

WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

of the

**February 25, 2021 Meeting**

to be held

at the Commission Office

1100 Madison Street, Martinsville, VA

or via

(Meeting ID 990 8334 1558, Passcode 753043)

<https://zoom.us/j/99083341558?pwd=dGQ4ZWRQVVBVeHZaRzlvMUhrd1JUZz09>

(Call In Information 1-929-205-6099, 990 8334 1558#, 0#, 753043#)

at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Leland Mitchell  
David Rotenizer

PATRICK COUNTY

Jerry Adams  
Clayton Kendrick, Jr.  
Denise Stirewalt

DANVILLE

James Buckner  
Lee Vogler  
Kimberly Walker

ROCKY MOUNT

Ralph Casey

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY

Ron Searce, Vice Chairman  
Vic Ingram  
Greg Sides

MARTINSVILLE

Jennifer Bowles  
Ronikka Hannans  
Kathy Lawson, Treasurer

HENRY COUNTY

Jim Adams, Chairman  
Wes George

ABSENT

Tim Tatum, Franklin County  
Tommy Slaughter, Henry County

STAFF

David R. Hoback, Executive Director  
Michael Armbrister, Deputy Director  
Jacob Bullins, Administrative Assistant  
Kristie Eberly, Associate Director  
Kathleen McEvoy, Grants Coordinator  
Joe Bonanno, Regional Planner

GUESTS

None

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME**

The Chairman established a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m., welcoming all and introducing new Patrick County Commission Member, Denise Stirewalt. The Chairman also recognized Ralph Casey for his recent appointment to the Rocky Mount Town Council.

**2. REGIONAL FORUM OPPORTUNITY—COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC**

There were no comments.

**3. POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

There were none.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA**

**a. Confirmation of Minutes of the November 19, 2020 Meeting—WPPDC/M(20)7**

- b. Treasurer's Report – October 31, 2020—WPPDC/P(21)1, November 30, 2020—WPPDC/P(21)2, and December 31, 2020—WPPDC/P(21)3
- c. WPPD Quarterly Report of Activities: State Data Affiliate Center & VEC Labor Market Info Service Programs - 2nd Quarter FY 2021—WPPDC/P(21)4
- d. ACKNOWLEDGE Register of Administrative Reviews Under the Virginia Intergovernmental Review Process – January/February 2021—WPPDC/P(21)5

The Deputy Director noted a correction to the minutes. On page 2, under item 6, the line after the second paragraph needed to be corrected to "In its earlier session, the Executive Committee recommended approval of the resolution, as presented."

Mr. George made a motion, seconded by Mr. Casey, to approve the consent agenda, as corrected. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**5. REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF REVISION TO FY 2021 ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET—WPPDC/P(21)6**

Mr. Bullins, the Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant, explained the proposed revisions to the FY 2021 Administrative Budget. He noted that the salaries, employee benefits, and payroll taxes line items were decreased by \$9,225, \$4,115, and \$3,587 respectively to due staff changes. Also due to a reduction in the Ride Solutions grant because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the contract fees, printing/advertising, and travel line items were all reduced by \$3,000, \$6,579, and \$6,700 respectively. Finally, the dues and equipment line items were increased by \$1,000 and \$7,000 respectively to accommodate some new memberships and new conference tables and chairs. Overall, the budget deficit was reduced from \$42,210 to \$26,967.

Ms. Bowles asked if the travel budget would be reduced long-term due to more meetings and conferences available virtually. The Executive Director stated that he did expect more virtual meetings moving forward, which would impact the travel budget.

The Executive Director reminded the Commission Members that the deficit budget was a result of the planned staff transition over the fiscal year.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board approve the Revised FY 2021 Administrative Budget, as presented.

Ms. Lawson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Bowles, to adopt the Revised FY 2021 Administrative Budget, as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**6. ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL PRIORITIES FOR THE VIRGINIA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM, YEAR 2021 AT REQUEST OF VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT--WPPDC/P(21)7; RESOLUTION WPPDC 2021-1**

The Deputy Director explained that DHCD requested that the PDC solicit input from the member localities for development of the region's CDBG Priority List. Based on responses received, staff developed a list of priorities and accompanying resolution for consideration of the Board. He explained the various categories and rankings and discussed potential projects. Upon approval, the resolution and list would be forwarded DHCD.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board approve the resolution as presented.

Ms. Stirewalt made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rotenizer, to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation to adopt the resolution establishing the 2021 CDBG Regional Priorities. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**7. SUPPORT RESOLUTION FOR PARTICIPATION IN FY 22 TDM PROGRAM GRANT (RIDE SOLUTIONS) THROUGH THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL & PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION (DRPT), RESOLUTION WPPDC 2021-2**

The Executive Director explained that the Board of Commissioners gave staff authority to submit the Ride Solution grant application at its October 2020 meeting. The application was submitted; however, staff was informed a resolution from the Board was now required for the application. Staff recommendation was to adopt the resolution of support.

Mr. George made a motion, seconded by Ms. Bowles, to adopt the resolution of support for participation in the FY 2022 TDM Program Grant. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**8. COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)**

**a. PRESENTATION OF THE UPDATED 2021 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)**

The Associate Director presented the draft 2021 CEDS document and noted that there were minimal updates this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She reviewed the update timeline and outlined changes to the document by chapter and section. She further noted that the 30-day public review period had begun with notices published in local newspapers and the draft CEDS posted on the PDC's website. The 2021 CEDS would be on the March Board agenda for consideration of approval.

**b. REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY PERFORMANCE MEASURES IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION – WPPDC/P(21)8**

As part of the PDC's Planning Grant, EDA's CEDS development process required the document to include performance measures as a means of benchmarking tasks and activities. Included in the Board package were the "Program Evaluation for April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021" and "Implementation Plan for April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022." This information would be included in the 2021 CEDS document for submission to EDA in March.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Bowles for serving as the CEDS Strategy Committee Chair and staff for their work on the CEDS update.

**9. UPDATES AND REPORTS ON WPPDC REGIONAL PROJECTS/STAFF ACTIVITIES RELATED TO:**

**a. DANVILLE MPO**

The Executive Director announced the Danville MPO had entered a contract with EPR for the next study on the Piney Forest Road Corridor, a 2.6-mile length of road from Franklin Turnpike south to Holt Garrison Parkway. He explained there was a history of accidents in the corridor with several bad intersections and geometry. Some intersections had a high PSI, potential for safety improvements, which would be advantageous for future VDOT funding requests. This was a collaborative effort between EPR, the City of Danville, and WPPDC, which would result in a \$13,000 savings.

**b. MARTINSVILLE SOUTHERN CONNECTOR**

The Executive Director updated the Board on the proposed new alignment of U.S. Route 220 from the North Carolina border to the Route 58 bypass, known as the Martinsville Southern Connector. There was a delay in the publishing of the final environmental impact statement in the Federal Register, which would occur in March 2021. The largest hurdle in this project was securing the \$600 million in funding to construct the project.

**c. SMART SCALE LOCAL & REGIONAL PROJECT UPDATES**

The Executive Director reviewed the table of Smart Scale projects from the region that were recommended for funding approval. Final grant awards were subject to approval by the Commonwealth Transportation Board in June 2021. Total combined recommended award for the region was \$72.5

million, which would have a large impact on transportation. The Executive Director commended Joe Bonanno for his work writing and providing technical assistance with Smart Scale applications.

Mr. Searce asked if the Executive Director expected any changes to the proposed funding awards, and the Executive Director replied that knew of nothing to suggest the recommended awards would not be approved.

**d. WPPDC WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITIES REPORT, JANUARY 1, 2000 – DECEMBER 31, 2020**

The Executive Director noted the annual Work Program Activities Report was provided for information only. The Chairman recommended that all board members review the report.

**e. WPPDC MEETING SCHEDULE**

The Executive Director stated the 2021 board meeting schedule was provided as a helpful resource. The Chairman added that there are additional meetings held at the PDC, including the CEDS Strategy Committee and Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (T-TAC). He also commented on the announced retirement of Terry Tilley, Stuart Town Manager, who had been a long-time, faithful member of the T-TAC committee.

**f. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET REQUESTS**

The Executive Director noted that staff had submitted budget requests to all member jurisdictions. He stated that the funding picture looked good for FY 2022.

**g. STATE PDC FUNDING UPDATE**

The Executive Director announced that an additional \$14,000 for each PDC was included in budget amendments from both chambers of the General Assembly. The funding increase had been approved last year but was not implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He stated that even with this increase, PDCs are still funded at a level lower than the pre-2008 level.

**h. AUDIT CONTRACT**

The Executive Director explained that the current contract for audit services had expired. Procurement would begin soon for a new contract. He also notified the Board that PDCs would have until December 15 to submit audits to the state moving forward.

**i. REGIONAL PLANNING UPDATES – HAZARD MITIGATION, PANDEMIC RECOVERY & RESILIENCY, CEDS**

The Deputy Director provided a brief update on the two on-going regional planning projects. He stated the Hazard Mitigation Plan is on schedule and Dewberry would soon have the first round of local planning team meetings completed. The next committee meeting would be held in late March with the first public input meeting soon after. He also stated that Thomas P. Miller & Associates would have a draft of the Regional Data Scan ready to present at the next Pandemic Recovery & Resiliency Planning Steering Committee meeting on March 11.

**j. VIRGINIA MAIN STREET WORKSHOP**

Ms. McEvoy, Grant Coordinator, described a program facilitated by the WPPDC to educate elected officials in the region about the Virginia Main Street Program. The workshop was well attended, with representatives from Franklin County, Rocky Mount, Boones Mill, and Stuart.

**k. UPDATE ON GRANT PROJECTS**

The Deputy Director provided an update on the development of the expanded grant writing and administration service for member jurisdictions. He explained the benefits of the service for both member jurisdictions and the PDC, and he outlined some of the projects currently being developed.

Ms. McEvoy described some of the grant applications that are currently in progress, and announced that a \$100,000 grant application was approved for a project at Celeste Park in Rocky Mount.

**I. HOUSEJOINT RESOLUTION NO. 77**

The Executive Director referenced a copy of House Joint Resolution No. 777 included in the Board packet that acknowledged and commended the work of Fred Shanks, who served on both the Danville MPO and WPPDC boards. The Chairman added that Mr. Shanks was an active member of the WPPDC board during his tenure.

**10. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Casey noted that he would be working to fill Rocky Mount's vacant positions on the WPPDC Board.

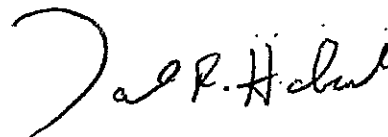
The Executive Director announced that the next meeting would be held on March 25, 2021.

**11. COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

Mr. Rotenizer thanked the WPPDC staff for representing the region at the recent Crooked Road board meeting. WPPDC was one of only two PDCs that attended the meeting. He also thanked Ms. McEvoy for her work to develop and disseminate the Opportunity Tracker each week.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.



David R. Hoback  
Executive Director