

WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

of the

February 24, 2022 Meeting

held at the Commission Office
1100 Madison Street, Martinsville, VA
or via

(Meeting ID 823 3633 1890, Passcode 969599)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82336331890?pwd=b3pxeHl0VzFUWUxHcjZmbVI2d0RIUT09>

(Call In Information 1-301-715-8592, 82336331890, 969599)

At 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Leland Mitchell
David Rotenizer

PATRICK COUNTY

Jerry Adams
Clayton Kendrick, Jr.

DANVILLE

James Buckner
Lee Vogler
Kimberly Walker

ROCKY MOUNT

Ralph Casey
Tyler Lee
Lucas Tuning

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY

Vic Ingram
Greg Sides

MARTINSVILLE

Kathy Lawson, Treasurer

HENRY COUNTY

Jim Adams, Chairman
Wes George

ABSENT

Tommy Slaughter, Henry County
Tim Tatum, Franklin County
Denise Stirewalt, Patrick County
Jessie Barksdale, Pittsylvania County
Jennifer Bowles, Martinsville
Ronikka Hannans, Martinsville

STAFF

Michael Armbrister, Executive Director
Kristie Eberly, Regional Programs Director
Jacob Bullins, Finance Director

GUEST

Robert Wood, Rocky Mount

1. Call to Order and Welcome

The Chairman established a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He recognized and welcomed Robert Wood, Town Manager for the Town of Rocky Mount, Tyler Lee, Citizen Appointee for the Town of Rocky Mount to the WPPDC and Ralph Casey, Council Member for the Town of Rocky Mount who is now serving on the Executive Committee.

2. Regional Forum Opportunity – Comments from Public

There were no comments.

3. Consent Agenda

- a. Confirmation of Minutes of the October 28, 2021 Meeting**
- b. Treasurer's Report – July 31, 2021, August 31, 2021, September 30, 2021, October 31, 2021, November 30, 2021, December 31, 2021**
- c. Register of Administrative Reviews Under the Virginia Intergovernmental Review Process – November and December 2021 and January and February 2022**
- d. West Piedmont Planning District Commission Quarterly Report of Activities: State Data Affiliate Center and VEC Business & Industry Data Center Programs – Second Quarter, FY2022**

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

4. Election of Vice-Chair to Serve the Balance of the Fiscal Year

The Executive Director stated that there has been a change in membership from Pittsylvania County and Mr. Ron Scarce is no longer a representative to the PDC which leaves the Vice Chair position open for the remainder of the fiscal year.

The Chairman stated Pittsylvania County has chosen Mr. Vic Ingram as the representative on the Executive Committee. At the Executive Committee meeting earlier that day, Mr. Lee Vogler volunteered to serve as Vice-Chair for the remainder of the unexpired term. It is the unanimous recommendation of the Executive Committee that Mr. Vogler fill that position for the balance of the fiscal year.

Ms. Lawson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Buckner, to approve Mr. Vogler to serve the unexpired term as Vice-Chair for the remainder of the fiscal year. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

5. Intergovernmental Review: Franklin County EDA Application – Economic Growth and Resiliency Plan for Franklin and Patrick Counties

The Executive Director stated that Patrick County and Franklin County are working together on a project that will develop multiple plans to enhance current business development and increase the project readiness of industrial sites across both counties. The towns of Boones Mill, Rocky Mount and Stuart are also participating. Franklin County is the lead applicant and would be the fiscal agent if the grant is approved. All of the participating local boards have approved their required match. The total project cost is \$625,000. Staff recommends approval by the Commission.

Mr. George made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rotenizer, to give favorable comment to the Franklin County EDA application. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

6. Support Resolution for Participation in FY22 TDM Program Grant (RIDE Solutions) through the Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation (DRPT)

The Executive Director stated that the WPPDC participates in the RIDE Solutions program and partners with the Roanoke Valley Allegany Regional Commission. The goal of the program is to promote alternative transportation options such as carpooling, biking and public transit to alleviate some of the traffic on our roads. The WPPDC applies for this grant annually which helps to fund staff time as well as marketing and other activities to promote the program. The total project amount is \$59,000 with the WPPDC required to provide a 20% match of \$11,800 to receive \$47,200 from DRPT. Staff recommends that the Commission adopt the resolution so that it can be submitted with the application.

Mr. Vogler made a motion, seconded by Mr. Casey, to adopt the resolution for participation in FY22 TDM Program Grant (RIDE Solutions) through the Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation (DRPT). Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

7. Establishment of 2022 Regional Priorities for the Virginia Community Development Block Grant Program

The Executive Director stated each year the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) asks the Planning District Commissions to set the Community Development priorities for their region. DHCD uses the priorities and ranking to score Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications from our localities. The PDC contacted the localities and there are only a few potential CDBG applications. There are several potential planning grant applications, but those applications are not scored based on the same criteria. Based on this information the PDC has developed a priority ranking of #1 for three types of projects, Comprehensive Community Development, Housing – Housing Rehabilitation and Economic Development – Business District Revitalization which applications are anticipated. Two types of projects, Community Service Facility and Public Infrastructure, have a priority ranking of #2 as no applications are anticipated. Staff recommends the Commission approve the CDBG priority rankings.

Mr. Casey made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lawson, to approve the 2022 regional priority rankings for the Community Development Block Grant program. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

8. Presentation of the 2022 5-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

The Regional Programs Director presented the 2022 CEDS document which she noted is now a 5-year plan and that there will be minimal updates each year. The PDC contracted with Thomas P. Miller & Associates (TPMA), who also developed the Pandemic Recovery & Economic Resiliency Plan (PRRP), to develop the CEDS and the PRRP was used as the basis for the CEDS. The draft CEDS is posted on the PDC's website and the 30-day public review period has begun with notices published in local newspapers. TPMA will be presenting the document and requesting comments from the CEDS Committee at their meeting on March 4, 2022. This meeting is open to the public for their comments also. The 2022 CEDS will be on the March Board agenda for consideration of adoption.

The Chairman recognized and thanked Ms. Bowles for her leadership of the CEDS Committee. He also encouraged the Commission to review the document.

9. Presentation of the West Piedmont Pandemic Recovery & Economic Resiliency Plan (PRRP)

The Executive Director presented the Pandemic Recovery & Economic Resiliency Plan (PRRP) and stated that the plan was developed in conjunction with Thomas P. Miller & Associates (TPMA). A lot of the information in the PRRP was used to develop the CEDS and the two plans work together but they are designed to address different things. The PRRP is focused on successfully reviving the economy from the adverse effects of the pandemic. The plan was developed based on data, interviews with business and community leaders, a business survey and an active steering committee. The goals and strategies were designed to help the impacted industry sectors and are actionable, with timelines and partners listed, for implementation over the next few years. The PRRP will be on the March Board agenda for consideration of adoption.

10. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director then highlighted some key items in the report:

- The WPPDC Housing Initiative, funded through a \$2 million grant from Virginia Housing with a goal to develop 20 new affordable housing units, is developing project partnerships across the region and has the potential to develop about 146 housing units.
- The Regional Housing Study started in January 2022 with VT's Center for Housing Research beginning the first phase of the project, housing data trainings for planners.
- All three WPPDC VATI applications were awarded totaling over \$122 million in funding. Currently, required pre-contract compliance tasks are being completed.
- The Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan has been approved by FEMA. The WPPDC will work with local emergency managers for local Board and Commission approvals.

- WPPDC signed an agreement with Virginia Department of Health, Office of Drinking Water to provide grant compliance assistance to their grantees in the region.
- The PRRP project included a regional branding component. The campaign “Life in SOVA” will be launched over the coming months. The website is www.lifeinsova.com.
- There were budget amendments in both the House and Senate to add a one-time increase of \$30,000 per PDC for assisting smaller localities with administering ARPA funding. The amendment passed the House but not the Senate. VAPDC is working to keep it in the budget.
- The Staff Projects list continues to increase and staff is doing a great job supporting our localities.
- SMART Scale Round 5 of transportation funding is opening. Working with VDOT and localities on two confirmed projects in the Town of Stuart and at Berry Hill in Pittsylvania.
- The Executive Committee, at their earlier meeting, was provided the updated Personnel Policy for review. The policy has not been updated in five years. Newer policies have been incorporated and some of the language and terminology has been updated. Following Executive Committee review, the draft policy will be presented to the Board for review with consideration for adoption in May.

11. Other Business

Mr. Vogler thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve as Vice-Chair and he is looking forward to working with everyone.

The Chairman noted that the next Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (T-TAC) meeting is on March 16 at 11 am via Zoom. The meeting has a lot of good information on transportation.

12. Comments from Commissioners

There was none.

13. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.



Michael Armbrister
Executive Director