

WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

of the

August 22, 2024 Meeting

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

PRESENT

Jim Adams, Chairman, Henry County
Pam Cobler, Henry County
Wes George, Henry County
Jerry Adams, Patrick County
Doug Perry, Patrick County
Kathy Lawson, Treasurer, Martinsville
Joe Martin, Martinsville
David Rotenizer, Franklin County
Tim Tatum, Vice-Chairman, Franklin County
Lucas Tuning, Rocky Mount
Ralph Casey, Rocky Mount
Dr. Gary Miller, Danville (V)
Ken Bowman, Pittsylvania County
Vic Ingram, Pittsylvania County
Tyler Lee, Rocky Mount (V)

ABSENT

STAFF

Kristie Eberly, Executive Director
Sean Campbell, Housing Program Director
Amanda Gray, Tourism & Marketing Specialist

GUEST

Mr. Marc Adelman-Danville Regional Airport

(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:

Lee Vogler, Danville-Personal matter
Nick Mitchell, Franklin County-Personal matter
Aaron Rawls, Martinsville-Personal matter
Tyler Lee, Rocky Mount-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.

2. Regional Forum Opportunity – Comments from Public

There were no comments.

3. Consent Agenda

- a. ***Confirmation of Minutes of the May 23, 2024 Meeting.***
- b. ***Treasurer’s Report – April 30, 2024 and May 31, 2024***
- c. ***Register of Administrative Reviews Under the Virginia Intergovernmental Review Process-June-July 2024***

Mrs. Kathy Lawson made a motion, seconded by Dr. Miller, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

4. Staff Spotlight

The Executive Director introduced Amanda Gray, Tourism Specialist that has been with West Piedmont for roughly 10 months. Ms. Gray gave an overview of Life in SOVA, Grown in SOVA, Virginia’s Mountain Spirit Trail, 2024 Virginia Tourism Corporation Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program, Gateways to Southwest Virginia and discussed the impact of Direct Visitor Spending.

5. USDOT Application for Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan for City of Martinsville

The Executive Director explained that we were recently asked about doing a Safe Streets for All project just for the City of Martinsville after being approached by the city for help. The city was aware of West Piedmont’s current MPO Safe Streets for All project. The Executive Director asked if there was any objection by the Board of Commissioners in submitting an application on this project on behalf of the City of Martinsville. There were no objections by the Board of Commissioners.

6. Executive Director’s Report

The Executive Director stated that the Housing Initiative project lists are nearly all completed and if not, then they are on schedule.

Line of Credit-WPPDC was approved in May 2022 for a \$500,000 line of credit for two years through Virginia Community Capital to serve as grant gap funding for the Housing Production Program. Virginia Community Capital is now Locus Bank and the line of credit was renewed for one year in June. Interest on the line of credit is paid by the Virginia Housing grant. Staff will continue to provide a report to the Board when the line of credit is used and the balance is paid after Virginia Housing reimburses grant drawdowns.

Regional Broadband -We now have over 621 miles of route fiber installed in Pittsylvania, Bedford, Charlotte, Patrick, and Franklin counties with construction starting soon in the rest of the counties. Connections to homes in Pittsylvania, Charlotte, Bedford and Patrick counties have started with over 4,878 serviceable passings and over 593 current subscribers. The WPPDC Dinwiddie Rural Band and RSN projects are both under contract with engineering beginning in 2024 and construction beginning in early 2025.

Staff Project List- The Executive Director updated on a few of the projects:

Ferrum Community Revitalization Projects- Address flooding issue. Submitted BRIC application which was not awarded. Submitted HMGP application which is pending. As of

this past Tuesday, the application was awarded and the PDC will be administering that grant for Franklin County.

I.C. Dehart Memorial Park Trail Improvements- Application submitted to Community Foundation for Western Virginia for Summer Grants program.

Woolwine-Dehart Park Upgrades-Application submitted for T-Mobile Hometown Grant.

Chatham Housing-Applying for VA Housing Community Impact Grant (CIG) for planning grant for housing.

Pine Hall Housing Rehab CDBG – Martinsville- Project underway with completion by December 2024. This began in 2021.

Martinsville MiNet Expansion-ARC application was submitted. Approved by Governor and sent to ARC for final approval.

Fayette Street & Beaver Street Pre-Development-Applying for VA Housing Community Impact Grant (CIG)

Mobile Home Parks Rehabilitation- Submitted application to HUD for PRICE grant.

Land Bank Study- VA Housing awarded the planning application and the study is underway.

Rural Investment Collaborative – Community Investment Training- Application submitted for Federal Reserve Bank’s 5-month training program. Once completed can apply for Community Development funding.

Transportation-

WPPDC is the recipient of a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) **RAISE Grant**, in the amount of \$1.657 million, will fund a plan for improvements of an approximately 24-mile segment of Route 122, extending from the intersection of Wirtz Road in Franklin County to the intersection of Joppa Mill Road in Bedford County.

Joe Bonanno, Transportation Planner, was responsible for writing the Franklin County/Bedford County RAISE grant application and assisted with an application for Rocky Mount. There were only three RAISE grants that were awarded in the state of Virginia and two are in the WPPDC region.

The Executive Director also mentioned that the West Piedmont Office was still advertising an additional Community Development Specialist.

7. Other Business

The Executive Director introduced Mr. Marc Adelman and Mr. Gary Miller to discuss the potential expansion of the Danville Regional Airport. Mr. Adelman stated there is only a small access road towards the back of the airport but with no access to a main road. With the Martinsville Speedway, VIR and the new Casino bringing in more people and traffic, there is a need for larger facility and improved road access. He plans to reach out to the PDC for help with grant funding for the project. There have been 3 approved projects for the airport thus far. 1) There is a \$1.7 Million dollar grant for a training facility for an 80x80 hanger for Averett and DCC to offer student training. Averett currently rents a single hanger. The 12,532-foot hanger would be used both the University and the Community College as well as Aeronautics and Aviation Maintenance. 2) A \$2 million grant for site reconstruction for three large corporate hangers. 3) There is also funding to add 39 space parking lot in the lot to support hanger development in the south ramp at 10,000 square feet. Working on development of linking roadways of Route 58 and South Boston Road. Projected it all to be built out within

the next 10 years. Mr. Adelman provided ariel photos for display. This meeting was a good opportunity to explain what the intentions of the Danville Regional Airport are as there are planning requirements with the FAA. Within the next few years, the Airport will be going thru a \$400,000 study for updating their Master Plan which includes modifying a layout plan. The Chairman thanked Mr. Adelman for the update on future airport plans.

The Executive Director gave out an updated WPPDC meeting calendar. The Executive Director also explained that the PDC had not purchased a company vehicle yet due to end of year work and partial roof replacement.

8. Comments from Commissioners

Mr. Vic Ingram noted that REW, a company out of England that builds Classic Vintage electric cars, is coming to Cane Creek bringing in new jobs. \$800 million investment.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.



Kristina Eberly
Executive Director