

WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

of the

August 24, 2023 Meeting

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

PRESENT

Jim Adams, Chairman, Henry County
Wes George, Henry County
Jerry Adams, Patrick County
Clayton Kendrick, Patrick County
Kimberly Walker, Danville
Lee Vogler, Vice Chairman, Danville
Kathy Lawson, Treasurer, Martinsville
Aaron Rawls, Martinsville
Joe Martin, Martinsville
David Rotenizer, Franklin County
Ralph Casey, Rocky Mount (V)
Greg Sides, Pittsylvania County
Vic Ingram, Pittsylvania County

ABSENT

Tommy Slaughter, Henry County
Dr. Gary Miller, Danville
Tim Tatum, Franklin County
Denise Stirewalt, Patrick County
Lucas Turning, Rocky Mount
Tyler Lee, Rocky Mount
Ron Scarce, Pittsylvania County

STAFF

Kristie Eberly, Interim Executive Director
Sean Campbell, Housing Programs Director
Mike Mercado, Housing Rehab Specialist
Tamika Royal, Housing Programs Specialist

GUESTS

Glen Adams, City of Martinsville

(V) = Virtual Attendance

In accordance with the ***West Piedmont PDC Remote Electronic Participation and All-Virtual Meeting Policy***, members attended virtually for the following reasons:

Ralph Casey, Rocky Mount – attended from home due to a personal matter

1. Call to Order and Welcome

The Chairman established a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Chairman introduced and welcomed guest Mr. Glen Adams, Martinsville Interim City Manager.

2. Regional Forum Opportunity – Comments from Public

There were no comments.

3. Consent Agenda

- a. Confirmation of Minutes of the August 24, 2023 Meeting***
- b. Treasurer's Report – April 30, 2023 and May 31, 2023***
- c. Register of Administrative Reviews Under the Virginia Intergovernmental Review Process-June thru August 2023***

d. Quarterly Report of Activities: State Data Affiliate Center and VEC Business & Industry data Center Programs-Fourth Quarter-FY 2023

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

4. Staff Spotlight: Sean Campbell and Tamika Royal

The Interim Executive Director stated that for Board Members to get better acquainted with staff members and the work they are doing, she will be asking each staff member to give a short presentation at upcoming board meetings.

Mr. Sean Campbell, Housing Programs Director:

- The Virginia Housing Development Grant to the PDC will contribute to funding in some way, such as gap funding, the full cost or leveraging other funds, for 117 housing units with 112 rental opportunities and 5 homeownership opportunities. Currently 57 units are completed and expect to complete 5 units by the end of 2023. The remaining units will be completed by July 2024.
- The original award from Virginia Housing was \$2,000,000 with \$1,600,000 allocated to production and \$400,000 allocated to administration costs.
- Virginia Housing/PDC Development Projects include DRHA Temple Avenue, DHRA Swanson Street, DRHA Colquhoun Street, Danville-Pittsylvania Habitat for Humanity, Southside Lofts, and Legendary Properties 119 Roselawn.
- The Stakeholder Engagement has involved a housing presentation at VACO, a housing presentation at Danville Regional Housing Summit, participated in Danville Regional Homelessness study, convened Regional Housing Advisory Committee, consulted on housing projects for multiple local governments and non-profits, established relationships with other PDCs that have housing programs, established a relationship with West Piedmont Better Housing Coalition and provided input to Virginia Housing for program changes and development of future programs.
- The WPPDC Housing Program currently serves as the administrator of the Pine Hall Rehabilitative Grant, the Virginia Housing PDC Development Grant and the Regional Housing Study and has completed administration of Martinsville Housing Survey.
- The WPPDC Housing Program is anticipating future grant applications for Chatham for a CDBG Planning Grant for a rehabilitation project and for Martinsville for a Virginia Housing Planning Grant for a property on Jackson Street. The WPPDC will be applying to Virginia Housing for three Community Impact Grants (CIG) for the viability and structure of a regional land bank to be held at the WPPDC, for the setup of a 501c3 Community Development Corporation and to develop regional database of properties available for development. The WPPDC is also anticipating applying for a Virginia Housing Blight Grant for development funds for the Acquire, Renovate, Sell (ARS) program and the HUD PRO Development Grant.
- The Housing Program's services and anticipated services will include planning and development for grant applications, grant administration, housing development consulting, housing rehab specialist services, lead inspection and risk assessment, asbestos testing and blower door testing.
- The Regional Housing Study data analysis is completed. Housing Forward and Virginia Tech are working on the strategy portion for the region and local governments. The draft is anticipated by mid-September for locality review and the final study releasing early November.
- Ms. Tamika Royal stated that the Pine Hall project was progressing and explained the four phases for the participants. She also noted that there was an increase in contractor interest for the project.

- The Interim Executive Director noted that the Lead Testing Gun that was approved for purchase in May had been recently purchased and received. The completion of 18 lead risk assessments which will make up the price of the lead gun for the PDC.
- Mr. Campbell also introduced new staff member Mr. Mike Mercado as the PDC's Housing Rehab Specialist.

5. Consideration of WPPDC Records Retention Policy

The Interim Executive Director explained that recently there was a Compliance Review from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. After review, the budget was in accordance, but the WPPDC was found to not have a written Records Retention Policy. This was not an issue last year but to satisfy DRPT, a Records Retention Policy was written and will be in the West Piedmont PDC's handbook as a revision and if adopted will go into effect September 1, 2023.

Ms. Kimberly Walker made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Kathy Lawson, to recommend that the Board approve the Records Retention Policy. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

6. Appointment of WPPDC Interim Executive Director

The Chairman discussed briefly about a conversation with former Executive Director Michael Armbrister and his reasonings for moving forward with a new job allowing him to tend to his family better and his resignation as West Piedmont PDC's Executive Director effective July 31, 2023. Moving forward with two Executive Committee meetings to put a plan in place for filling the Executive Director's position, a unanimous decision was made to ask Mrs. Kristie Eberly to fill the Executive Director's position as Interim Executive Director. The offer was accepted by Mrs. Eberly and her new position will be effective August 1, 2023. It was decided that prior to December 31, 2023, a review would be done with Mrs. Eberly. The Chairman proceeded to talk about the growth during the last few years of the West Piedmont PDC and the positive things that have been happening.

Mr. Wes George made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jerry Adams, to appoint Mrs. Kristie Eberly the Interim Executive Director for the West Piedmont Planning District. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

7. Interim Executive Director's Report

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

The Executive Director reviewed the Housing Production Project Line of Credit Use was at \$1,578,000.00, reimbursement funds were \$570,216.42 and it was noted by Sean Campbell that a couple of houses would finish up within the next month or two and then the West Piedmont could pay more back in on the Line of Credit

East VATI Project has installed over 208 miles of cable in Pittsylvania and Charlotte counties. Connections to Sandy Level will begin in the next 30 days once testing is complete.

West VATI Project has received SCC approval for Appalachian Power's participation, and full engineering has been installed. The Patrick County Charter project is working through some final VDOT permitting issues, but construction should in Patrick County this month.

VATI 2023 Projects – WPPDC East and Pittsylvania-are in the pre-contract phase with agreements being drafted. The West project is still in the letter of intent phase. The Patrick County ARC Area Development application received state approval and will be sent to ARC Washington for final approval. The ARC grant will serve as match for Patrick County's VATI 2023 grant funding.

A consulting contract has been signed with Mr. Michael Armbrister to continue as Broadband Project Manager for six months to allow time for staff to become familiar with the project. Broadband questions can be directed to Mr. Armbrister at broadband@wppdc.org

Regional Tourism Initiatives – Staff continues to develop the next component of the Regional Tourism Initiative, outdoor recreation, through discussions with funding agencies and other partners, including Friends of SWVA, WPPDC has applied to the Virginia Tobacco Commission and Economic Development Administration (EDA) for planning grants. The Outdoor Recreation Program will be modeled after the Agritourism and Agribusiness Program.

The Regional Agritourism and Agribusiness Program, Grown in SOVA, will continue to market the website, along with doing outreach to procedures, over the next year. Funding for continued marketing and website improvements is currently being researched.

The Interim Executive Director announced that in July 2023 Kathleen McEvoy was promoted to Community Development Director.

The Interim Executive Director announced the most recent new staff member, Mrs. Amanda Gray, as the new Tourism and Marketing Specialist. Ms. Gray will be working on Grown in SOVA agritourism and agribusiness project, the Moonshine Heritage Trail, Regional Outdoor Recreation Development Program and with the Health Advisory Committee. She will also be managing the WPPDC website and social media.

The WPPDC is currently advertising for a Community Development Specialist and hopes to have the position filled by September 2023.

8. Other Business

The Chairman presented a Resolution of Recognition to acknowledge and recognize the leadership and appreciation of the former West Piedmont PDC Executive Director Mr. Michael Armbrister and request that it be a Permanent Resolution placed in the West Piedmont PDC building on display if passed by the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. David Rotenizer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Joe Martin, to approve the Resolution of Recognition for Mr. Michael Armbrister. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wes George approached the idea of adding an additional sound set up for the Board room to amplify the sound.

9. Comments from Commissioners

There were no comments from the commissioners.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.


Kristina Eberly
Interim Executive Director