

CENTRAL PINES REGIONAL COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 25, 2026 | 6:00 – 8:00 pm | Virtual

Chair Byron McAllister Presiding

Delegates & Alternates Attending:

Sheveil Harmon, Town of Angier
Javiera Caballero, City of Durham
Kathleen Ferguson, Town of Hillsborough
Butch Lawter, Johnston County
Kirk Smith, Lee County
Jean Hamilton, Orange County (A)
Rebecca Salmon, City of Sanford
Byron McAllister, Town of Selma
Susan Evans, Wake County
Rick Hutchinson, Village of Whispering Pines

CPRC Staff Attending:

Grace Berry, Lead for NC Fellow
Jenny Halsey, Deputy Executive Director
Alana Keegan, Local Government Services Director
Thomas McCallister, FTZ Administrator
Beth Seidel, Member Engagement Coordinator
Hope Tally, Chief Finance Officer
Lindsay Whitson, Community & Economic Development Director
Lee Worsley, Executive Director

A = Alternate

1. Call to Order

- a. Call to Order
Byron McAllister, Board Chair

- b. Roll Call
Beth Seidel, Clerk to the Board

- c. Declaration of Quorum
Byron McAllister, Board Chair

Chair Byron McAllister called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and went over housekeeping information. He reminded everyone about the virtual meeting guidelines. Beth Seidel, Clerk to the Board, called roll

and a quorum was met.

- d. Get to Know CPRC
Byron McAllister, Board Chair

Chair McAllister shared the following with the Executive Committee: The Triangle Development Awards Program was established in 1983 by the Triangle J Council of Governments to encourage quality development in the then six-county Region J area. The awards program lasted for about 10 years. The emphasis of the Awards was on projects that bring together innovative ideas in planning, financing, architecture, and landscape architecture.

Examples of Award winners include:

- Shepherd's Vineyard in Apex
- Moore Square Station in Raleigh
- BASF Agricultural Research Center in RTP
- Selma Equipment Repair Shop in Selma
- Kiwanis Family Park in Sanford
- Park Forty Plaza in Durham

2. Review of Agenda

- a. Review of Agenda
Byron McAllister, Board Chair
Potential Action: Chair McAllister will approve

Chair McAllister approved the agenda.

3. Presentations & Recognition

- a. Draft Central Pines 2026-2029 Strategic Plan
Presenters: Lee Worsley, Executive Director, Jenny Halsey, Deputy Executive Director, and Alana Keegan, Local Government Services Director
Potential Action: None – Information Only

Executive Director Lee Worsley gave an overview of the proposed 2026-2029 Strategic Plan, including strategic focus areas and goals. This will be the second iteration of the Central Pines Strategic Plan. The Executive Committee met at a retreat in November 2025 to provide high-level guidance on the organization's strategic direction. That guidance has been utilized to develop goals and to finalize Strategic Focus areas for the 2026-2029 Central Pines Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan is a critical document that will guide resource

allocation and work prioritization for Central Pines and its staff members over the next three years. The Strategic Plan will serve as a guidance document for developing the Central Pines budget each year. A more detailed workplan will be presented at the time of Strategic Plan adoption. Lee Worsley, Executive Director; Jenny Halsey, Deputy Executive Director and Alana Keegan, Local Government Services Director have been the primary leads on the development of the Strategic Plan. However, all members of CPRC's Strategic Leadership Team have also been heavily involved in goal development and several all staff meetings have been utilized to get input used in the Plan's construction.

Once the Executive Committee has provided feedback, the plan will be finalized for Board presentation in April and potential adoption in May.

Feedback from Executive Committee

Focus Area 1: Thriving People & Communities

Chair McAllister confirmed that this appeared to be right on target.

Focus Area 2: Connected Places

Chair McAllister shared his concern that this had the potential to be too broad, but the way it was laid out looked very doable. Delegate Susan Evans agreed.

Focus Area 3: Prosperous & Sustainable Region

Chair McAllister articulated that the dropping of the Public Safety issue was heard by staff, which should make this focus area more manageable. Delegate Evans shared that she was excited about the regional approach for disaster relief, and that there are experts out there we can bring in to help with this area. Delegate Rick Hutchinson remarked that a regional approach to emergency management is essential.

Focus Area 4: Regional Excellence & Innovation

Chair McAllister noted that this Focus Area nicely ties the first three focus areas together.

Focus Area 5: Organizational Excellence

Chair McAllister shared how this focus area streamlined from external to internal. Chair McAllister shared that this plan was extremely well put together. Delegate Kathleen Ferguson agreed with the Chair's sentiment and noted that she was excited to see the co-location of the disciplines as well as an emphasis on the Regional Data Center. There were no objections to moving this forward to the full Board.

Delegate Javiera Caballero asked if this plan could be posted on a

dashboard and track the progress of the plan. Mr. Worsley shared that we would be tracking the metrics, which was not done well in the original plan. Delegate Caballero also inquired if there was the potential to connect this plan to their own websites. Chair McAllister noted to have a conversation at the next Board meeting about how they can share this information in their individual communities.

4. Public Hearing

5. Business

- a. Approval of Foreign Trade Zone Chair and Vice Chair
Presenter: Thomas McCallister, FTZ Administrator
Potential Action: Place on Consent Agenda

The Foreign Trade Zone #93 (FTZ) Board has approved the nomination of Mayor Rebecca Salmon, City of Sanford, as Chair of the FTZ #93 Board. They have also approved the nomination of Jeri Barutis from the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC) to serve as the Vice Chair. The FTZ bylaws require the CPRC Executive Committee or Full Board to have final approval of Chair nominations.

The FTZ is an economic tool that we have in our region that can provide duty referral and exemption for eligible goods and reaches across the entire CPRC region as well as 8 additional counties. Funding for FTZ comes from annual fees from operators. CPRC staff involved in this project include Thomas McCallister, FTZ #93 Administrator and Lindsay Whitson, who provides oversight of FTZ staff.

6. Consent Agenda

Items on the Consent Agenda are considered routine and will be enacted by a single motion unless a member of the Executive Committee requests an item be removed. Any item that is removed from the Consent Agenda will be considered individually after the Consent Agenda.

- a. Draft Minutes: February 25, 2026
- b. CPRC Budget Amendment 5, Resolution #2026-03-01
- c. Triangle West TPO Budget Amendment, Resolution #2026-03-02
- d. Approval of Foreign Trade Zone Chair & Vice Chair, Resolution #2026-03-03

Action: Adoption of Consent Agenda as presented
Motion: Delegate Susan Evans
Second: Delegate Javiera Caballero
Vote: Approved unanimously by roll call

7. Items Removed from Consent Agenda

8. Around the Region

a. Around the Region

Presenter: Byron McAllister, Board Chair

Chair McAllister asked members of the Executive Committee if they had gotten any significant feedback about current tax rates.

Kathleen Ferguson, Hillsborough

They have been excoriated. There have been some discrepancies between owners who are people of color versus corporate entities. There are real concerns with loopholes in affordable housing legislation caps.

Rick Hutchinson, Whispering Pines

Nothing significant either way.

Jean Hamilton, Orange County

Echoed Kathleen's comments that residents have been extremely upset. They are aware of the issues with and have established a tax assessment work group. They are hiring a consultant to look at the issues. Their tax administrator will retire April 1, so they are hiring an acting tax collector in the meantime. They are taking the concerns of the community extremely seriously. They may decide to do assessments more often.

Byron McAllister, Selma

They have had to have conversations about how inflation not only affects the residents, but also the municipalities and how they operate.

Javiera Caballero, Durham

Wondered if CPRC could do some analysis on housing costs and property tax across the country, based on California and Texas. Durham holds Community Conversations around the budget so that the public is aware of how the budget operates.

Susan Evans, Wake County

They have seen increases of over 50% in recent years. (Audio was difficult to hear)

Butch Lawter, Johnston County

The average increase was 70% in 2024. There is a lack of understanding from the legislature of what local governments do.

9. Chair's Report

a. Chair's Report

Presenter: Byron McAllister, Board Chair

Potential Action: None – Information Only

Chair McAllister informed the Executive Committee that the Nominating Committee will be convening soon. Since Immediate Past Chair Brett Gantt is no longer on the Board, Chair McAllister asked if previous Immediate Past Chair Butch Lawter would serve in that position, to which he agreed.

The Chair reminded everyone that the Executive Director's evaluation will be conducted at the June Executive Committee meeting. Deputy Director Jenny Halsey will be in touch with a questionnaire prior to that meeting.

10. Executive Director's Report

a. Executive Director's Report

Presenter: Lee Worsley, Executive Director

Potential Action: None – Information Only

Executive Director Lee Worsley shared that he would be emphasizing the lack of funding from the federal and state government for the long-term care ombudsman program with the Area Agency on Aging in his upcoming Budget message. We should have seven ombudsmen based on national statistics and standards, however we only have five.

There was a great turnout for our new member orientation sessions. There were three sessions available to accommodate a variety of dates and times.

Mr. Worsley is open to having a one-on-one orientation for anyone else who couldn't make one of those sessions. Mr. Worsley commended staff for their work on securing a \$10M Weatherization Assistance Program award. Will help over 900 homes.

At the April Board of Delegates Meeting, the budget will be presented, and a public hearing will be held. No dues increases are expected.

City/County Managers and Solid Waste Managers met today to discuss challenges and opportunities for regional collaboration around this topic.

Mr. Worsley will be in Micro tomorrow presenting their budget. They are now caught up on all their audits (which were previously 3 years behind), and have the potential to build fund balance. With assistance, these elected officials have shown how you can dig in and turn things around.

11. Closed Session

12. Closed Session

13. Other Business



a. Other Business

Presenter: Byron McAllister, Board Chair

Chair McAllister will be in touch with Mr. Lawter about convening a Nominating Committee.

14. Adjournment

With there being nothing further, the meeting adjourned at 7:14 pm.

Duly adopted this 24th day of June 2026 while in regular session.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Byron James McAllister".

Byron McAllister
Board Chair

ATTEST:

Beth Seidel

Beth Seidel
Clerk to the Board
Central Pines Regional Council