WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

of the

<u>May 28, 2026 Meeting</u>

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

PRESENT	**ABSENT**
Jim Adams, Chairman, Henry County	Justin Brown, Pittsylvania County
Kathy Lawson, Treasurer, Martinsville	
Clayton Kendrick, Patrick County	
Ken Bowman, Pittsylvania County	Dillard Jones, Pittsylvania County
Jonathan Wood, Patrick County	Lee Vogler, Danville
Ralph Casey, Rocky Mount	Nick Mitchell, Franklin County
Fatemah Casey, Rocky Mount	James Turner, City of Danville
Tim Tatum, Vice-Chairman, Franklin County	Aaron Rawls, Martinsville
Wes George, Henry County	David Rotenizer, Franklin County
Jerry Adams, Patrick County	Lucas Tuning, Rocky Mount
Joe Martin, Martinsville	

Virtual Attendance	**STAFF**
Pam Cobler, Henry County	Michael Armbrister, Executive Director
Dr. Gary Miller, Danville	Joe Bonanno, Senior Transportation Planner

In accordance with the ***West Piedmont PDC Remote Electronic Participation and All-Virtual Meeting Policy***, members attended virtually for the following reasons:
Dr. Gary Miller-Virtual-Personal matter
Pam Cobler-Virtual-Personal matter

1. <u>Call to Order and Welcome</u>

The Chairman established a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. <u>Regional Forum Opportunity – Comments from Public</u>

There were no other comments from the public.

3. <u>Consent Agenda</u>

a. Confirmation of Minutes of the March 26, 2026 Meeting.
b. Treasurer's Report – February 28, 2026.
c. Register of Administrative Reviews Under the Virginia Intergovernmental Review Process.

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. ***Consideration of Resolutions of Support for Round 7 Smart Scale Project Applications.***

Mr. Joe Bananno, Transportation Senior Planner, noted the transportation projects for Round 7 of the Smart Scale program. These applications aim to improve road safety, traffic flow, and pedestrian access through measures such as intersection reconfigurations, roadway widening, and the installation of specific traffic control designs like roundabouts, R-cuts, through-cuts, and a diverging diamond interchange. The presentation included explanations of these designs and generated discussion among commissioners regarding their effectiveness and potential challenges.

- **Franklin County:** Three projects, including intersection reconfigurations (e.g., a roundabout at Brooks Mill Road/Scruggs Road) and curve realignments on US 220.
- **Rocky Mount:** Two projects, focusing on intersection improvements (e.g., a roundabout at Route 40/Floyd Avenue) and roadway/pedestrian safety on Route 40.
- **Henry County:** Four projects (two submitted by PDC, two by Henry County), including intersection reconfigurations (through-cuts) on US 220, roadway widening on Barrows Mill Road, and an R-cut at Route 58/Preston Road.
- **City of Martinsville:** One project for intersection improvements at Commonwealth Boulevard, Liberty Street, and Market Street, including a through-cut.
- **Pittsylvania County (via MPO):** One project for Franklin Turnpike at Ridgecrest Drive, proposing a roundabout, shared-use path, and ADA upgrades.
- **Danville (via MPO):** Two projects for the Berry Hill area, including a diverging diamond interchange at Danville Expressway/Oak Ridge Farms Road and upgrading a connector road to four lanes.
- **Danville:** Four additional projects, comprising three segments of Riverside Drive improvements (sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, R-cuts, median changes) and West Main Street corridor improvements (continuous green tee, roundabout, sidewalks).
- **Discussion of Specific Traffic Control Measures:** Explanations and discussions were held regarding the functionality and implications of roundabouts, R-cuts, through-cuts, and diverging diamond interchanges.
- **Commissioner Feedback and Concerns:** Commissioners shared perspectives and raised concerns about specific intersection designs, particularly the safety of R-cuts and the complexity of the West Main Street intersection in Danville.

The Chairman discussed making a motion to vote to approve the Resolution of Support for Rocky Mount Round 7 Smart Scale separate from all other Smart Scale Resolutions.

A motion was made by Mr. Tim Tatum, seconded by Mrs. Kathy Lawson to vote separately. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Tim Tatum, seconded by Mr. Ken Bowman to approve the Resolution of Support for Rocky Mount Round 7 Smart Scale application. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Ralph Casey, seconded by Mrs. Kathy Lawson to approve Resolution of Support for Round 7 Smart Scale Smart Scale applications. After the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

5. ***Adoption of the 2026 Regional Priorities for the Virginia Community Development Block Grant Program.***

The Executive Director noted that every year, DHCD, Department of Housing and Community Development, asks the PDC's across the state to prioritize the project types in their region as well as provide a listing of potential planning grant and implementation applications that will be submitted. This year, applications were due in July. Ranked number one were economic development, infrastructure, and housing rehab projects. Ranked number two were public service projects and open submission. Those project types that were ranked number one would receive the maximum points during DHCD's review of applications. Three applications would be submitted from the West Piedmont region. All three of those projects fit within the number one priority that staff recommend.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kathy Lawson, seconded by Mr. Ralph Casey to approve the Adoption of the 2026 Regional Priorities for the Virginia Community Development Block Grant Program. Upon the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

6. ***Consideration of Resolution of Support of Reestablishing the Virginia Roanoke River Basin Advisory Committee***

The Executive Director noted that PDC's were working on a variety of water and flood planning projects. The PDC's realized that the Code of Virginia authorized the creation of the Roanoke River Basin Advisory Committee. That committee was staffed and in operation for a time, but the committee was no longer active. The resolution that the PDC's were bringing to their commissioners for approval would ask the state to pull that committee back together, provided with the staffing and the funding it needed to evaluate the water resources within the Roanoke River Basin.

The staffing would come from the state, but each PDC would appoint representatives to the committee. West Piedmont PDC would be able to appoint two commissioners or other water resources experts to serve and represent West Piedmont.

The Executive Director offered to gather more information to present to the Board of Commissioners for the next meeting and the Board agreed to table the resolution until the August meeting.

7. **Consideration of Updated CEDS Working Committee Membership**

The Executive Director noted that staff was working on the update of our CEDS, which was done every five years. The CEDS update was led by a CEDS Strategy committee, which needed to be updated. Ms. Kiana Dillard from WPPDC staff had been working on reforming the committee. That committee was a subcommittee of the commission, with the commission serving as the CEDS committee. Staff asked that the board approve the committee as presented but also let it be fluid and flexible so staff could add additional members.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kathy Lawson, seconded by Mr. Ralph Casey to approve the Consideration of Updated CEDS Working Committee Membership. Upon the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

8. ***Consideration of Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Administrative Budget***

The Executive Director noted that in April a draft of the FY27 budget was presented to the Executive Committee. The Executive Director key changes, new projects, and updates in the FY27 budget, both revenues and expenditures. The budget included a three percent cost of living increase for staff. In FY27, total revenue was estimated at $1.6 million and total expenses estimated at $1.3 million. Possible capital costs during the fiscal year may include upgrading an aging HVAC unit.

The Executive Director explained the draft FY27 budget included possible projects, and if those possible projects became actual, the commission would consider additional performance-based pay increases.

A motion was made by Mr. Tim Tatum, seconded by Mr. Wes George to adopt the Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Administrative Budget. Upon the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

9. ***Consideration of Proposed Work Program for Fiscal Year 2027***

The Executive Director noted that the annual work program was tied to the FY27 draft budget, and it was critical to ensure staff could accurately charge time. The changes to the annual work program mirrored the changes in the budget.

A motion was made by Mr. Ken Bowman, seconded by Mr. Tim Tatum to approve the Proposed Work Program for Fiscal Year 2027. Upon the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

10. ***Consideration of Fiscal Year 2027 Calendar***

The Executive Director presented the annual meeting calendar for fiscal year 2027 that outlined commission and executive committee meetings during the year as well as the holiday office closure.

A motion was made by Mr. Tim Tatum, seconded by Mrs. Kathy Lawson to approve the Fiscal Year 2027 Calendar. Upon the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

11. ***Executive Director's Report***

The Executive Director noted that the housing projects were moving forward. One of the Villa Heights houses was under contract, and a second house was expected to be under contract soon. Construction on the next houses would start soon.

The Executive Director explained recent developments with the regional broadband projects and issues with RiverStreet Networks. He proceeded to review highlights from the written executive director's report, including grant applications submitted and projects statuses.

He celebrated two WPPDC staff members. Kiana Dillard who was honored as one of the 40 Under 40 by the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce and Amanda Gray was selected to participate in the 2026 Virginia Rural Leadership Institute.

12. ***Report of Nominating Committee for Fiscal Year 2027 & Election of Officers***

The Chairman provided a report of the nominating committee, which met in April. The decision by the nominating committee recommended maintaining the same officers as fiscal year 2026. He opened the floor for additional nominations for any officer. There were no nominations from the floor.

A motion was made by Wes George, seconded by Ken Bowman to keep the Nominating Committee members the same for Fiscal Year 2027. Upon the vote, the motion carried unanimously.

13. <u>Other Business</u>

There was no other business.

14. <u>Comments from Commissioners</u>

There were several comments from commissioners related to good news in the region, including:

- There are good things happening in Martinsville,
- The vibes are inspiring in our area,
- Localities are experiencing growth in Economic Development,
- New private investment with 4,000 anticipated jobs in Pittsylvania County.

15. <u>Adjournment</u>

A motion was made by Tim Tatum, seconded by Wes George to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:21p.m.

Mr. Michael Armbrister
Executive Director