

WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES

of the
February 28, 2019 Meeting

held at the
Commission Office
1100 Madison Street, Martinsville, VA
at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT

FRANKLIN COUNTY

None

DANVILLE

Fred Shanks
Bryce Simmons

HENRY COUNTY

Jim Adams, Chairman
Tommy Slaughter

MARTINSVILLE

Kathy Lawson, Treasurer
Joe Martin

PATRICK COUNTY

Karl Weiss
Jerry Adams

ROCKY MOUNT

None

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY

Ben Farmer
Greg Sides

ABSENT

Leland Mitchell, Franklin County
Tim Tatum, Franklin County
David Thorp, Franklin County,
Wes George, Henry County
Rickie Fulcher, Patrick County
Ron Searce, Pittsylvania County
Jennifer Bowles, Martinsville
Ralph Casey, Rocky Mount

STAFF

David Hoback, Executive Director
Leah Manning, Deputy Director
Jacob Bullins, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Awaiting the presence of a quorum, the Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., and welcomed those present. He referred the Board to the revised meeting agenda for an additional item that was added. Only moments later, Mr. Martin joined the meeting to constitute a quorum.

2. Regional Forum Opportunity – Comments from the Public

There were none.

3. Consent Agenda:

a) **Confirmation of Minutes of the December 6, 2018 Meeting—WPPDC/M(18)6**

b) **Treasurer’s Report – November 30, 2018—WPPDC/P(19)1, December 31, 2018—WPPDC/P(19)2, and January 31, 2019--WPPDC/P(19)3**

c) **WPPD Quarterly Report of Activities: State Data Affiliate Center and VEC Labor Market Info Service Programs – 2nd Quarter FY 2019—WPPDC/P(19)4**

d) **Register of Administrative Reviews Under the Virginia Intergovernmental Review Process – January/February 2019--WPPDC/P(19)5**

With no questions or comments regarding the Consent Agenda items, Mr. Shanks made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Lawson, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

4. INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEWS: (Federal Transit Administration Grant Applications--Section 5310)

a) **Applicant: Southern Area Agency on Aging, Martinsville, VA**

Project: Continue Mobility Management Program Activities and Purchase of Two Vehicles for Henry and Pittsylvania County Clients--WPPDC/P(19)6

Description: SAAA applied for funding of one 14-passenger vehicle with wheelchair lift to replace a 14-passenger vehicle currently serving clients in Pittsylvania County. A funding request for a second vehicle included a 5-passenger minivan with ramp to replace a 5-passenger minivan currently utilized in Henry County. The new vehicles would provide demand response transportation for elderly clientele in each locality referenced. Funds would provide 80 percent of costs with a required 20 percent local match.

Comments: The Executive Director provided application information and responded to any questions from the Board.

Mr. Simmons made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Lawson, to make favorable comment on the application. Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

b) **Applicant: Danville-Pittsylvania Community Services, Danville, VA**

Project: Purchase of Two Vehicles for City of Danville and Pittsylvania County--WPPDC/P(19)7

Description: \$80,000 total cost (\$64,000, with 20 percent local match of \$16,000) to purchase two modified minivans with wheelchair ramps to provide transportation for developmentally disabled clients in the Danville-Pittsylvania County area for medical appointments or other agency-related activities.

Comments: The Executive Director presented application information.

Mrs. Lawson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Slaughter, to make favorable comment on the application. Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to make favorable comment on each of the applications.

5. INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEWS: (Appalachian Regional Commission Planning Grant Applications)

a) **Applicant: County of Henry, Collinsville, VA**

Project: Fieldale Recreation Center Improvements--WPPDC/P(19)12

Description: Application was for a \$50,000 planning grant to assist with the Fieldale Recreation Center’s interior improvements. As part of the ongoing Smith River Small Towns Collaborative initiative, this effort would assist in revitalization in the communities of Bassett, Fieldale, Stanleystown, and Koehler in Henry County.

Comments: The Executive Director provided application information to Board members, noting the project would include identification of potential uses for the historic structure, conduct a building assessment for hazardous building materials, and help identify interior restoration alternatives.

Mrs. Lawson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Farmer, to make favorable comment on the application. Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to make favorable comment on this application.

b) **Applicant: County of Patrick, Stuart, VA**
Project: Healthy Patrick County--WPPDC/P(19)13

Description: Application was submitted for a \$50,000 planning grant through ARC to assist with a study to reopen the Patrick County hospital, which closed in September 2017. The funding would provide expert guidance to determine best practices for the community's health care needs.

Comments: The Executive Director reviewed application information and discussed the great need for the hospital.

Mr. Shanks made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Lawson, to make favorable comment on the project application. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to make favorable comment on the ARC project application.

6. Review and Consideration of Revision to FY 2019 Administrative Budget—WPPDC/P(19)8

Mr. Bullins, the Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant, explained that the proposed changes included an increase in Revenues of \$397 as a result of DEQ funding received for the Birch Creek-Dan River TMDL Implementation Study; on the Operating Expenditure Budget, changes would include an increase in Contract Fees of \$5,000 and \$300 in Dues, due to expenses associated with computer contracts and an increase in VAPDC membership dues. He noted this involved a \$2,500 decrease in Computer Related expenses and decrease of \$2,403 in Printing and Advertising expenditures, bringing the total Operating Expenditure Budget change to \$0.

Due to the absence of a quorum, the Executive Committee did not meet prior to the Board, but members felt the proposed Administrative Budget revisions were minor and the agenda item could move forward in view of the circumstances.

Mrs. Lawson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Simmons, to approve the proposed Administrative Budget revision as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to approve the proposed Administrative Budget revision as presented.

7. Establishment of Regional Priorities for the Virginia Community Development Block Grant Program, Year 2019 at Request of Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development—WPPDC/P(19)9; Resolution WPPDC 2019-1

As in the past, the staff had solicited input from the member localities for the development of the region's CDBG Priority List for 2019. Based on responses received, the PDC staff developed a list of priorities and accompanying resolution for consideration of the Board. It was noted that, upon approval, the resolution and list would be forwarded to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

Mrs. Lawson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Simmons, to approve the 2019 resolution/priority list as presented, with the authority to change to accommodate any potential projects that may surface prior to submission to DHCD. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to approve the resolution/priority list for 2019 as presented for submission to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, with the authority to change to accommodate any potential projects that may surface prior to submission to DHCD. [A copy of the resolution and approved priority list are attached.]

8. US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration

• **Distribution of 2019 Draft Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)**

The Deputy Director presented the draft 2019 CEDS document, noting that the 30-day public review period had begun with notices published in local newspapers, distribution of the CEDS for public display at local government administrative offices and local libraries in the region, and posting on the PDC's website. She reviewed the various changes with the latest edition, highlighting the addition of "Looking Forward" document which was a new supplement to model the Charlotte, NC example that was discussed at the onset of the 2019 CEDS update last fall. The 2019 CEDS would be on the March Board agenda for consideration of approval at the next meeting. She recognized the CEDS Committee Chair, Ms. Bowles, who was unable to attend, but also acknowledged the important work of both the Working Committee and the CEDS Committee as well as PDC staff members who had assisted in the process.

• **Review of Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Performance Measures in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration—WPPDC/P(19)10**

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, 2018 – March 31, 2019" and "Implementation Plan for April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020." This information would be included in the 2019 CEDS document for submission to EDA in March.

Mr. Simmons made a motion, seconded by Mr. Slaughter, to approve the “Program Evaluation for April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019” and “Implementation Plan for April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020” for submission to EDA with the 2019 CEDS document as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to approve the “Program Evaluation for April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019” and “Implementation Plan for April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020” for submission to EDA with the 2019 CEDS document.

9. Updates and Reports on WPPDC Regional Projects/Staff Activities Related to:

a) Danville-Pittsylvania MPO Update

The Executive Director reviewed the ongoing activities of the Danville MPO consultant-led projects utilizing the on-call consulting firm EPR, noting the two projects to include the MPO’s Long-Range Transportation Plan update - a comprehensive, multimodal plan with two major components being a Constrained project list and a Vision list (projected needs); the second being an update of the Route 58 West access management study first conducted in 2012. He indicated the Long-Range Plan required an update every 5 years; it was last updated in 2015 and the MPO had until Aug 2020 to complete it. For the access management study, the Executive Director pointed out the need for the update with the development of the Smart Scale process, VDOT’s implementation of alternative intersections, further of development of Berry Hill which was in the early stages at the time of the original study, and the 2014 VDOT access management standards that were developed. He anticipated the MPO Policy Board would approve the studies in the coming week, and this would be the bulk of consultant-led MPO studies through FY 2021.

b) Ride Solutions Program Update

The Executive Director reminded the Board about the December discussion of rule changes by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and the need for a possible stand-alone application, where previously the PDC had partnered with the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC). However, he stated that DRPT had agreed to allow the PDC to continue to partner with RVARC since West Piedmont was new to the program and could partner in the foreseeable future. In addition, he acknowledged that staff would attend and participate in the Martinsville-Henry County Fast Track program this year and would also be present at an upcoming job fair to be held at New College Institute. He added that there would be a mid-March stakeholders meeting in Danville to spread the word about the program.

c) Smart Scale Update

The Executive Director briefed the Board regarding the Smart Scale projects recommended for funding. In the Salem VDOT District, Franklin County had three projects – roadway improvements on Routes 220 and 619 (Pleasant Hill/Sontag) with \$5.9 million in Smart Scale funding, improvements on Routes 220 and 919 (Grassy Hill) at \$6.9 million, and improvements on Routes 122 and 636 (Lost Mountain Rd) at \$9.7 million, noting both Route 220 projects resulted from the Route 220 Arterial Preservation program. In the Lynchburg VDOT District, Pittsylvania County had one recommended project for Route 29 and Shula Drive, a \$4.7 million project. He acknowledged the work of Mr. Sides on that application. The Executive Director also recognized the team effort by many for the successful \$30.9 million Smart Scale application of the Danville MPO for the Berry Hill Connector Road project.

d) Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan

The Executive Director advised that in 2011, the PDC developed and adopted a Regional Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan in conjunction with VDOT. He indicated that as part of the Rural Transportation Planning Work Program, staff would engage local planning staffs, VDOT staff, and others for the plan update in consideration of the Smart Scale program. He noted an upcoming stakeholder meeting to be held the following week. He added that staff anticipated completion of the update by the end of 2019 or early 2020 in order to prepare for the next round of Smart Scale.

e) WPPDC Work Program Activities Report – January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018

The Executive Director referred the Board to the Work Program Activities Report handout for calendar year 2018, which was distributed to the member jurisdictions at the end of the year to update them on work undertaken by the Commission staff. The report was only for informational purposes to provide work items accomplished by staff during the past year.

f) VAPDC Update

The Executive Director noted 2019 marked the 50th anniversary of the Virginia Association of the Planning District Commissions (VAPDC). He also advised that 2020 would mark the 50th anniversary of West Piedmont PDC and mentioned it in consideration of celebration activities for next year.

g) Virginia Investment Pool (VIP) Update

The Executive Director reminded the Board that staff had been authorized to invest in the VIP program. Following the Board’s instructions, staff moved \$450,000 in the investment pool, while maintaining the savings account for now. He noted the investment had already earned a good amount in interest, but staff would continue to test the program for two more months and review any additional investments at that time.

h) Franklin County CDBG Application

The Deputy Director indicated the PDC was in the process of assisting Franklin County with an Economic Development CDBG application for a 500,000 gallon water tank to serve the Summit View Business Park currently under development.

i) VATI State Broadband Coalition

The Executive Director advised the General Assembly had approved a \$15 million increase in the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI) program to fund broadband initiatives around the state. He acknowledged the current fiscal year program funding was only \$4 million and required a 1 to 1 match and partnership with a private (ISP) provider. The increase in funding would bring new opportunities.

j) Forest Core Grant – Virginia Outdoors Foundation – Pittsylvania County

The Executive Director discussed the Wayside Park improvements in the Hurt area of Pittsylvania County with a \$106,000 grant through the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, matched with \$72,000 in local funds. He provided an overview of the project, adding that funding was provided by the Mountain Valley Pipeline through a conservation/preservation program for impacted areas.

k) Martinsville Southern Connector Update

The Executive Director referenced the information regarding the Environmental Impact Statement for the Martinsville Southern Connector from Route 220 at the North Carolina line to the existing Route 58 Bypass in Henry County. VDOT was collaborating with FHWA and many other federal partners to develop the study. He acknowledged that several alternatives to improve this portion of Route 220 were under consideration and improvements would help alleviate heavy truck traffic. He mentioned a public informational meeting was held by VDOT in January. He further indicated field work would be getting underway soon with surveys and environmental assessments; the final EIS would be completed in early 2021.

THE BOARD:

Noted these informational reports.

10. Other Business and Reports

The Executive Director indicated the next Board meeting would be held on Thursday, March 28th.

THE BOARD:

Noted this information.

11. Comments from the Commissioners

The Chairman introduced the newest Board member, Mr. Greg Sides, the Citizen-Appointed representative for Pittsylvania County. Mr. Sides provided his background information and was welcomed by all.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

David R. Hoback
Executive Director

Attachments