

# WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES

of the  
August 25, 2011, Meeting

held at the  
Commission Office  
1100 Madison Street, Martinsville, VA  
at 7:30 p.m.

## PRESENT

### HENRY COUNTY

Wes George  
Jim Adams  
Tommy Slaughter

### FRANKLIN COUNTY

Bobby Thompson

### ROCKY MOUNT

Jerry Greer  
Gregory Walker

### PATRICK COUNTY

Lock Boyce

### PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY

James Astin, Treasurer  
James Snead  
William Pritchett

### MARTINSVILLE

Kathy Lawson, Chair

### DANVILLE

Albert K. "Buddy" Rawley, Jr.,  
Vice-Chairman  
Gary Miller

## ABSENT

Kim Adkins, Martinsville  
Kimble Reynolds, Martinsville  
Karl Weiss, Patrick County  
Jerry Adams, Patrick County  
Ralph Casey, Rocky Mount  
Verna Graham, Danville  
Leland Mitchell, Franklin County  
Bill Brush, Franklin County

## STAFF

Aaron Burdick, Executive Director  
Leah Manning, Deputy Director  
Jacob Bullins, Administrative Assistant  
Joseph Bonanno, Regional Planner

**1. Call to Order and Welcome to Guests**

The Chairman established a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**2. Confirmation of Minutes of the May 26, 2011, Meeting—WPPDC/M(11)4**

Mr. Adams made a motion, seconded by Mr. Snead, to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2011, meeting as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Unanimously approved the minutes of the May 26, 2011, meeting as presented.

**3. Regional Forum Opportunity—Comments from Commissioners and/or Public**

There were no comments from Commissioners or the public.

**4. Introductions of Leah Manning, new Deputy Director, and Joe Bonanno, new Regional Planner**

The Executive Director introduced the Board to Leah Manning as the new Deputy Director, and Joe Bonanno as the new Regional Planner for the PDC. He mentioned that Mr. Bonanno had worked on the PDC newsletter and noted that Mr. Bonanno would work on land use and transportation issues including any Danville MPO projects.

THE BOARD:

Welcomed staff members.

**5. Points Arising from Previous Meetings**

There were none.

**6. Treasurer's Report –May 31, 2011—WPPDC/P(11)38**

Mr. Greer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Adams, to approve the May 31, 2011, Treasurer's Report as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Unanimously approved the May 31, 2011, Treasurer's Report as presented.

**7. Register of Administrative Reviews Under the Virginia Intergovernmental Review Process—July-August 2011--WPPDC/P(11)36**

THE BOARD:

Noted this informational report.

**8. WPPD Quarterly Report of Activities: State Data Affiliate Center & VEC Business & Industry Data Center Programs – Fourth Quarter – FY 2011—WPPDC/P(11)37**

The Executive Director indicated that the staff had responded to a number of requests for data/information during the past quarter. The Board paper outlined the types of requests that had been made.

THE BOARD:

Noted this informational report.

**9. WPPDC Fiscal Year 2011 Annual Report Prepared for the VA Department of Housing and Community Development in Accordance with the Regional Cooperation Act, Code of Virginia.**

The Deputy Director advised the Board that their meeting packages had included a portion of the PDC's FY 2011 Annual Report prepared for the VA Department of Housing and Community Development, as required by the Regional Cooperation Act of the Code of Virginia. She reviewed the four major elements of the report that had been submitted to DHCD on August 17, 2011. DHCD provides this report for all PDCs to the General Assembly bi-annually. This information is required in order for the Commission to begin receiving quarterly payments from the State.

The Executive Director reported that, while in attendance at the July VAPDC Conference, legislative assistants advised VAPDC to look for ways to improve this reporting methodology in order for the bi-annual report to be a more valuable representation of what PDCs do across the Commonwealth. He added that DHCD would also examine methods to improve the quality of the report that is presented to the Virginia General Assembly. The Executive Director referred the Board to a contract that was available for review and would require the Board's action. He explained the scheduling of payments as well, noting that payments would be made on a quarterly basis for FY 2012. Mr. Rawley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thompson to accept the contract from DHCD in order to receive payments from the State. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Unanimously accepted the contract through DHCD for FY 2012.

**10. Danville Metropolitan Planning Association Public Participation Plan—WPPDC/P(11)39**

The Executive Director advised that, following an evaluation period by VDOT and the Danville Transit System staff, the Danville MPO Public Participation Plan had been adopted by the MPO Policy Board at its August 24, 2011, meeting. He briefed the Board on the document, noting that this Plan ensured that the public had open access to MPO decisions, activities, and plans. The Executive Director explained that the Plan had to be reviewed periodically, primarily due to the Danville Transit System's triennial audit at this time, and that this amended version of the Public Participation Plan would keep the document up-to-date for SAFETEA-LU purposes. He further noted that FHWA and VDOT had reviewed the Plan and found it acceptable.

Mr. Astin stated that the Executive Committee had recommended in its earlier session that the Plan be adopted by the Board. Mr. Snead made a motion, seconded by Mr. George to adopt the Danville MPO Public Participation Plan as amended. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**THE BOARD:**

Unanimously approved the adoption of the Danville MPO Public Participation Plan as amended.

**11. Status Report on Phase III Development of Regional Water Supply Plan in Conjunction with Virginia Department of Environmental Quality**

The Executive Director reported that each of the participating localities, including the towns, had received a briefing packet from the consulting firm of Draper Aden to adopt the Regional Water Supply Plan as well as the Drought Response Plan, any contingency plans, and any locally adopted drought ordinances. He explained that the Plan must be adopted and submitted by the November 2, 2011, deadline. He also indicated that by doing the Plan on a regional basis, this was very cost-effective for the localities. The Executive Director reviewed the various aspects of the Plan such as the water sources, water use, and water conservation practices; he advised that this would not impact the individual localities with the adoption by neighboring localities and would not limit future water sources for each locality. He noted that the information was current as of October 2010, but there were a few small changes to the Plan such as Patrick County's water system and the fact that Martinsville had a larger capacity since many industries in the City had closed. He also commented that the Plan must be reviewed every five years, with a requirement by DEQ to re-submit the Plan for review every ten years.

The Executive Director stated that following adoption by the local governments, this would become part of the State Plan and that both PDC staff and Draper Aden would be available to assist or present information to the local governing bodies, as requested.

**THE BOARD:**

Noted this report.

**12. Status Report on Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan in Conjunction with Virginia Department of Emergency Management**

The Executive Director informed the Board that the consulting firm of Dewberry had developed a Hazard Mitigation informational brochure for review and comment by local government members including local Public Safety Directors. He reported that the Plan was under review by FEMA and awaiting official approval so that the local governments could adopt the Plan by this fall. He further stated that this would call for more public hearings for adoption by local governing bodies and that the final Plan must be adopted by November 21, 2011. The Executive Director added that if the Plan is not adopted by a locality, FEMA would not provide any grant funds to that particular locality.

**THE BOARD:**

Noted this informational report.

**13. Update and Reports on Regional Projects/Activities Related to:****a. U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA):**

The Executive Director expressed concern over the delayed arrival of the contract with EDA, noting that other Economic Development Districts had not yet received a contract, but all were instructed by EDA to proceed forward with any business. He continued that the PDC staff had worked to develop the CEDS Strategy Committee membership and that the first meeting date had been scheduled for September 27, 2011. He also discussed items that would be presented and reviewed by the CEDS Committee at the first meeting and how staff would proceed with other information that would be provided to the CEDS Committee. The Executive Director reviewed the structure of the CEDS Strategy Committee, stating that the Committee would consist of a majority of private-sector individuals. He gave an overview of the process for the next annual CEDS update and stated that the document would have to be advertised for public review under the new EDA guidelines. The Executive Director also noted the amount of EDA funding for the region as a result of the diligent work of Mrs. Hullett over her years as Deputy Director/Economic Development Planner for the PDC.

The Chair stated that the newly formed CEDS Strategy Committee must have a Chair and Vice-Chair and that the Executive Committee, in its earlier meeting, had nominated Mr. Thompson as Chairman and Mr. Rawley as Vice-Chairman. Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Snead, to approve the nominations as noted. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**THE BOARD:**

Unanimously approved the nominations of Mr. Thompson as Chairman and Mr. Rawley as Vice-Chairman of the CEDS Strategy Committee.

**b. Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization in Conjunction with the VA Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA):**

The Executive Director reviewed the additional amendments adopted by the MPO Policy Board at its August 24, 2011, meeting that included an amendment to the 2035 Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and the FY 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for a MPO project that involved Mount Cross Road in Danville. He explained that these amendments would provide funding for spot improvements and access management on the Mount Cross Road segment from Lowes Drive to the West Danville Corporate Limits. He indicated that the amendment to the CLRP would provide for a total of \$6 million in funding; the TIP amendment would include \$600,000 for preliminary engineering for the project.

Mr. Rawley reported that he had contacted the Danville City Engineer to review the project funding and specifications, noting that the available funding was a result of surplus MPO funds from previous projects that came in under bid.

The Executive Director also updated the Board regarding activities for the four MPO Corridor Studies currently underway in conjunction with URS Corporation. He noted that, in addition to the Mount Cross Road project, other projects included: a connector between Route 863 and US Route 58, a study of improvements on Route 750; an access management plan for Route 58 West; and a trail connector study between two existing trails (Danville Riverwalk Trail and Ringgold Depot Trail in Pittsylvania County).

**THE BOARD:**

Noted this information.

**14. Legislative Letter Review: Report on Year 2012 General Assembly Legislative Letter—WPPDC/P(11)40**

The Executive Director provided an overview of items for review of the FY 2011 Legislative letter that was included in the Board package. He stated that staff wanted to give the Board and local administrators sufficient time to review and comment on any modifications and requested that Board members provide additional input in the coming months, including changes, deletions, etc. Dr. Miller commented that the City of Danville had already gone on record in support of Item 4 in the letter, which stated not to restrict local revenue authority, and further commented on Item 9 in support of the expansion of sales tax proceeds to localities and how they could be utilized by local governments. The Executive Director commented on the timing of this letter review in conjunction with the Governor's report of surplus funds within the State.

**THE BOARD:**

Noted this information.

**15. Highlights of Commission and Staff Activities; Other Business and Reports**

• **Appalachian Regional Commission/Department of Housing & Community Development**

The Executive Director mentioned that staff had attended an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Workshop in Abingdon in July and provided information regarding the ARC grants and FY 2011-2014 funding for the ARC localities of Martinsville, Henry, and Patrick Counties. He also discussed the internal restructuring of the Department of Housing and Community Development with a new division.

• **Environmental Protection Agency – Wetlands and Streams Mitigation**

The Executive Director advised that he had attended an EPA Wetlands and Streams Mitigation webinar conference, noting that new wetland mitigation rules have been developed for local governments. He reviewed some of the regulation changes that would be implemented by EPA. Some discussion took place among the Board members regarding these changes and the impact on local governments.

• **Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions Meeting**

The Executive Director shared the various topics of discussion that took place at the VAPDC Conference held in July. He emphasized that the biggest theme of the Conference was "Regionalism" and how to deal with some of the financial problems that localities have faced. He added that, in addition to the recommendation to improve the DHCD reporting methods to the General Assembly, PDCs should work more closely with key players, identify services that are best delivered regionally, and develop incentives for regional priorities.

- **Virginia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (VAMPO)**

The Executive Director informed the Board that he had attended a VAMPO meeting in July that outlined how MPOs would work with the CTB in developing the Six-Year Improvement Program. In addition, he stated that other MPOs in the Commonwealth would follow Bob Dowd's lead to draft letters requesting that the federal legislators oppose language in the National Transportation Bill to eliminate MPOs with populations less than 200,000. The Executive Director advised the Board of responses the PDC had received from local delegation members in support of the opposition to eliminate the smaller MPOs.

THE BOARD:

Noted this briefing.

- **Resolution of Recognition for Joan Hullett, Retired Deputy Director/Economic Development Planner**

With the July 31<sup>st</sup> retirement of Mrs. Hullett, the Chair noted the Resolution of Recognition for Mrs. Hullett's dedicated service of more than 40 years with the PDC and pointed out that a copy of the resolution would be displayed along with Bob Dowd's Resolution of Recognition and photograph. Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rawley, to approve the Resolution of Recognition and Appreciation for Mrs. Hullett's dedicated service to the PDC. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Unanimously approved the Resolution of Recognition and Appreciation for Mrs. Hullett's service of more than forty years to the PDC.

- **West Piedmont PDC Newsletter**

The Chair continued with the discussion of the newly created newsletter that Mr. Bonanno had developed. The Board commented favorably and gave approval of the newsletter.

THE BOARD:

Unanimously approved the newsletter and instructed the Executive Director to distribute it to the member local government managers.

**16. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Aaron Burdick  
Executive Director