

WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

of the

August 28, 2025 Meeting

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

PRESENT

Jim Adams, Chairman, Henry County
Pam Cobler, Henry County
Nick Mitchell, Franklin County
Kathy Lawson, Treasurer, Martinsville
Clayton Kendrick, Patrick County
James Tuner, Patrick County
Jonathan Wood, Patrick County
Tyler Lee, Rocky Mount (V)
Fatemah Casey, Rocky Mount
Tim Tatum, Vice-Chairman, Franklin County
Ken Bowman, Pittsylvania County
Dillard Jones, Pittsylvania County
Joe Martin, Martinsville

ABSENT

Lee Vogler, Danville
Eddie Hite, Pittsylvania County
Dr. Gary Miller, Danville
Jerry Adams, Patrick County
Aaron Rawls, Martinsville
Wes George, Henry County
David Rotenizer, Franklin County
Lucas Tuning, Rocky Mount

STAFF

Michael Armbrister, Executive Director
Sean Campbell, Deputy Director

GUEST

Steve Marshall, Patrick County Supervisor
Kurt Bozenmayer, Planning Commission Chairman,
Patrick County

(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:

Tyler Lee-Rocky Mount (V)-Personal matter

1. Call to Order and Welcome

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

2. Regional Forum Opportunity – Comments from Public

Mr. Kurt Bozenmayer was in attendance to re-establish communication with Mr. Armbrister in regards to the Comprehensive Plan for Patrick County.

There were no other comments.

3. Consent Agenda

- a. ***Confirmation of Minutes of the May 22, 2025 Meeting.***
- b. ***Treasurer's Reports –March 31, 2025, April 30, 2025 and May 31, 2025.***

c. Register of administrative Reviews Under the Virginia Intergovernmental Review Process - June-August 2025

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

4. Authorize the Executive Director to Serve as a Designated Representative for WPPDC Bank Accounts

The Executive Director explained that the Executive Director position works on all the banking activities as well as with the Finance Director. It is required by Truist Bank Services that a meeting motion has occurred, and documentation is in place and has approved Mr. Armbrister as an authorized representative for their files. Once approved, then new signature cards will be issued by Truist Bank Services.

A motion was made by Mr. Ken Bowman, seconded by Mr. Tim Tatum to authorize Mr. Michael Armbrister, WPPDC Executive Director, to be an authorized representative with Truist Bank Services for the West Piedmont Planning District Commission. Upon the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

5. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director thanked the Board of Commissioners for the opportunity to return to the PDC. Mr. Armbrister noted that he has been meeting with the staff members individually over the last couple weeks and is excited about the way things are growing and moving forward. The Chairman noted the updates in the Housing Department with Mr. Sean Campbell, Deputy Director. The Fuller Center for Housing announced that there are 3 more homes in the City of Martinsville in Stony Court. Mr. Campbell stated that Housing had applied and received the second round of the last Regional Housing grant of \$1.2 million dollars, with \$160,000 for PDC Administrative funds. Those funds are now helping with a Villa Heights project in Henry County for 13 home ownership opportunities. Mr. Campbell noted that several other projects are being financed through the Housing Department, including homes with Harvest Foundation, Habitat, Landmark Asset Services and Virginia Housing. The PDC set up a separate account for the Housing Development used for Revolving Loan Funds for roughly \$360,000 in funds over a period of time.

The Executive Director updated the Broadband Project that there is now over 1,517 miles of fiber installed in the partnering counties. The project has hit the mid-point for the compliance review period in several of those projects. There are two ARC projects that are associated with Broadband that should be under contract soon. One in Patrick County and the other in the City of Martinsville. The first project has closed out in the Western portion of Patrick County with Charter Communications except for 13 locations that are on the north side of the parkway crossing. In November, once approved, we expect that Charter will connect those 13 locations.

The Executive Director met with the PDC Tourism staff this past week in discussion of improvements with PDC Tourism, how the PDC can become a DMO (Destination Management Organization), which would allow us to apply for VTC funding for the entire region.

The Executive Director noted that the MPO and PDC applied for Safe Streets for All grant that goes to the Federal Highway Administration. Because of the federal government and funding

status, that application has been on hold and the PDC has been in touch with FHWA for updates.

The Executive Director noted that Mr. Sean Campbell has been promoted to Deputy Director and has been extremely impressed with the work he completed and kept up to date to keep the PDC on track during his Interim Executive Director status.

6. Discussion: Vision and Input from Commissioner

The Chairman asked Mr. Armbrister for his input first. Mr. Armbrister noted this was a good opportunity to hear from each Board of Commissioners member to find out how the PDC can serve their locality better to make West Piedmont the best PDC in the state of Virginia.

Tim Tatum, Franklin County, Vice-Chairman-Impressed with the PDC Communication and would like to keep that strong, ongoing and active line of clear communication. Suggest that Mr. Armbrister and Mr. Campbell schedule with Administrative and City officials to meet occasionally on what or how the PDC can help their jurisdiction. Having a face with the PDC organization name is helpful.

Clayton Kendrick, Patrick County-Agreed with Mr. Tatum's statements. Only concern is the advancement of Broadband in Patrick County, to which Mr. Armbrister commented he already has a meeting set up with DHCD about the west project area.

James Turner, Patrick County-No comment

Dr. Pam Cobler, Henry County-Encouraged the Broadband Rural Virginia project area. Dr. Cobler noted that she actively consults towards disability rights resources, and it is considered within the West Piedmont PDC region.

Mr. Jim Adams, Henry County, Chairman-Noted the progress that Mr. Armbrister has made since beginning the Broadband project several years ago. Mrs. Jennifer Denton has been helping for the last 6 months on the Broadband project as well.

Jonathan Wood, Patrick County-Would like a better understanding as to what the PDC does for the counties and cities and what the counties and cities can do for the PDC. People contact him for resources, and he would like to have a better understanding of benefit and direction.

Joe Martin, City of Martinsville-Working together is crucial for each other's benefit. Better jobs, better paying jobs and better affordable housing. That is what we need to bring into this community as more medical options.

Tyler Lee, Franklin County-Would love to hear more needs and steps to better the West Piedmont Healthcare Advisory Committee. There is an expansion of Carilion Rocky Mount and Franklin Memorial that will increase the number of ER beds at Westlake which is a much larger space than what is available currently. Mr. Adams touched on the Blue Ridge Regional Airport expansion project that the WPPDC had a hand in, is now equipped to bring in larger aircraft for patient transport.

Fatemah Casey, Rocky Mount- Noted that she felt the same about Housing but just talking to people on an everyday basis about good paying jobs.

Dillard Jones, Pittsylvania County-Offered help anywhere that it is needed. Does see a lot of positive things going on.

Kathy Lawson, City of Martinsville-Expansion of the MiNet project along with the Housing projects. The PDC has worked with the city successfully in the housing programs and continues to work with several outside agencies on other projects that have been successful with so many grants.

Ken Bowman, Pittsylvania County-Communication is key. Outreach to explain to people what it is that the PDC actually does as some of the localities do not know how helpful the PDC and connecting agencies can be to them.

The Chairman made sure that everyone was getting the marketing email blast that goes out weekly and if not, then to please give information to make sure they are added to the list. The legislative agenda will be coming up soon for all localities so please note what will need to be worked on before session.

Mr. Michael Armbrister requested for anybody that has found opportunities that the PDC may be able to help, to please reach out.

7. Other Business

There was no other business.

8. Comments from Commissioners

Dr. Pam Cobler announced that Mr. Joey Arrington with Arrington Engines has been invited by NASA to drive his car at Cape Canaveral to attempt to break his own record of 244.9 mph. There have been donations, pledges and promised funds for this. Just wanted to mention this for outreach for our area. It could mean global recognition.

9. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Tim Tatum, seconded by Mrs. Kathy Lawson. Upon the vote, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.



Mr. Michael Armbrister
Executive Director