

# WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

## MINUTES

of the

### March 25, 2021 Meeting

to be held

at the Commission Office

1100 Madison Street, Martinsville, VA

or via

(Meeting ID 990 2769 1434, Passcode 116036)

<https://zoom.us/j/99027691434?pwd=bJJuOU9qaGt0K0xqN1lyVjcreVhkdz09>

(Call In Information 1-301-715-8592, 990 2769 1434#, 0#, 116036#)

at 7:00 p.m.

#### PRESENT

##### FRANKLIN COUNTY

Leland Mitchell  
David Rotenizer

##### PATRICK COUNTY

Jerry Adams  
Clayton Kendrick, Jr.

##### DANVILLE

James Buckner  
Lee Vogler

##### ROCKY MOUNT

Ralph Casey

##### PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY

Ron Searce, Vice Chairman  
Vic Ingram  
Greg Sides

##### MARTINSVILLE

Jennifer Bowles  
Ronikka Hannans

##### HENRY COUNTY

Jim Adams, Chairman  
Wes George

#### ABSENT

Kathy Lawson, Martinsville, Treasurer  
Tim Tatum, Franklin County  
Tommy Slaughter, Henry County  
Kimberly Walker, Danville  
Denise Stirewalt, Patrick

#### STAFF

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

#### **1. Call to Order and Welcome**

The Chairman established a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

#### **2. Regional Forum Opportunity—Comments from Public**

There were no comments.

#### **3. Points Arising from Previous Meetings**

There were none.

#### **4. Consent Agenda**

a. Confirmation of Minutes of the February 25, 2021 Meeting—WPPDC/M(21)1

b. Treasurer's Report – January 31, 2021—WPPDC/P(21)9 and February 28, 2021—WPPDC/P(21)10

**c. Acknowledge Register of Administrative Reviews Under the Virginia Intergovernmental Review Process – March 2021—WPPDC/P(21)11**

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

**5. Consideration of Approval of the 2021 Annual Report of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy of the West Piedmont Planning District—WPPDC/P(21)12; Resolution WPPDC 2021-3**

The Associate Director briefly reviewed the status of the CEDS and review that was provided at the February 25, 2021 meeting. She recognized that this marked the close of the 30-day public comment period through the public participation process, noting there were no comments from the general public.

Mr. Rotenizer stated that the Virginia Tourism Corporation released updated data every August. The Executive Director stated the Commission is required to submit the CEDS by the end of March, which prevents some data from being the most current. Mr. Vogler asked that staff be diligent to keep data up to date, especially tourism, as tourism opportunities will be growing in the Danville area. The Deputy Director thanked the CEDS Strategy Commission and Ms. Bowles, who chairs the committee, for their work on the CEDS update. The Executive Director stated the CEDS Spotlight is a very useful document that highlights key points from the CEDS.

The CEDS Strategy Committee unanimously approved the 2021 CEDS at the February 10, 2021 meeting, with a recommendation that the Board approve it as well. At its earlier session, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board adopt the resolution approving the 2021 Annual Report of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as presented.

Mr. Buckner made a motion, seconded by Ms. Bowles, to adopt the resolution approving the 2021 Annual Report of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**6. Consideration of Approval of WPPDC Grant Administration Agreement Template – WPPDC/P(21)13**

The Deputy Director explained that the WPPDC will soon be undertaking grant administration work for local governments and organizations in the region. A grant administration agreement template would be necessary to enter into an agreement for that work. The Grant Administration Agreement template would be edited as necessary to indicate grantee, grant name, funding amount, timeline, and scope of work for each project. The agreement template also includes a pay for performance budget structure that would be updated for each project.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board approve the WPPDC Grant Administration Agreement Template.

Ms. Bowles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Casey, to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation to approve the WPPDC Grant Administration Agreement Template. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**7. Consideration of Resolution of Approval for Scope of Work for the Rural Transportation Planning Assistance Program for FY 2022 – WPPDC/P(21)14; Resolution WPPDC 2021-4**

The Executive Director reported that staff had prepared a draft Scope of Work that needed to be submitted along with a project budget, cover letter, and resolutions to serve as the Commission's application for funds under the basic assistance portion of the Virginia Department of Transportation's Rural Transportation Planning Program (RTPP) and that the Commission's review and input on the Scope of Work, evidenced by a resolution, was required for the application. The amount of VDOT funds available to the PDC for FY 2022 was a reported \$58,000, with a 20% match, or \$14,500, required by the PDC. He provided an overview of

to be undertaken under this program which included activities requested by VDOT such as Smart Scale regional meetings, regional/state planning activities, technical assistance to local government members and VDOT, and implementation of the Ride Solutions program in the region. He also stated the PDC would begin working on a road map for Danville and Pittsylvania County as part of the scope of work.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board adopt the resolution approving the Scope of Work for the Rural Transportation Planning Assistance Program for FY2022.

Mr. Sides made a motion, seconded by Mr. George, to adopt the resolution approving the Scope of Work for the Rural Transportation Planning Assistance Program for FY2022. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**8. Consideration of Revising the WPPDC Charter – WPPDC/P(21)15**

The Executive Director explained that the WPPDC Charter was originally adopted in 1970 with only one revision in 1973. Some of the language in the Charter was outdated, confusing, inconsistent, and redundant. He reviewed several proposed changes to the Charter that would clarify the outdated, confusing and inconsistent language. The Chairman notified the Board that, if staff is approved to move forward with the proposed revisions, a final draft of the revised Charter would be presented at a future meeting for adoption.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board approve staff revising the Charter as proposed. The final draft Charter would be presented at a future meeting for final approval.

Ms. Bowles made a motion, seconded by Mr. George, to approve staff revising the Charter as proposed. The final draft Charter would be presented at a future meeting for final approval. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

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

**a. Piney Forest Road Corridor Study**

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. He outlined work WPPDC staff, Joe Bonanno and David Rakes, had done as part of the study, including a study of potential for frontage and backage roads to reduce congestion in the corridor. The Executive Director also stated the study would include a MetroQuest survey to gather public input and comments on the Piney Forest Road Corridor. WPPDC staff had been working with VDOT and EPR to develop the MetroQuest survey. Phase 2 of the study would occur later in the year once traffic patterns return to a more pre-pandemic level.

**b. MPO OIPO GAP Grant**

Mr. Bonanno, WPPDC Regional Planner, explained that the Danville MPO applied for technical assistance through the Growth and Accessibility Planning (GAP) application in January. The application was approved and the MPO would receive technical assistance to develop a data driven approach to identify the best projects for future studies and funding applications. The tool to be developed as part of the project would be based on performance measures from VTRANS and the Long-Range Transportation Plan. The study would begin in April with final completion in October 2021. The Executive Director thanked Mr. Bonanno for his work on the application and development of the scope of work.

**c. Hazard Mitigation Plan**

The Deputy Director provided an update on the Regional Hazard Mitigation Planning project. Dewberry, the consultant working on the project, had completed all of the local planning team meetings and would complete the update of the Risk Assessment by mid-April. The next meeting of the planning committee would be held in mid-April with the first public input opportunity soon after that meeting.

**d. Pandemic Recovery & Economic Resiliency Plan**

The Deputy Director provided an update on the Regional Pandemic Recovery & Economic Resiliency Planning project. Thomas P. Miller & Associates, the consultant working on the project, had completed the data scan and identified seven sectors to focus on, including Advance Manufacturing; Advanced Materials; Wood Products, Forestry, and Furniture; Food Manufacturing; Healthcare; Hospitality and Tourism; and Childcare. The next phase of the project would begin in April and would include a site visit, interviews with 10-20 leaders in each sector, and a small business survey. The first public input meeting would be held on April 29 at 6:00pm.

**e. IALR EDA Grant**

The Deputy Director notified the Board that the EDA application submitted for the Industry 4.0 Project at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research had been awarded. The \$2.5 million grant would be matched with \$2.5 million from the Danville Regional Foundation and would be used to purchase advanced manufacturing equipment for workforce training projects. The project would result in the creation of 400 jobs, retention of 800 jobs, and spur over \$83 million in private investment.

**f. Other Ongoing Grant Projects**

The Deputy Director outlined the grant applications that were under development by WPPDC staff. He explained that staff were busy writing applications in Patrick County, Franklin County, Martinsville, Pittsylvania County, and regionally. The Associate Director added that she recently submitted the EDD Application to EDA for annual funding, and was working on applications for Boones Mill, Patrick County, and Pittsylvania County.

**g. Office Vehicle Lease**

The Executive Director explained that the lease on the office vehicle would be completed in April 2021, and his recommendation was to return the vehicle. Due to the pandemic, staff travel was reduced, and he recommended the Commission operate without an office vehicle until staff travel returned to normal levels. Mr. George asked if the Commission had a way to compensate staff for using personal vehicles, and the Executive Director replied that staff were reimbursed for mileage traveled at the federal rate.

**h. PDC/MPO Website Updates**

The Deputy Director notified the Board that staff had been investigating updates to the WPPDC website. It would be more affordable and more efficient to create and maintain a new WPPDC website in-house. Development of a new WPPDC website was underway, and a new Danville MPO website had been completed recently.

**i. FY2022 Budget**

The Executive Director explained that the Commission would follow the same basic process as in previous years to develop the FY 2022 budget. He stated the Deputy Director would be more involved in the process this year, and that the Commission was on solid financial ground. A priority for the FY 2022 budget would be a salary increase for staff. A draft budget would be presented to the Executive Committee at their meeting on April 22, 2021.

j. **Audit Contract**

The Executive Director stated that the contract for audit services ended on June 30, 2021. Staff had developed and advertised a Request for Proposals to procure audit services for the next three fiscal years. Staff would recommend a firm to provide audit services at the May meeting.

**10. Appointment of Nominating Committee for Fiscal Year 2022**

The Chairman stated that the Executive Committee served as the Nominating Committee for several years and would continue to serve as the Nominating Committee for Fiscal Year 2022 with approval from the Board.

Mr. Casey stated that he was working to fill Rocky Mount's two open seats on the Board.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board approve appointing the Executive Committee to serve as the Nominating Committee for Fiscal Year 2022.

Mr. George made a motion, seconded by Ms. Bowles, to approve appointing the Executive Committee to serve as the Nominating Committee for Fiscal Year 2022. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**11. Other Business**

There was none.

**12. Comments from Commissioners**

There were no comments.

**13. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.



David R. Hoback  
Executive Director