

**WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES
of the
June 25, 2009, Meeting**

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

PRESENT

HENRY COUNTY

Paula Burnette
Wes George

PATRICK COUNTY

Karl Weiss

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Marshall Blair
Bobby Thompson

MARTINSVILLE

Kimble Reynolds, Vice-Chairman
Kathy Lawson

ROCKY MOUNT

Ralph Casey
Jerry Greer

DANVILLE

Harry Kolendrianos, Chairman
Albert K. "Buddy" Rawley, jr.

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY

James Astin, Treasurer

ABSENT

William Pritchett, Pittsylvania County
Henry Davis, Pittsylvania County
Gary Miller, Danville
Jim Adams, Henry County
Leland Mitchell, Franklin County
Roger Seale, Rocky Mount
Ron Knight, Patrick County
Jerry Adams, Patrick County
Kim Adkins, Martinsville

STAFF

Robert W. Dowd, AICP, Executive Director
Joan Hullett, Deputy Director

GUESTS

Art Powers, USDA Rural Development
Cindy Bomar, USDA Rural Development
Dan Sleeper, Pittsylvania County Administrator

1. Call to Order and Welcome to Guests

A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m., with guests present welcomed.

2. Confirmation of Minutes of the May 28, 2009, Meeting—WPPDC/M(09)4

Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rawley, to approve the minutes of the May 28, 2009, meeting as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Unanimously approved the minutes of the May 28, 2009, meeting as presented.

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

Mr. Astin noted that the Executive Director had recently completed most of the coursework toward maintaining his AICP certification through the American Institute for Certified Planners.

There were no other comments.

4. Points Arising from Previous Meetings

The Executive Director noted that the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy had been submitted to the Philadelphia Regional Office of the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration.

THE BOARD:

Noted this report.

5. Treasurer's Report –May 31, 2009

Mr. Thompson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blair, to approve the May 31, 2009, Treasurer's Report as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Unanimously approved the May 31, 2009, Treasurer's Report as presented.

6. Register of Administrative Reviews Under the Virginia Intergovernmental Review Process—June 2009--WPPDC/P(09)40

THE BOARD:

Noted this informational report.

7. West Piedmont Planning District Quarterly Report of Activities: State Data Affiliate Center & VEC Labor Market Information Service Programs – Fourth Quarter – Fiscal Year 2009—WPPDC/P(09)41

The Executive Director reported that the PDC staff had provided technical assistance with 32 data requests during the past quarter, many of which involved assistance to the local governments. It was also noted that the PDC's website is now available and includes the most recent statistics available to assist with public and private sector data requests.

THE BOARD:

Noted this informational report.

8. Intergovernmental Review:

- **Applicant: Virginia Department of Transportation**

Project: VDOT Fiscal Year 2010 State Transportation Planning, Research (SPR) Work Program--WPPDC/P(09)38

VDOT had submitted its transportation planning and research program for Fiscal Year 2010 to the Federal Highway Administration, Richmond Office. Major tasks for the VDOT program involved: the Statewide Highway Needs Assessment; Statewide Multi-modal Long-Range Plan; Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. A primary mission was to provide the technical tools for determining the deployment of available resources for transportation in the state. Good financial planning is a must in order to provide coordination and control of every transportation-related activity. The VDOT planning effort typically includes developing continuing updates to various small, urban area long-range transportation plans such as those developed in the past for the Rocky Mount, Stuart, and the Martinsville-Henry County areas. The state staff may make field visits regarding special projects and issues in addition to the VDOT Headquarters and District offices' in-house analyses and studies that consume principal blocks of work effort. The Department staff also works continuously with the Danville MPO staff and City and County staffs to provide planning assistance respective to the Danville-Pittsylvania County Metropolitan Planning Organization Study Area. It was noted that VDOT's work with the MPOs may include: travel demand model forecasting for highway projects to aid development of constrained long-range transportation plans, input on environmental studies, review of projects for plan conformance, evaluation of special traffic situations, consideration of transportation system management options, long-range

planning and surveillance, and coordination with consultants and local area representatives in development of various planning tasks, including long-range plan development. Other key efforts include the state multimodal transportation plan; travel demand assistance and modeling; highway needs assessment; the state highway plan; GIS program on-call assists; rural transportation planning program, including efforts in association with West Piedmont PDC. Much work now involves the statewide and regional rural long-range transportation plan development.

The Department also works with the Virginia Transportation Research Council headquartered at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, to develop a number of research efforts each year, which are designed to aid in improving the statewide transportation system network, as well as the enhancement of safety across the system to the extent possible.

Board paper attachments presented an *abstract* of the Program submitted to the PDC for review; programs of specific nature regarding other regions, specifically, may have been edited out of the text to reduce length of the document. The cost summary for the planning program was: SPR: 1A--\$34,935,547; 1B--\$1,450,000; 1C--\$10,436,981; SPR: II--4,346,546 (Research Council effort); the total was \$51,169,074. Adding the NCRP program at \$968,414 the grand total came to: \$52,137,488.

Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Burnette, to make a favorable comment on the application. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to make a favorable comment on the project.

9. Intergovernmental Review:

- **Applicant: Danville-Pittsylvania Regional Industrial Facilities Authority and County of Pittsylvania**
Project: Site Development at Cane Creek Centre—U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, American Reinvestment & Recovery (ARRA) Stimulus Grant Request--WPPDC/P(09)42

The Danville-Pittsylvania Regional Industrial Facilities Authority and the County of Pittsylvania County planned to submit an American Reinvestment & Recovery Act (ARRA) grant request in the amount of \$2,417,220 to the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration for site improvements on Lots 3 and 9 at Cane Creek Centre, located in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. Matching funds in the amount of \$426,568 had been requested from the Virginia Tobacco Commission's Reserve Fund Program. Cane Creek Centre is located just east of the Danville City limits in the Ringgold community between U.S. Route 58, State Routes 729, 730, and 733. The property is owned by the Danville-Pittsylvania Regional Industrial Facility Authority. The Centre development had been occurring in phases. A 2,900-foot access road with water and gas lines had been constructed off Barkers Road (SR 733) to serve a portion of the Industrial Centre. The proposed project included preparation of Lots 3 and 9 at the Industrial Centre, along with 2,141 feet of sanitary sewer to serve Lots 3 and 9. The sewer line would be owned by the County of Pittsylvania and operated and maintained by the Pittsylvania County Service Authority. The Master Plan for the project noted that conceptual grading plans had been developed showing an area reserved for storm water management for each individual lot. Detailed cost estimates were included with the Board paper. This is a "shovel-ready" project. Design has been completed, and it is anticipated that the solicitation of bids and awarding of contracts could take place in 45 days. The construction period is estimated at 240-300 calendar days.

The applicants already had a Department of the Army Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and a Virginia Water Protection (VWP) Individual Permit from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. The Cane Creek Centre Master Plan was prepared by Dewberry & Davis, Incorporated, of Danville (dated December 17, 2004; revised: January 20, 2005). A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was prepared by Dewberry & Davis, Incorporated, of Danville (dated March 8, 2002); a Phase I Archaeological Survey was prepared by Dewberry & Davis, Incorporated, of Danville (dated 2002).

It was noted that the proposed project was a Priority #1 project in the 2009 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy approved by the WPPD Board of Commissioners at its meeting on May 28, 2009. The proposed investment would address a number of goals and strategies of the CEDS document: encouraging regional diversity and reducing the dependence on textiles, furniture, and wood-related products; promoting advanced technology within the region; supporting development of regional industrial parks as well as local industrial parks with regional impact; reducing the regional unemployment rates; continue to provide public water and wastewater systems in all areas where such systems are deemed economically feasible to meet the needs of existing and planned commercial and industrial growth.

Mr. Dan Sleeper, Pittsylvania County Administrator, was present to respond to questions concerning the application.

Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rawley, to make a favorable comment on the application. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to make a favorable comment on the project.

10. Town of Chatham: Application for USDA Funds for Water and Sewer Improvement Plan

The Executive Director explained that this item had been placed on the agenda to let the Board know about the Town of Chatham's need for assistance in developing a water and sewer improvement plan. The Town had requested assistance from Rural Development to help finance the initial step of getting a plan for physical improvements put together. The work would entail developing a water system master plan that would include system mapping, hydraulic system modeling, water quality assessment, overall system condition assessment, leak detection program, review of rate analysis and funding, audit for deficiencies and engineering report. For the sewer system plan, there would be system mapping, sewer system assessment, inflow and infiltration study, rate analysis and funding review, audit for deficiencies, and preliminary engineering report. The initial funding needed was \$34,000.

Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rawley, to make a favorable comment on the project. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to make a favorable comment on the project.

11. Presentation by USDA Rural Development Staff –Art Powers, Area Specialist, and Cindy Bomar, Area Specialist

Mr. Powers and Ms. Bomar provided the members with a folder of information about a variety of USDA Rural Development grant and loan programs, after which they presented a Powerpoint presentation outlining information on programs that may be of interest to eligible localities in the Region. In the presentation, they had included slides with a number of programs that had been undertaken in the region utilizing USDA Rural Development funds. Mr. Thompson joined them in highlighting a number of very successful projects funded at Ferrum College by USDA Rural Development, noting an increase in enrollment due to this assistance from USDA Rural Development.

THE BOARD:

Expressed appreciation to Mr. Powers and Ms. Bomar for attending the meeting and making this very informative presentation.

12. Status Report on Regional Water Supply Planning Activities in Conjunction with VA Department of Environmental Quality

The Executive Director advised that the staff had completed a draft final contract for the final and Third Phase of the planning effort to complete the Regional Water Supply Plan. Staff would ask Draper Aden Associates of Blacksburg to review and sign the document with the intent that work would get underway in July.

THE BOARD:

Noted this informational report.

13. Update on Roanoke River Basin Transfer

The Executive Director advised that, as directed by the Board at its last meeting, he had sent a letter to the Kerr Lake Water Regional System and other North Carolina entities expressing the Commission's concerns for continuing efforts to transfer Roanoke River water outside the basin, in this case to the Neuse and Tar River system.

He also referred Board members to a newsletter from the Roanoke River Basin Association that had been included in the Board package. This item noted the Basin Association's opposition to any interbasin transfers of water that would have a negative impact on the people of the Basin. The Association noted that it seeks to protect basin water resources and growth potential, as both are essential for environmental protection and economic vitality. It also noted that jurisdictions in both North Carolina and Virginia are in the midst of developing local water supply plans and that these plans should provide for the latest forecasts of water supply and demand which they felt are needed due to the recent trend of lower river inflows and water supply for the communities in both the Virginia and NC mid and lower Roanoke River Basin areas. It further stated that it was, therefore firmly

and respectfully, the position of the Association that no new petitions should be granted until the Water Supply Plans have been updated or completed, submitted, and proper due diligence has been accomplished on them. They also believe no proper statement of impact could be made prior to that action being completed.

The Executive Director also advised that he had sent a letter expressing concerns for the findings of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in its report on re-licensing the hydroelectric facility operations; however, he had not had any feedback concerning FERC's activities following their recent public meeting in Franklin County that he attended and provided testimony.

THE BOARD:

Noted this informational report.

14. Updates and Reports on Regional Projects/Activities Related to:

• **U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration**

It was reported that the staff had been working with Pittsylvania County and the Danville-Pittsylvania Regional Industrial Facilities Authority on development of their ARRA stimulus grant.

• **Rural Transportation Planning Program in conjunction with the VA Department of Transportation**

- The Executive Director referred the members to a letter in their Board package noting the plans for a meeting in Roanoke County at Hidden Valley High School on the VTRANS long-range planning update to the Year 2035. He noted that the information included directions to a website. The PDC staff had worked with VDOT extensively to publicize this meeting and the website.

THE BOARD:

Noted this informational report.

- The Board was referred to a resolution supporting the use of rail way right of ways in Virginia to develop and extend Virginia and its localities trail system. Staff had included an email discussing the development of trails in rail corridors to give some background to the draft resolution that the staff had put together to be compatible with those be adopted elsewhere. With regard to the resolution supporting the use of railway right of ways to develop and extend trails, Mrs. Burnette noted the importance for localities to keep in mind that, once rails are abandoned, they cannot be used for trails in the future. Following discussion, Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Burnette, to adopt the resolution as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Unanimously approved a resolution requesting that (a) as the Commonwealth of Virginia funds rail expansion in the future, enhancement and renovation projects, bike and pedestrian accommodations – rails with trails – shall be required as an integral component of these projects and the Commonwealth of Virginia shall embrace a true multi-modal design philosophy for current and future rails projects, including the Southeast High Speed, Crescent, and Heartland Rail Corridors and (b) that the Commonwealth of Virginia work with other states to support and promote the extension of these trails to create a multi-state network of trails which would benefit citizens throughout the United States for generations in the future. [See attached resolution.]

- The Executive Director distributed a letter dated June 23rd from Delegate Charles Poindexter, requesting comments on a request to him from the New River Valley Planning District Commission concerning a restudy of the Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements to better address the land development conditions presented in rural Virginia. At the Executive Committee's earlier session, it was decided to recommend to the Board that the Executive Director request that the county administrators who were also contacted on the issue be asked to submit a copy of their opinions to him so that he could compile a response on a timely basis to Delegate Poindexter. In addition, the Director would be able to respond on his own if the response to Delegate Poindexter was needed before the Board convened again. Mrs. Burnette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blair, to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously for the Executive Director to request that the county administrators who were also contacted on the issue concerning the Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements in Delegate Charles Poindexter's June 23, 2009, letter be asked to submit a copy of their opinions so that the Executive Director could compile a response on a timely basis to Delegate Poindexter. In addition, the Director was authorized to be able to respond on his own if the response to Delegate Poindexter was needed before the Board convened again.

- The Executive Director called attention to a letter, a copy of which was included in the Board package, sent to the Commonwealth Transportation Board in support of the various member

localities desires for a list of improvements for the Commonwealth's transportation system in our region. He noted that the list was basically the same as what the Commission had been submitting in the past in respect to project contents.

THE BOARD:

Noted this informational report.

- o The Executive Director briefed the Board on a letter he had received in regard to the State's Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements legislation that became effective March 9, 2009, in which the PDC had been requested to supply GIS or geographic information on this area's demarcated growth centers. He presented maps which basically updated the Growth Centers that had been included in the PDC's Regional Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan development and explained the changes that had been made. Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rawley, to support the changes in the Growth Center Map Boundaries and that the maps be reviewed by the Transportation Planning Technical Advisory Committee for review as well. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to support the changes in the Growth Center Map Boundaries developed for the Regional Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan and that the maps be reviewed by the Transportation Planning Technical Advisory Committee for review as well.

- ***Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization Assistance Program in conjunction with the VA Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration***

The Executive Director reported that he had been working with the MPO's consultant and VDOT staff in coordinating a Public Meeting on July 22 to present preliminary findings and conditions as a necessary step in developing the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan.

THE BOARD:

Noted this informational report.

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

The Executive Director reported that the 75th anniversary of the opening of the Blue Ridge Parkway was coming up. He noted that he wanted to know if the Commission would like to be part of and support the efforts to publicize the anniversary. He further noted that, if there were money support involved, he would need to come back to the Board for further discussion. Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Greer, for the Commission to be part of and support the efforts to publicize the anniversary, with the Executive Director to come back to the Board for further discussion if financial support were requested. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously for the Commission to be part of and support the efforts to publicize the anniversary, with the Executive Director to come back to the Board for further discussion if financial support were requested.

The Executive Director advised that he and the Deputy Director had attended a meeting of Local Development District staffs for Virginia's Appalachian Regional Commission area. The meeting, held in Abingdon, was sponsored by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

He also reported that he had solicited expressions of interest or proposals from CPA firms to conduct an audit of the agency's financial records and activities for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009.

THE BOARD:

Noted these reports.

16. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Robert W. Dowd, AICP
Executive Director