

WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

of the

February 23, 2023 Meeting

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

or via

Meeting ID 844 0150 6332, Passcode 749862

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84401506332?pwd=MTFVYjhZNldUc1Zlc29TYk1jL1Vsdz09>

(Call In Information 1-301-715-8592, 84401506332#, 749862#)

At 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT

FRANKLIN COUNTY

David Rotenizer
Tim Tatum

PATRICK COUNTY

Jerry Adams
Clayton Kendrick
Denise Stirewalt

DANVILLE

Dr. Gary P. Miller
Lee Vogler, Vice Chairman
Kimberly Walker

ROCKY MOUNT

Ralph Casey
Lucas Tuning

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY

MARTINSVILLE

Jennifer Bowles
Kathy Lawson, Treasurer

HENRY COUNTY

Jim Adams, Chairman
Wes George

ABSENT

Tommy Slaughter, Henry County
Vic Ingram, Pittsylvania County
Ron Searce, Pittsylvania County
Greg Sides, Pittsylvania
Tyler Lee, Rocky Mount

STAFF

Michael Armbrister, Executive Director
Kristie Eberly, Regional Programs Director

1. Call to Order and Welcome

The Chairman established a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Regional Forum Opportunity – Comments from Public

There were no comments.

3. Consent Agenda

a. Confirmation of Minutes of the October 27, 2022 Meeting

b. Treasurer's Report – September 30, 2022, October 31, 2022, November 30, 2022, December 31, 2022

c. West Piedmont Planning District Commission Quarterly Report of Activities: State Data Affiliate Center and VEC Business & Industry Data Center Programs – Second Quarter, FY2023

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

4. Staff Showcase: Kristie Eberly

The Executive Director stated that for Board members to get better acquainted with staff members and the work they are doing he will be asking each staff member to give a five minute presentation at upcoming Board meetings.

Ms. Eberly discussed the Agritourism and Agribusiness Development Program and showed the newly developed logo concepts. She also talked about emergency communications and emergency responder equipment applications for Franklin County and flood mitigation planning for Boones Mill. She is working with Patrick County on several projects including a Business Development Center and Childcare Center in Stuart, the industrial park shell building and the revitalization of Cockram Mill. She manages the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) program and updates. She is also the representative to the Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund which is a coalition of two North Carolina council of governments and the WPPDC.

5. Intergovernmental Review: Danville-Pittsylvania Community Services Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 Program Application

The Executive Director stated that Danville-Pittsylvania Community Services submitted a \$125,000 application on February 1st for the FTA Section 5310 Program to purchase two new minivans with wheelchair equipment to transport their clients. These vehicles will replace vehicles that have reached the end of their useful life. Staff has no concerns and recommends supporting the application.

Mr. Vogler made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lawson, to approve the Intergovernmental Review for the Danville-Pittsylvania Community Services Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 Program application. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

6. Regional Route 122 Study

The Executive Director stated that this is a project is a partnership between Franklin County, Bedford County, Central Virginia PDC and West Piedmont PDC. WPPDC staff, Joe Bonanno, is writing an U.S. Department of Transportation RISE program application for the project which will update some completed plans for the 24 mile corridor. This is an area of growth for both counties by Smith Mountain Lake and will address some safety issues in the area. This is a \$1.6 million planning project. The WPPDC will be the applicant and the grant administrator for the project. Staff recommends approving the submission of an application with the WPPDC as the applicant and the grant administrator.

Mr. Tatum made a motion, seconded by Ms. Bowles to approve the submission of an application to the U.S. Department of Transportation with the WPPDC as the applicant and the grant administrator. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

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

The Executive Director noted that the agenda has a typo, and it should be FY24 not FY22. This is an annual application the WPPDC and Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission partner on for the region. The grant funds are for marketing and outreach to businesses and individuals to encourage car pooling and other alternate forms of transportation to work. This application also

includes funds for a guaranteed ride to or from work. The program cost is \$59,000 which includes an \$11,800 match from the WPPDC.

Mr. George made a motion, seconded by Ms. Stirewalt, to adopt the resolution to apply for a Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation FY24 TDM Program Grant (RIDE Solutions). Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

8. 2023 West Piedmont Regional Strategic Plan

The Executive Director stated that every PDC is required by the Code of Virginia to have a Regional Strategic Plan. WPPDC had a plan that was adopted in 2016 and this is an update to that plan. The goals from the WPPDC Annual Work Program, as well as our other regional plans, to develop this plan. The draft plan was submitted to the member jurisdictions, DHCD, Board members and some regional partners for comment. DHCD had no comment, a positive comment was received from Henry County and no other jurisdiction commented. A Public Hearing, which is required by the Code of Virginia, was held on February 23, 2023, at 5:00 pm and did not have any comments. Staff recommends that the Board adopts the Resolution to approve and adopt the Regional Strategic Plan which will be sent to DHCD for use during review of PDC annual reports.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board approve and adopt the Regional Strategic Plan.

The Executive Director was asked if secession planning was included in the plan, and it is not.

Ms. Bowles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rotenizer, to approve and adopt the Regional Strategic Plan. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

9. Remote Electronic Participation and All-Virtual Meeting Policy

The Executive Director stated that the General Assembly made changes to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to allow for certain types of remote electronic participation in public meetings as well all virtual meetings. This policy follows the Virginia FOIA and outlines the requirements for members to participate in hybrid or all virtual meetings. If a Board member is unable to follow the proper steps in time to attend a meeting virtually, they would be able to participate but not take action on any votes. This policy will take effect at the next (March) meeting. It will be documented in the minutes that the member is unable to attend in person with a generic reason.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board adopt the Remote Electronic Participation and All-Virtual Meeting Policy.

Ms. Walker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Vogler, to adopt the Remote Electronic Participation and All-Virtual Meeting Policy. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

10. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director stated that the Southern Virginia Partnership for Health Science Careers has asked the WPPDC to be their fiscal agent and we would be paid for providing this service. This program's mission is to increase healthcare workers in the region which is included in the CEDS and PRRP.

The Friends of Southwest Virginia is applying to Appalachian Region Commission (ARC) for funding for Outdoor Recreation planning and they are including Patrick and Henry counties.

The WPPDC is submitting two ARC application for the Stuart Downtown Revitalization and Patrick County broadband funding.

The Executive Director highlighted some projects in the written report provided in the Board meeting packet.

11. Other Business

There was no other business.

12. Comments from Commissioners

Dr. Miller noted that the City of Danville has excellent mountain biking trails for the outdoor recreation project. He also stressed the need for health workforce in the region.

Mr. Tatum stated that this fall Ferrum College is adding an emergency medical program.

Mr. Rotenizer stated that the Blue Ridge Institute will be celebrating 50 years this year.

The Chair recognized that Jennifer Bowles, representing Martinsville, and Ron Searce, Pittsylvania County have returned as Board members.

The Chair noted that there will be full Board meetings on March 23 and May 25 and an Executive Committee only meeting on April 27.

13. Adjournment

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



Michael R. Armbrister
Executive Director