536,261			

Budget Amendment #1

The financial information in the report reflects the HCCOG's overall financial position for the fiscal year through September 30, 2023 and is for the management discussion purposes only.

Julie Page, Finance Officer

BUDGET AMENDMENT #1

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of High Country Council of Governments that the following amendment be made to the Budget Resolution for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

SECTION 1: REVENUES BY SOURCE**PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT FUND**

Federal	\$ 19,150.00
State	\$ 3,590.00
Local	\$ 1,197.00
TOTAL PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT FUND	\$ 23,937.00

AREA AGENCY ON AGING FUND

Federal	\$ (169,442.00)
State	\$ (107,513.00)
Local	\$ 170,197.00
TOTAL AREA AGENCY ON AGING FUND	\$ (106,758.00)

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FUND

Federal	\$ 68,139.00
TOTAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FUND	\$ 68,139.00

TOTAL REVENUES BY SOURCE	\$ (14,682.00)
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SECTION II: EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM**SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS**

Planning/Development Fund	\$ 23,937.00
Area Agency on Aging Fund	\$ (106,758.00)
Workforce Development Fund	\$ 68,139.00
TOTAL SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	\$ (14,682.00)

TOTAL EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM	\$ (14,682.00)
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FY2023-2024 ORIGINAL BUDGET	\$ 5,998,296.00
Budget Amendment #1 10-16-2023	\$ (14,682.00)
	\$ 5,983,614.00

TOTAL AMENDED BUDGET FY2024	\$ 5,983,614.00
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BY VOTE OF THE HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS UPON MOTION BY:

_____ AND SECONDED BY _____

THIS THE _____ DAY OF _____ 2023.

Todd McNeill, Chair of the Board

Dennis Aldridge, Secretary

Todd McNeill
Chair of the Board

Doug Matheson
Vice-Chair



Dennis Aldridge
Secretary

Larry Fontaine
Treasurer

468 New Market Blvd.
Boone, NC 28607

www.hccog.org

Phone: 828-265-5434

Fax: 828-265-5439

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS – NOVEMBER 2023 MEETING

OCTOBER 31, 2023

		2023
Total Fund Balance - Governmental Funds		\$ 2,122,917
Restricted Fund Balance - GF		\$ 22,457
Assigned Fund Balance - GF		\$ 553,514
Unassigned Fund Balance - GF		\$ 1,546,946

	2024	
Total Expenditures - YTD	\$ 1,784,065	\$ 6,719,237

Total Fund Balance as % of General Fund Expenditures*	35.48%	31.59%
---	--------	--------

Unassigned Fund Balance as % of General Fund Expenditures*	25.85%	23.02%
--	--------	--------

*FY2024 Budget Expenditures \$5,983,614

	FISCAL YEAR 2024	
	BUDGET	ACTUAL
Total Revenue		
General	\$ 322,301	\$ 330,351
Planning/Development	\$ 1,251,640	\$ 328,407
Area Agency on Aging	\$ 2,672,120	\$ 448,836
Workforce Development	\$ 1,737,553	\$ 266,975
	\$ 5,983,614	\$ 1,374,569
Total Expenditures		
General	\$ 322,301	\$ 364,478
Planning/Development	\$ 1,251,640	\$ 471,297
Area Agency on Aging	\$ 2,672,120	\$ 528,660
Workforce Development	\$ 1,737,553	\$ 419,631
	\$ 5,983,614	\$ 1,784,065

Revenues over (under) expenditures		\$ (409,496)
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FY2024 PROJECT ORDINANCES

DESCRIPTION	FISCAL YEAR	BUDGET	REVENUE	EXPENSE	VARIANCE
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)	2022	\$ 593,750.00	\$ 144,177.64	\$ 193,632.75	\$ (49,455.11)
CDC VACCINE GRANT	2022	\$ 41,765.00	\$ 41,764.00	\$ 41,524.15	\$ 239.85
DISASTER RECOVERY NCARCOG	2023	\$ 331,250.00	\$ 58,779.02	\$ 71,391.79	\$ (12,612.77)
DOGWOOD HEALTH TRUST	2023	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ -
ASU FALLS PREVENTION	2023	\$ 251,959.00	\$ 91,418.80	\$ 106,506.81	\$ (15,088.01)
ARPA FCSP	2023	\$ 125,769.00	\$ 13,393.00	\$ 27,025.64	\$ (13,632.64)
ARPA P&A		\$ 147,189.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ARPA OMB		\$ 10,456.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ARPA EBHP		\$ 39,013.00	\$ 712.00	\$ 4,678.06	\$ (3,966.06)
ALLEGHANY COUNCIL ON AGING ARPA		\$ 58,120.00	\$ 473.00	\$ 473.00	\$ -
GENERATIONS ASHE ARPA		\$ 114,666.00	\$ 64,326.00	\$ 64,326.00	\$ -
AVERY SENIOR SERVICES ARPA		\$ 71,006.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
MITCHELL SENIOR CENTER ARPA		\$ 66,601.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
WATAUGA PROJECT ON AGING ARPA		\$ 146,001.00	\$ 65,320.00	\$ 65,320.00	\$ -
BROC ARPA		\$ 154,860.00	\$ 55,130.00	\$ 55,130.00	\$ -
WILKES SENIOR RESOURCES ARPA		\$ 107,181.00	\$ 23,982.00	\$ 23,982.00	\$ -
RUBY PARDUE BLACKBURN ADC ARPA		\$ 13,792.00	\$ 7,214.00	\$ 7,214.00	\$ -
YANCEY COMMUNITY CENTER ARPA		\$ 77,944.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
LEGAL AID OF NC ARPA		\$ 27,000.00	\$ 5,220.00	\$ 5,220.00	\$ -
		\$ 1,159,598.00	\$ 235,770.00	\$ 253,368.70	\$ (17,598.70)
NCWORKS SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER RECOVERY GRANT	2023	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 23,588.37	\$ 27,303.17	\$ (3,714.80)
NCWORKS SMALL BUSINESS WORK-BASED LEARNING GRANT	2023	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 82,115.58	\$ 102,838.11	\$ (20,722.53)
TOTALS		\$ 3,178,322.00	\$ 777,613.41	\$ 896,565.48	\$ (118,952.07)

Cash Balances

Operating Account	\$ 217,025
NCCMT Account	\$ 1,356,375
	\$ 1,573,400

***Budget Amendment #2
Presenting FY2023 Audit***

The financial information in the report reflects the HCCOG's overall financial position for the fiscal year through October 31, 2023 and is for the management discussion purposes only.

Julie Page, Finance Officer

BUDGET AMENDMENT #2

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of High Country Council of Governments that the following amendment be made to the Budget Resolution for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

SECTION 1: REVENUES BY SOURCE

PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT FUND

Local	\$ 41,000.00
TOTAL PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT FUND	\$ 41,000.00

AREA AGENCY ON AGING FUND

Federal	\$ 222,688.00
State	\$ 97,953.00
TOTAL AREA AGENCY ON AGING FUND	\$ 320,641.00

TOTAL REVENUES BY SOURCE	\$ 361,641.00
---------------------------------	----------------------

SECTION II: EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM

SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS

Planning/Development Fund	\$ 41,000.00
Area Agency on Aging Fund	\$ 320,641.00
TOTAL SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	\$ 361,641.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM	\$ 361,641.00
--------------------------------------	----------------------

FY2023-2024 ORIGINAL BUDGET	\$ 5,998,296.00
Budget Amendment #1 10-16-2023	(\$14,682.00)
Budget Amendment #2 11-20-2023	\$ 361,641.00

TOTAL AMENDED BUDGET FY2024	\$ 6,345,255.00
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BY VOTE OF THE HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS UPON MOTION BY:

_____ AND SECONDED BY _____

THIS THE _____ DAY OF _____ 2023.

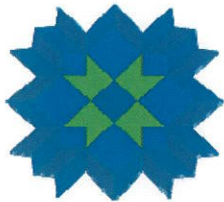
Todd McNeill, Chair of the Board

Dennis Aldridge, Secretary



HIGH COUNTRY

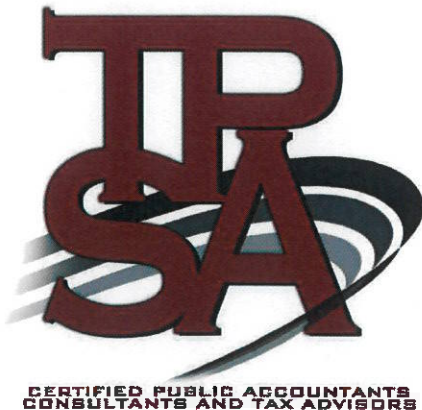
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



HIGH COUNTRY
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Presentation of Audit Results

**Fiscal Year Ended
June 30, 2023**



**CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
CONSULTANTS AND TAX ADVISORS**

**Alan W. Thompson, CPA
1626 S Madison Street
PO Box 398
Whiteville, NC 28472
910.642.2109 phone
910.642.5958 fax
www.tpsacpas.com**

HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Presentation Agenda

	<u>PAGE(s)</u>
I. GENERAL COMMENTS	
II. REQUIRED COMMUNICATIONS	
SAS 114	1-3
III. AUDIT RESULTS	4-7
IV. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS	
V. CLOSE	

Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co, P.A.

P.O. Box 398

1626 S Madison Street

Whiteville, NC 28472

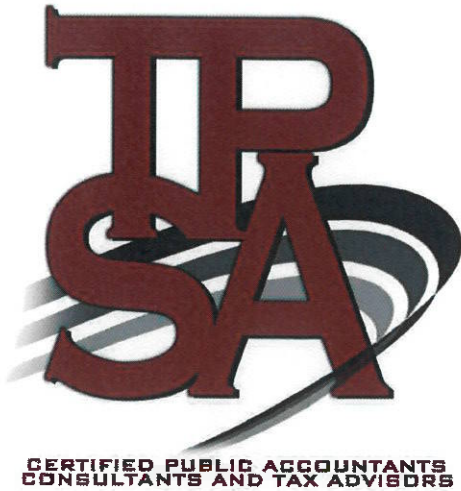
Telephone (910) 642-2109

Fax (910) 642-5958

Alan W. Thompson, CPA

R. Bryon Scott, CPA

Gregory S. Adams, CPA



October 31, 2023

To the Board of Directors
High Country Council of Governments
Boone, North Carolina

We have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of High Country Council of Governments, Inc. for the year ended June 30, 2023. Professional standards require that we provide you with information about our responsibilities under generally accepted auditing standards, *Government Auditing Standards* and the Uniform Guidance, as well as certain information related to the planned scope and timing of our audit. We have communicated such information in our letter to you dated May 12, 2023. Professional standards also require that we communicate to you the following information related to our audit.

Significant Audit Findings

Qualitative Aspects of Accounting Practices

Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. The significant accounting policies used by High Country Council of Governments, Inc. are described in Note 1 to the financial statements. The Council adopted GASB statement 96 "Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements," effective for fiscal year ended June 30, 2023. We noted no transactions entered into by High Country Council of Governments, Inc. during the year that were both significant and unusual, and of which, under professional standards, we are required to inform you, or transactions for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus. All significant transactions have been recognized in the financial statements in the proper period.

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ significantly from those expected. There were no significant estimate(s) or assumptions noted during the audit.

Certain financial statement disclosures are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statement users. There are no such disclosures identified.

The financial statement disclosures are neutral, consistent, and clear.

Members

American Institute of CPAs - N.C. Association of CPAs - AICPA Division of Firms

Difficulties Encountered in Performing the Audit

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management in performing and completing our audit.

Corrected and Uncorrected Misstatements

Professional standards require us to accumulate all known and likely misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that are trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. Management has corrected all such misstatements. Some of the misstatements detected as a result of audit procedures and corrected by management were material, either individually or in the aggregate, to each opinion unit's financial statements taken as a whole.

Disagreements with Management

For purposes of this letter, a disagreement with management is a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, that could be significant to the financial statements or the auditors' report. We are pleased to report that no such disagreements arose during the course of our audit.

Management Representations

We have requested certain representations from management that are included in the management representation letter dated October 31, 2023.

Management Consultations with Other Independent Accountants

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, similar to obtaining a "second opinion" on certain situations. If a consultation involves application of an accounting principle to the governmental unit's financial statements or a determination of the type of auditor's opinion that may be expressed on those statements, our professional standards require the consulting accountant to check with us to determine that the consultant has all the relevant facts. To our knowledge, there were no such consultations with other accountants.

Other Auditing Findings or Issues

We generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, with management each year prior to retention as the High Country Council of Governments, Inc.'s auditors. However, these discussions occurred in the normal course of our professional relationship and our responses were not a condition to our retention.

Other Matters

We applied certain limited procedures to the Schedule of Funding Progress –Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability (Asset) – Local Government Employees' Retirement System, Schedule of Contributions – Local Government Employees' Retirement System, and the Schedule of Changes in the Total OPEB Liability and Related Ratios, which is Required Supplementary Information (RSI) that supplements the basic financial statements. Our procedures consisted of inquiries of management regarding the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We did not audit the RSI and do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the RSI.

We were engaged to report on the combining statements and the individual fund statements, which accompany the financial statements but are not RSI. With respect to this supplementary information, we made certain inquiries of management and evaluated the form, content, and methods of preparing the information to determine that the information complies with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the method of preparing it has not changed from the prior period, and the information is appropriate and complete in relation to our audit of the financial statements. We compared and reconciled the supplementary information to the underlying accounting records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves.

Restriction on Use

This information is intended solely for the use of the Board and management of the High Country Council of Governments, Inc. and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

Very truly yours,

Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., P.A.

Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co, P.A.

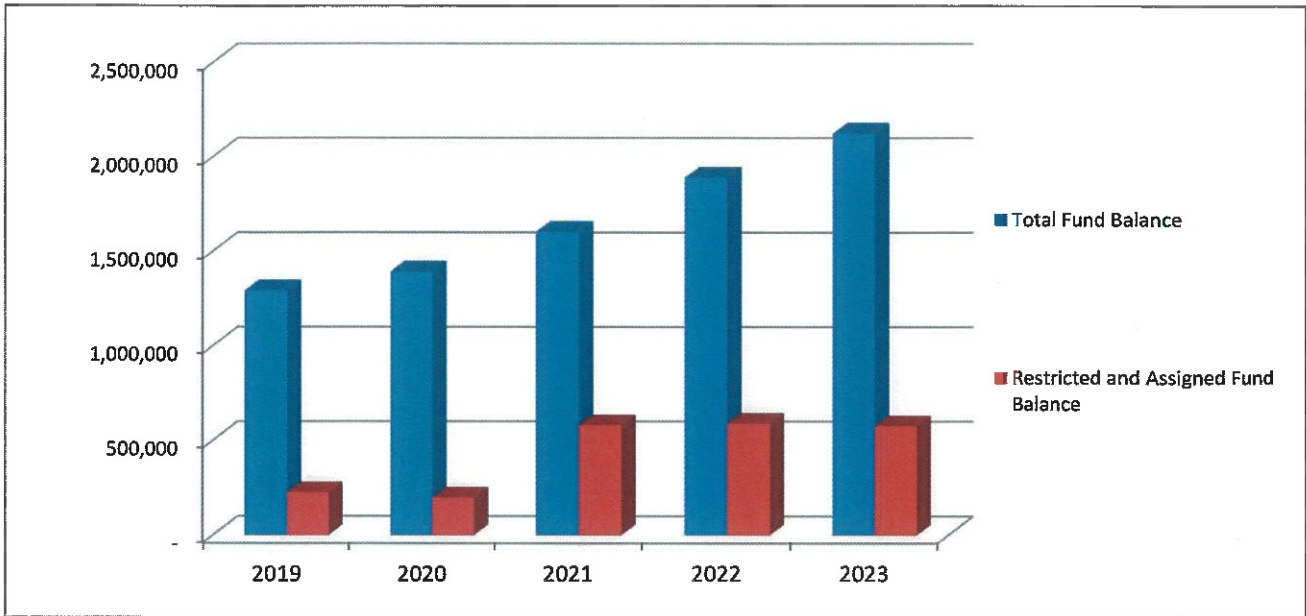
HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR 5 YEARS

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Total Fund Balance - Governmental Funds	2,122,917	1,889,108	1,602,480	1,392,247	1,291,827
Restricted Fund Balance - GF	22,457	71,514	360,862	112,360	202,601
Assigned Fund Balance - GF	553,514	517,457	219,359	84,579	23,000
Unassigned Fund Balance GF	1,546,946	1,300,137	1,022,259	1,195,308	1,066,226
Total Expenditures (including transfers)	6,719,237	6,027,586	5,572,839	5,392,193	5,466,733
Total Fund Balance as % of Governmental Fund	31.59%	31.34%	28.76%	25.82%	23.63%
Unassigned Fund Balance as % of Governmental Fund Expenditures	23.02%	21.57%	18.34%	22.17%	19.50%
Revenues over (under) expenditures before transfers					
General Fund	122,752	63,530	75,453	15,841	(75,725)
Special Revenue Funds	111,057	223,098	134,750	(28,569)	42,935
Year End Cash vs. Fund Balance					
Cash - General	1,594,933	1,415,827	1,104,148	1,285,256	1,161,118
Cash - Special Revenue Funds	613,453	241,177	14,260	-	-
Fund Balance - General	1,569,403	1,446,651	1,383,121	1,307,668	1,291,827
Fund Balance - Special Revenue Funds	553,514	442,457	219,359	84,579	113,148
Breakdown of General Fund Revenues					
Local Activities	543,302	229,293	191,265	128,155	130,432
Miscellaneous	26,050	20,142	29,542	38,122	40,874
Interest	55,117	2,212	210	9,950	6,738
Total	624,469	251,647	221,017	176,227	178,044
Breakdown of General Fund Expenditures					
General Government	514,506	203,554	145,564	160,386	253,769
Total Revenue					
General Fund	624,469	251,647	221,017	176,227	178,044
Federal Funds	5,051,528	5,140,707	4,908,201	4,524,417	4,604,063
State Funds	250,996	202,712	235,462	221,179	242,537
Local Funds	766,376	624,842	418,392	457,642	409,299
Total Revenues	6,693,369	6,219,908	5,783,072	5,379,465	5,433,943
Total Expenditures (before transfers)					
General Fund	514,506	203,554	145,564	160,386	253,769
Transportation	166,843	159,563	159,563	159,563	169,046
Economic and Community Development	1,011,279	811,805	627,982	624,792	530,871
Human Services	3,141,395	3,135,311	3,200,781	2,776,091	2,750,669
Workforce Development	1,885,214	1,717,353	1,438,949	1,671,361	1,762,378
Total Expenditures	6,719,237	6,027,586	5,572,839	5,392,193	5,466,733

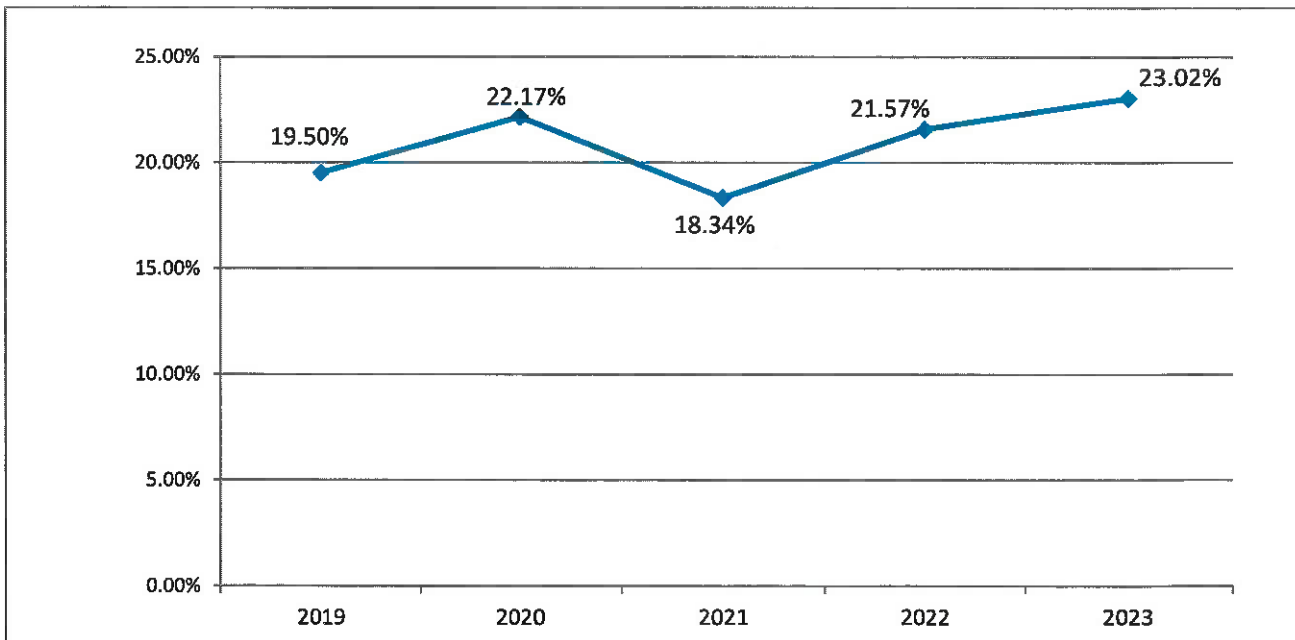
HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Analysis of Fund Balance - General Fund



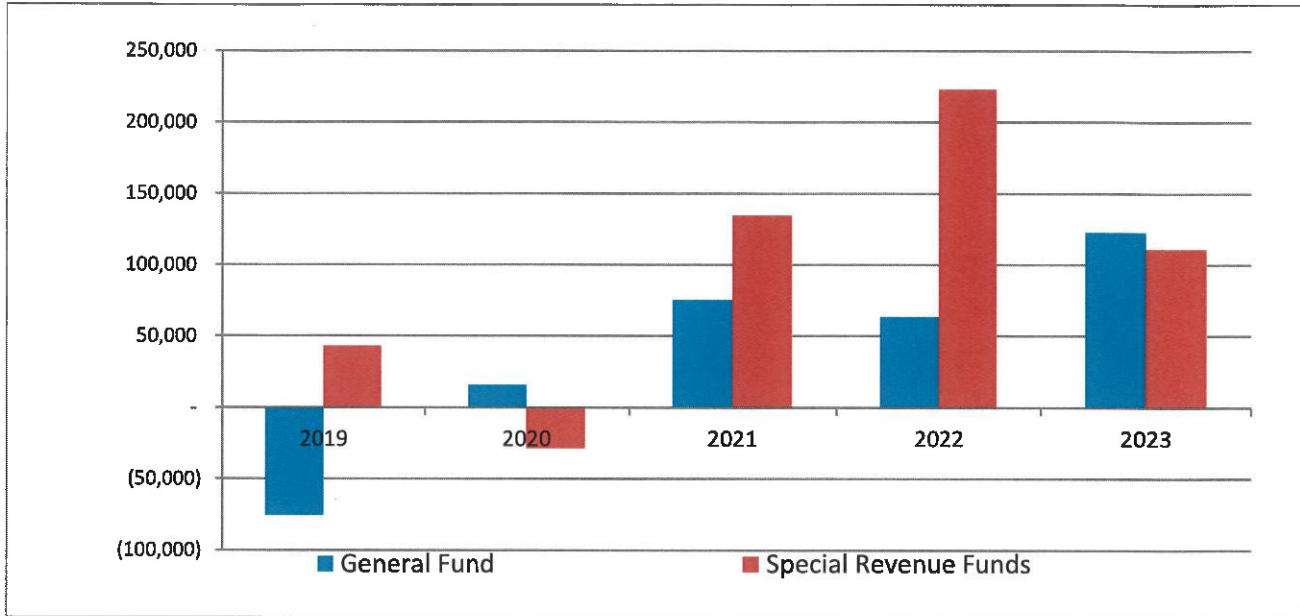
HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Analysis of Unassigned Fund Balance as a % of General Fund Expenditures



HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

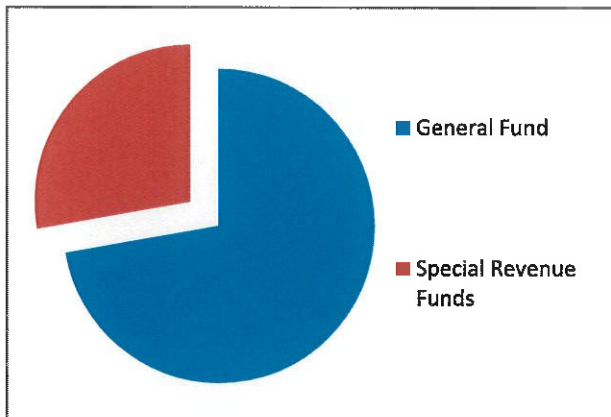
Analysis of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures before Transfers



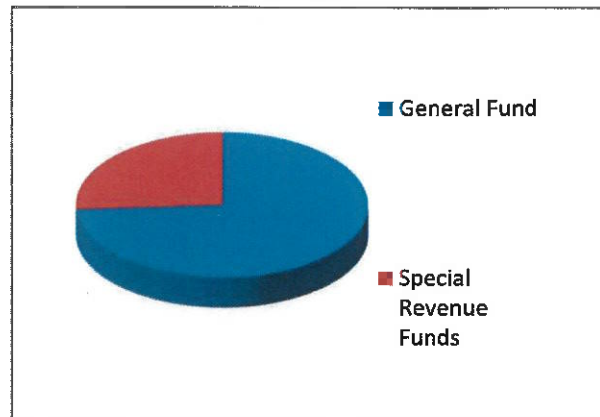
HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Analysis of Cash and Fund Balances at June 30, 2023

CASH BALANCES



FUND BALANCES



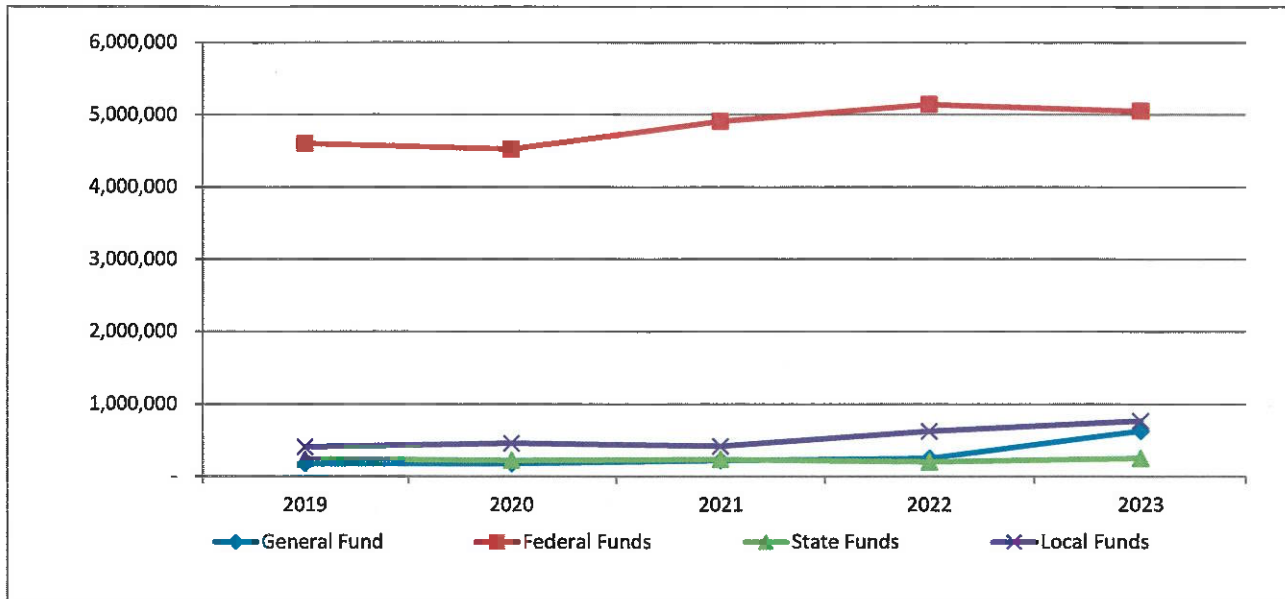
2023

General Fund
Special Revenue Funds
Total

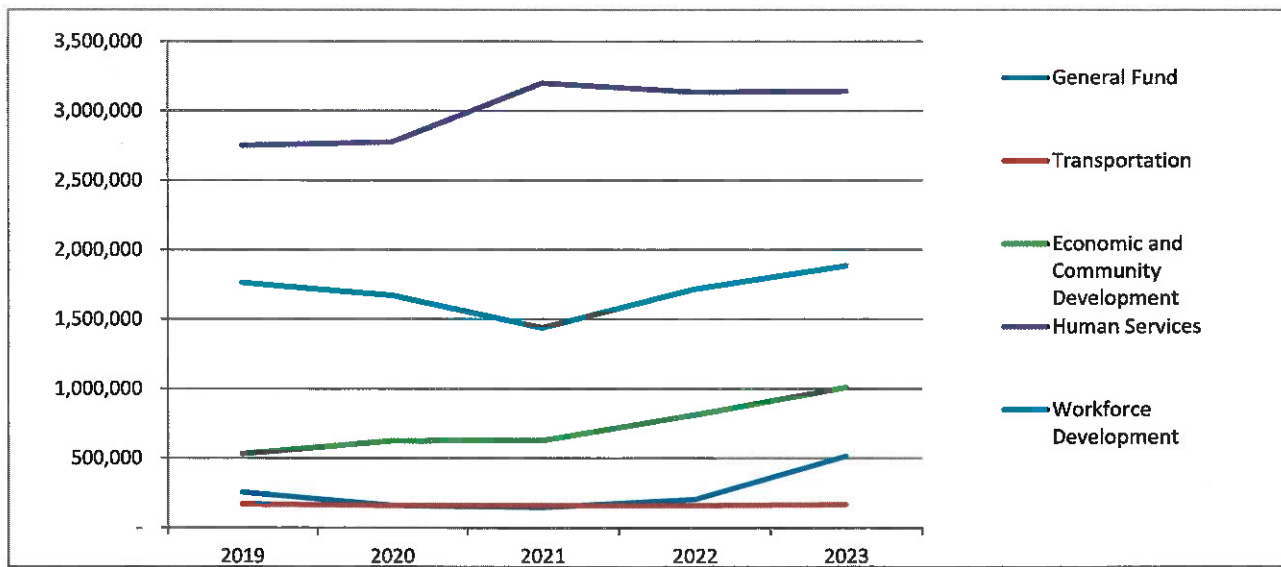
<u>Cash Balances</u>	
\$	1,594,933
	613,453
<u>\$</u>	<u>2,208,386</u>

<u>Fund Balances</u>	
\$	1,569,403
	553,514
<u>\$</u>	<u>2,122,917</u>

HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS Analysis of Total Revenues



HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS Analysis of Total Expenses



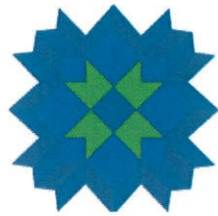


HIGH COUNTRY
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**The High Country Council of Governments Strategic
Assessment
Executive Summary**



Conducted by
The Southeast Regional Directors Institute
Fall 2023



HIGH COUNTRY

COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



The High Country Council of Governments Strategic Assessment
Complete Record Report
Conducted by
The Southeast Regional Directors Institute
Fall 2023

About the High Country Council of Governments

The High Country Council of Governments (HCCOG) is designated by both state and federal governments as the official agency for the administration of various funds and programs. It provides an array of services to local governments that enhances the well-being of the region's communities. HCCOG serves 7 counties and 19 municipalities of Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey in North Carolina..

About the Southeast Regional Directors Institute

*The Southeast Regional Directors Institute is a professional development association for regional council executive directors and when applicable their councils and state associations in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, **North Carolina**, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia*

Overview

At the request of the High Country Council of Governments (HCCOG) the Southeast Regional Directors Institute (SERDI) conducted a strategic assessment of the Council during the late summer and early fall of 2023.

The assessment consisted of five segments: (1) Online Surveys of the HCCOG Executive Board and High Country Municipal and County Officials (2) six focus group sessions of (a) HCCOG Executive Board (b) Planning and Resilience Leaders (c) Area Agency on Aging (d) Workforce Development Board (e) HCCOG Staff Management and (f) HCCOG professional staff. (4) HCCOG Executive Board work session and, (5) the submission of the Assessment Complete Record Report.

Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged throughout the assessment process and confirmed by the Executive Board at its work session:

The High Country Board of Directors must get all local governments to attend and participate in the Council's deliberations

Strategy

The HCCOG has the distinction of being possibly the only council in the United States whose governing board contains a seat for each local government in the region. The commitment to its Council is strong by those Executive Board members who attend and actively participate. The Executive Board feels it is up to them to reach out and encourage those local governments that do not regularly attend to participate so that all 26 local governments have a voice at the table on region's issues, challenges, and opportunities.

Action Steps

- The HCCOG Chair, and other officers, and possible members from bordering jurisdictions as well as the Executive Director should set up in-person meetings with each of the jurisdictions' representatives who do not participate currently in Executive Board activities. Who attends should be the call of the HCCOG Chair.
- The pitch should be made to those jurisdiction representatives that do not currently participate the importance of them being an active member of the Board and for their local government's interest being at the table.
- A quick overview of the COG, current activities, and if applicable a Return on Investment (ROI) analysis should be presented.

Responsible Parties

- The HCCOG Chair, Executive Director, and appropriate other Executive Board members.

Timetable

- As soon as possible.

There are four key challenges facing the region that HCCOG is best suited to be the convener to address.

Strategy

The challenges (1) Housing (2) Infrastructure (3) Workforce and (4) Gentrification of the region from the outside and the generational population. "Convener" can mean leading, assembling the appropriate key leaders and/or organizations, and/or HCCOG staffing support to address whatever the challenge, opportunity, or need may be. Currently only one of the challenges have program/standing committee that can take a deeper dive/regional perspective that being Workforce. Housing at all levels and the challenge of the gentrification of the region and failure of Raleigh to recognize population shifts in communities impacting government services and impact on infrastructure that is not recognized in funding formulations from the state. In addition to traditional infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, etc.) it is important to include electric utilities, broadband, in that consideration.

Action Steps

- A policy work committee for three of the four committees (Workforce exists) should be created. Each policy work committee should contain a cross-section of subject-specific professionals and local government professional and elected officials. Each policy work committee should have applicable HCCOG support staffing as deemed appropriate by the committee.
- Each policy work committee should develop an annual work program to study, address, and develop policy and action step recommendations to the HCCOG Board of Directors and the local governments in the region. Policies and action step recommendations should be developed in three categories: individual local governments, regional programs, and recommendations/requests for state support.
- Explore how the HCCOG's affiliated 501c3 organization could be a funding conduit and/or support entity for the overall effort on challenges facing the region.

Responsible Parties

- Executive Board and Executive Director

Timetable

- To be determined.

Promotion of High Country Council of Governments.

Strategy

It is very important that the staff and the Board of Directors on behalf of the region's local governments promote the HCCOG. Those that criticize are almost always unaware of the services and initiatives that HCCOG are carrying out on behalf of them and the region as a whole.

Action Steps

- If possible, it would be great to add another administrative officer to the staff. This would enable the Executive Director and Communication Officer the ability to increase their promotion activities.
- HCCOG staff need to attend as many local government commission and council meetings as possible.
- HCCOG Executive Board need to update their governing bodies on the last deliberations of the COG and bring back any feedback to the Board.
- A communication strategy needs to be implemented to connect with the region's local governments on a weekly basis. What is going on in the region, new funding opportunities, highlighting current projects, ROI angles, explanations such as dues increases...why necessary, what it covers, the benefit to the region, COG, and their local government.
- Further develop the HCCOG brand and corresponding branding materials to be used by all staff to promote the variety of programs and support provided by the HCCOG. This could possibly include a baseline PowerPoint presentation as well as specific templates as needed to enhance the ability to tell the broader COG story. This would be developed with the assistance of COG's website designer and a link to the website should be placed on each of the region's local governments' websites.

Responsible Parties

- Executive Director, Communication Officer, Executive Board, and the Website Designer

Timetable

- As soon as possible.

Having More of a Regional Focus

Strategy

In addition to the traditional grant writing/technical assistance services provided by HCCOG to the local governments of the region, there should be more importance put on a regional focus. Approaching opportunities, issues, and challenges in a regional way. It gets to a convening role...if it means leading, if it means supporting, if it means coordinating, etc. it is an important role.

Action Steps

- Specifically, Housing and the Gentrification of the Region were mentioned as regional challenges that should be addressed by HCCOG convening the region's leaders and interests to address.
- Each year the Executive Board working with the Executive Director should identify a portion of the annual work program to address regional opportunities, challenges, and issues that HCCOG should help the region's local governments address.
- It should be the Executive Director's responsibility to work with the Executive Board to identify external partners at the region and if applicable, the state level that will be key to work with HCCOG in the regional efforts.
- The Executive Director needs to work with the website designer to add a "Regional Endorsement" place for individual local governments to share initiatives they are undertaking and to learn of other local initiatives going on elsewhere that might be an initiative worth duplicating in their own community.

Responsible Parties

- Executive Director and Executive Board.

Timetable

- As soon as possible.

Enhance / expand the HC Workforce Development Board's role as regional convener

Strategy

While the HCWDB has a history as a focal point in workforce issues in the region, and with the exception of some recent funding from ARPA to address specific issues, stakeholders agreed that there is a need for more. The workforce issues inherent in the region's current (and future) economy require a broader and more direct involvement by those same stakeholders. As noted frequently in the assessment process, the convener role does not place the WDB in a leadership role, it may assume other roles given the expertise or interest of other workforce/educational entities.

Action Steps

- While the WDB does develop and implement comprehensive four-year plans and a program year workforce development plan in accordance with WIOA, the Board should explore and pursue the development of its own "Strategic Plan" using external resources (via procurement). The WDB is a key component of the COG's CEDS process, they will have experience in this process.
- One desired outcome would be the identification of necessary need-specific summits, task force development and supportive funding streams for said activities.
- Continue outreach sessions throughout the region on workforce specific topics (expungement, skill shortages, underemployment, assimilating Latinos, etc.) and develop a network of interested stakeholders to support said strategic planning and convening for the region on critical issues.

Responsible Parties

- Executive Director and Workforce Staff and identification of appropriate partners.

Timetable

- Immediate...as soon as feasible.

"Revisit" HCCOG's legislative outreach effort

Strategy

The HCCOG's Legislative Committee of 10 Executive Board members should increase its engagement with the region's legislative delegation. Participants in several focus groups think there is a need to delineate High Country's issues from those similar but different challenges found in the Asheville metro region.

Action Steps

- Consideration should be given to use the Board meeting prior to the Legislative Session for the delegation to share with the Board their thoughts on the upcoming session overall and regarding their work with their committees.
- Time should be set aside at the Board meeting for the Board and Executive Director to share with the delegation the accomplishments of the COG during the past year and key regional initiatives that are or are being considered in the upcoming months/year.
- Ensure that all Board members have a 'hip pocket' narrative that outlines how any local project has a regional impact of some kind and can include that in discussions regarding local projects and needs with their specific legislator.
- A discussion should take place to consider a quarterly communication between the HCCOG and the legislative delegation for updates on initiatives and actions in both directions.

Responsible Parties

- HCCOG's Legislative Committee, Executive Board, Executive Director.

Timetable

- In place to enact prior to next session of the Legislature.