

WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES

of the
October 22, 2009, Meeting

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

PRESENT

HENRY COUNTY

Jim Adams
Wes George
Paula Burnette

PATRICK COUNTY

Karl Weiss
Ron Knight

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY

James Astin, Treasurer
Henry Davis

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Leland Mitchell
Bobby Thompson
Marshall Blair

ROCKY MOUNT

Ralph Casey
Roger Seale
Jerry Greer

MARTINSVILLE

Kimble Reynolds, Jr., Vice-Chairman
Kathy Lawson

ABSENT

Harry Kolendrianos, Chairman
Kim Adkins, Martinsville
William Pritchett, Pittsylvania County
Jerry Adams, Patrick County
Buddy Rawley, Danville
Gary P. Miller, Danville

STAFF

Robert W. Dowd, AICP, Executive Director
Joan Hullett, Assistant Director
Tammy Moss, Administrative Assistant

GUESTS

Larry Saunders, CPA, Larry Saunders & Associates

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Vice-Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and welcomed Mr. Larry Saunders, CPA, of Larry Saunders & Associates.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Mr. Jim Adams made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Lawson, to approve the minutes of the September 27, 2009, meeting. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the September 27, 2009, meeting.

3. REGIONAL FORUM OPPORTUNITY—COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND/OR COMMISSIONERS

There were no comments from the public and/or Commissioners.

4. POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

There were none.

5. WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION INFORMATION CENTER: QUARTERLY REPORT OF ACTIVITIES: STATE DATA AFFILIATE CENTER AND VEC BUSINESS & INDUSTRY DATA CENTER PROGRAMS—FIRST QUARTER – FY 2010 – WPPDC/P(09)64

THE BOARD:

Noted this informational report.

6. TREASURER'S REPORTS: JULY 31, 2009—WPPDC/P(09)50 and AUGUST 30, 2009—WPPDC/P(09)51

Mr. Seale made a motion, seconded by Mr. Casey, to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to approve the July 31, 2009, and August 30, 2009, Treasurer's Reports as presented.

7. AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE COMMISSION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2009—LARRY SAUNDERS, CPA—WPPDC/P(09)55

The Planning District Commission, as a subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, is required to conduct an annual audit of the Commission's finances and financial conditions, which can include matters such as compliance, internal control, schedule of revenue and expenses, schedules of allocated costs, fringe benefits, and federal financial assistance. A copy of the Auditor's Report of all Commission accounts for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2009, as prepared by the Certified Public Accountant firm of Larry Saunders & Associates, CPAs, was distributed with the meeting agenda. Mr. Saunders was present and noted that, in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards, there were no findings related to the financial statements of the Commission. He also advised that there were no findings or questioned costs for Federal Awards in conjunction with the Audit of the Commission. The audit had followed the regulations found under Government Auditing Standards Board Section 34 rules. Mr. Saunders commended Ms. Tammy Moss, the Commission Bookkeeper, on the excellent job she does in keeping the Commission's financial records.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee had voted unanimously to recommend that the Board accept the Auditor's Report for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2009.

Mr. Jim Adams made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to accept the Auditor's Report for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2009, as presented.

8. REGISTER OF ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS UNDER THE VIRGINIA INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS – OCTOBER 2009 – WPPDC/P(09)65

THE BOARD:

Noted this report.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REVIEW: REQUEST FROM VA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY FOR REVIEW OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PROJECT—GUARDRAIL REPLACEMENT AND INSTALLATION PROJECT—WPPDC/P(09)66

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality had requested the Commission's review and comment on an Environmental Assessment Report for guardrail replacement and installation project on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Department of the Interior's National Park Service was proposing to replace deteriorated guardrail that does not meet current crashworthiness criteria along the Parkway. Due to aging, wear and tear, and weathering, the guardrails need

periodic replacement. Certain locations along the Parkway had been identified as meeting the requirements for the addition of new guardrail to address current safety standard at such locations as tunnel openings, stone masonry walls, bridge wing walls, parapet walls and roadside fill slopes. Two alternatives were considered in the Environmental Assessment: 1) the no actions alternative would maintain all current management practices and levels of treatment for the resources and 2) the preferred alternative under which a consistent, comprehensive, and adaptive approach would be used to maintain roadside safety while protecting, to the maximum extent possible, the Parkway's significant historical and environmental resources. The no action alternative would have moderate, long-term, park-wide adverse effects on the Parkway resources: the cumulative effects would be moderate, long-term and adverse. The preferred alternative would have minor to moderate, long-term, local adverse effects on the Parkway resources; the cumulative effects would be minor to moderate, log-term, local and adverse. The report considered the following topics in the environmental assessment report: Soils; Special Status Species; Cultural Resources including Structures and Cultural Landscapes; Visitor Safety; Visitor Experience; Park Operations. Topics dismissed from further analysis included: Topography; Air Quality; Wildlife; Geological Resources; Prime and Unique Farmland; Soundscape Management; Lightscape Management; Vegetation; Water Quality and Quantity; Marine or Estuarine Resources; Wetlands; Floodplains; Land Use; Non-native Species Introduction or Promotion; Socioeconomic Environment; Environmental Justice; Energy Requirements and Conservation Potential; Other Agency or Tribal Land Use Plans; Urban Quality; Archaeological Resources; Ethnographic Resources; Indian Trust Resources; and Museum Collections.

Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Casey, to make a favorable comment to the VA Department of Environmental Quality on the Environmental Impact Report for the review of the US Department of the Interior, National Park Service Project for guardrail replacement and installation. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to make a favorable comment on the proposed project.

10. INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW: COMMONWEALTH CROSSING BUSINESS CENTRE—HENRY COUNTY—WPPDC/P(09)67

Henry County had submitted an application to the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration for \$1,720,000 in funding to provide water and wastewater collection infrastructure to serve the Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre (CCBC) in Henry County. The County has funding commitments from the Small Business Administration in the amount of \$800,000 and the Virginia Tobacco Commission in the amount of \$1,720,000. Local funds would also provide \$60,000 for the project. CCBC is a 730-acre industrial site off U.S. Route 220 near the Virginia-North Carolina line. The park's location should be attractive to industries needing rail access, since rail tracks border the property, and fast access to Piedmont Triad International Airport and Interstates 40 and 85 in North Carolina. The park is owned by the Henry County Industrial Development Authority. The project budget breakdown would be as follows: Administrative and Legal Expenses, \$67,000; Land, structures, rights-of-way, appraisals, etc., \$118,000; Architectural and Engineering Fees, \$274,000; Construction, \$3,519,550; Contingencies, \$321,450. The total project cost would be \$4,300,000.

The project would include installation of approximately 27,550 linear feet of 12-inch waterline along existing state roads from the existing water system at Magna Vista High School to U.S. Route 220 near Ridgeway and across U.S. 220 to connect to the existing PSA water system in Ridgeway. A 12-inch line would extend south along U.S. Route 220 from this new line to Reservoir Road at the CCBC. Fiber optic conduit would also be run along the 27,550 linear feet of waterline.

The entire wastewater collection system serving CCBC is based on gravity flows. The proposed wastewater collection lines would be laid out in a pattern that would maximize coverage and therefore serve the largest acreage in CCBC. The main wastewater collection line parallels Patterson Branch and a creek that drains to Patterson Branch beyond Martinsville Reservoir. Downstream of the CCBC, the wastewater would be conveyed to the existing wastewater collection system via a 12-inch gravity sewer that would parallel Marrowbone Creek. The wastewater collection system in and downstream of the CCBC would be owned and operated by the Henry County PSA. The proposed system connects to the existing system approximately 26,050 linear feet to the northeast along Marrowbone Creek.

The project is included as a Priority 1 project in the 2009 CEDS document approved by the WPPD Board.

Mrs. Burnette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Astin, 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 proposed project.

11. INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW: APPLICATION TO USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FUNDING FOR THE ACQUISITION OF EQUIPMENT TO SERVE THE FRANKLIN COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER—WPPDC/P(09)68

Franklin County was applying to the US Department of Agriculture's Rural Development agency for funding to assist in the equipment of the new Government Center in Rocky Mount. The total cost of the project was \$180,680.30; it was anticipated that Rural Development may award \$50,000, with the County financing the balance of \$130,680.30. Since the last office space for County operations was built, the population had increased 46 percent and, with this change, the need had grown for more core services, which had over the years, forced operations into a number of separate buildings, negatively impacting customer service and handicap access to important County Programs. Location of most of the core services into one building would allow the public to be better served by a single point of contact, meeting a majority of the public's needs. The County needed to assure that services could be maintained in the event of an emergency and that its leadership has communications to make decisions and could quickly direct needed resources and responses.

The new Government Center is a 50,000 square foot building that is an adaptive reuse project to rehabilitate a vacant store in Rocky Mount. This facility would house the following core services for the County: the County Administrator; Board of Supervisors; Treasurer; Commissioner of the Revenue; Development Services; Voter Registrar; and Finance and Information Technology. Equipment was needed for the building to ensure that the building could continue to function to house mission critical services of the County even with loss of power so that the Public Safety and 'seat of government' functions could be maintained. The equipment would allow redundant Internet connections to be provided to sustain Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) phones, cell phone coverage and computer access to be maintained. It would also provide fax connectivity and a back-up computer server to assure core services continue to be delivered. The following lists the principal equipment to be acquired with the USDA Rural Development and County funds: a backup generator; Alcatel wireless equipment; Cisco analog voice gateway; APC UPS; fiber connectivity; server for virtualization; redundancy provision for core network switch; and cell phone signal booster system.

Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mitchell, 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 proposed project.

12. CONSIDERATION OF RE-ADOPTION OF WPPD DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY STATEMENT – 2010--WPPDC/P(09)59 and CONSIDERATION OF RE-ADOPTION OF WPPD AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN--2010--WPPDC/P(09)60

As part of the Economic Development Administration planning grant anticipated for submission to EDA in 2010 by the PDC, a Certification of Drug-Free Workplace Requirements was needed as required by the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988. In order to comply with the Act and to maintain an updated policy statement, the staff had reviewed the current policy statement and found that no changes were required.

It was also noted that, on less than a biennial basis, the Commission staff is responsible for reviewing the PDC's Affirmative Action Plan and reporting to the Board any necessary changes and subsequently present a plan or revised plan for renewal adoption. Upon reviewing the document, it had been determined that no changes were necessary at this time.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board re-adopt the WPPD Drug-Free Workplace Policy Statement and WPPD Affirmative Action Plan without modifications.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Seale, to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to re-adopt (a) the WPPD Drug-Free Workplace Policy Statement for 2010 without modifications and (b) the WPPD Affirmative Action Plan for 2010 without modifications.

13. ANNUAL APPLICATION FOR PLANNING FUNDS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION—WPPDC/P(09)57

In July 1992, the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, announced the designation of the West Piedmont Planning District as an Economic Development District under the provisions of Title IV of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended. In its capacity as an Economic Development District, the Planning District Commission is eligible to receive planning grant monies from the Economic Development Administration. This grant requires up to a dollar-for-dollar match, which is allocated from the PDC funds.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board adopt the resolution of intent as presented to apply for EDA funds for the period from April 1, 2010, through March 31, 2011, and

to allocate Planning District Commission funds for the required match up to a dollar-for-dollar for an EDA Planning Grant.

Mrs. Lawson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to adopt the resolution of intent as presented to apply for EDA funds for the period from April 1, 2010, through March 31, 2011, and to allocate Planning District Commission funds for the required match up to a dollar-for-dollar for an EDA Planning Grant.

14. AUTHORIZATION TO APPLY FOR RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ASSISTANCE FUNDS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011—WPPDC/P(09)56

The Executive Director noted that the resolution included with the Board paper, if approved, would be included with an application to the Virginia Department of Transportation to obtain a Fiscal Year 2011 portion of funds the Department is allocating during the Fiscal Year 2011 for planning district commissions to use in continued development of a rural (non-MPO) transportation planning program. The grant request would include \$58,000 from the Department's SPR funds available and \$14,500 from the Commission in matching amounts, plus any additional amounts in carryover funds to Fiscal Year 2011 from Fiscal Year 2010 that remain unexpended and found to qualify for carryover by the Department. The funds expected from VDOT would be included in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2011 WPPDC budget and work program for personnel, indirect costs, and direct costs related to personnel costs in carrying out the program preparations. VDOT had previously allowed limited expenses for materials, software, and hardware to be used in transportation planning and the final application may include these with approval by VDOT.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board adopt the resolution as presented and to allocate the matching funds for the Rural Transportation Planning Grant Assistance for Fiscal Year 2011 as required by VDOT with a provision that, if VDOT changes the funding amount up or down, staff can redo the resolution to reflect such change.

Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Casey, to approve the Executive Committee's recommendation. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to adopt the resolution of intent as presented to apply for VDOT Rural Transportation Planning Assistance funds for the period for Fiscal Year 2011 and to allocate the matching funds for the grant as required by VDOT with a provision that, if VDOT changes the funding amount up or down, staff can redo the resolution to reflect such change.

15. ANNUAL APPLICATION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE GRANT FUNDS FROM THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION—WPPDC/P(09)61

The Executive Director explained that the localities of County of Henry, City of Martinsville, and County of Patrick are eligible members of the Appalachian Regional Commission. In Virginia, planning district commissions serve as "Local Development Districts," or LDDs, with responsibilities similar to those of "Economic Development Districts," or EDDs, in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. Currently, the West Piedmont Planning District Commission serves as an EDA-designated EDD. He noted that the West Piedmont Planning District Commission is eligible to receive an Appalachian Regional Commission planning grant for the period from January 1, 2010, through December 31, 2011.

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee had voted unanimously to recommend that the Board adopt a resolution authorizing the PDC staff to submit an application for funding to the Appalachian Regional Commission for the Planning District Commission's work in the capacity as a Local Development District and to provide the required local match for said grant.

Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blair, to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to adopt a resolution authorizing the PDC staff to submit an application for funding to the Appalachian Regional Commission for the Planning District Commission's work in the capacity as a Local Development District and to provide the required local match for said grant.

16. UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY PLAN IN CONJUNCTION WITH VA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The Executive Director informed the Board that the Commission would be hosting a regional stakeholders meeting on Thursday, October 29, 2009, from 6:30 pm. to 8:30 p.m. at the Commission Office to present information and solicit input on the development of the Regional Water Supply Plan. The WPPDC regional water supply planning group is made up of 10 local governments and two service authorities. Participating jurisdictions include the counties of Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania; the cities of Danville and Martinsville, and the towns of Chatham, Gretna, Hurt, Ridgeway, and Stuart. The Henry County Public Service Authority and Pittsylvania County Service Authority also participate. (It was

noted that Franklin County and Rocky Mount are participating in the development of the water supply plan for the Roanoke Valley-Allegheny Regional Commission/PDC Plan.) It was noted that ads had been placed in local newspapers and invitations mailed to stakeholders across the region. Information and meeting location directions had also been placed on the PDC's website at www.wppdc.org.

The WPPDC Regional Water Supply Plan is being developed to comply with the State Water Control Board's regulation 9 VAC 25-780, Local and Regional Water Supply Planning and to produce a functional plan to support sustainable growth and economic development. The purpose of this meeting was to inform stakeholders of the existing and future water demands in the region, present future water needs and potential water supply alternatives, and get input on the contents of the Plan and issues regarding water supply and use.

THE BOARD:

Noted this report.

17. UPDATES AND REPORTS RELATED TO U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

The Executive Director reported that the Commission staff had submitted grant applications to EDA for the Cane Creek Centre, a joint Danville-Pittsylvania County project, and Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre, a Henry County project.

THE BOARD:

Noted this informational report.

18. UPDATE ON REGIONAL PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES RELATED TO RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROGRAM IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE VA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Executive Director updated the Board on work efforts in conjunction with the VA Department of Transportation in development of the Regional Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan. He noted that traffic counts had been completed for all designated study locations, or "hot spots," in the District. Staff had been having teleconference sessions with the consultants. Information had been presented to the Commission's Transportation Technical Advisory Committee for review and comment.

In followup to discussion at the last meeting, staff had worked with the Commission's Transportation Technical Advisory Committee to review and obtain input to respond to the VDOT-Headquarters request for review of their suggested list of projects on the Statewide Mobility System. The Committee provided a number of changes, which were presented to VDOT to meet the October 9th deadline for providing input.

THE BOARD:

Noted this report.

19. AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT LETTERS OF SUPPORT AND RESOLUTIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENHANCEMENT GRANT PROEJCTS—FISCAL YEAR 2011—WPPDC/P(09)58

At its earlier session, the Executive Committee had voted unanimously to recommend that the Board authorize the Chairman or Vice-Chairman to co-sign with the Executive Director requests from local governments for letters of support or resolutions to be used in applications for VDOT Enhancement Grant Program funds for Fiscal Year 2011 and beyond.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Casey, to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to authorize the Chairman or Vice-Chairman to co-sign with the Executive Director requests from local governments for letters of support or resolutions to be used in applications for VDOT Enhancement Grant Program funds for Fiscal Year 2010 and beyond.

20. UPDATES AND REPORTS RELATED TO THE DANVILLE MPO PROGRAM IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE VA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Executive Director informed the Board that the Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization's Year 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan, adopted in 2004, was being updated expeditiously in an abbreviated format. The PDC staff, in its capacity as the Administrative Agent for the MPO, was having a committee meeting on October 26th to review the amended sections. From these, the MPO would proceed to a public hearing in Danville on November 30th.

THE BOARD:

Noted this report.

21. CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZING THE COMMISSION STAFF TO PREPARE AND HAVE EXECUTED RESOLUTIONS AND LETTERS IN SUPPORT OF LOCALITY ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANT APPLICATIONS—WPPDC/P(09)70

The Executive Director informed the Board that the PDC staff was involved in aiding as much as possible the localities and their staffs in putting together applications to the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy to obtain funding provided for in the Stimulus bills for the purposes of 1) reducing fossil fuel emissions in a manner that is environmentally sustainable and, to the maximum extent practicable, maximizes benefits for local and regional communities; 2) reduces the total energy use of the eligible entities; and 3) improve energy efficiency in the building sector, the transportation sectors, and other appropriate sectors. He noted that the localities may ask the Commission for endorsement and support for their applications and, therefore, the staff would like the Commission's authorization to develop letters and/or resolutions in support of the localities; a Commission officer and Executive Director would need to execute these and the Executive Director would be responsible for transmitting them back to the locality representative. It was noted that the staff would tailor the language to cover the individual projects, but use a general format overall in developing the letters and resolutions.

He further explained that the localities' applications were targeted at obtaining competitive grant funds from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program being administered by the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy. The EECBG program grant funds being pursued in this round and particular program amounted to over \$9 million. Over 280 localities across the Commonwealth were eligible to apply for these funds. These funds were separate from those received in recent months by larger, eligible localities in the Commonwealth such as City of Danville, City of Roanoke, and other large cities and counties.

Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to authorize the Chairman or Vice-Chairman to co-sign with the Executive Director requests from local governments for letters of support or resolutions as requested by the PDC localities to be used in applications for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant funds administered by the VA Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to authorize the Chairman or Vice-Chairman to co-sign with the Executive Director letters of support or resolutions as requested by the PDC localities to be used in applications for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant funds administered by the VA Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy.

22. DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATIVE LETTER FOR UPCOMING GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION

The Executive Director updated the Board on the status of the legislative letter development, noting that last year's letter had been sent to the local government administrators for input. An updated letter would be presented at the December Board meeting.

THE BOARD:

Noted this report.

23. CONSIDERATION OF PARTICIPATION IN A BI-STATE STUDY WITH PIEDMONT TRIAD COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS, GREENSBORO, NC—DAN RIVER BASIN RESTORATION ANALYSIS & STRATEGY PROJECT – FUNDS ANTICIPATED FROM FEDERAL 205(J) GRANT—WPPDC/P(09)71

The Executive Director informed the Board that he had been contacted by Cy Stober of Piedmont Triad Council of Governments, Greensboro, NC, asking that the WPPDC consider being a partner in a bi-state project to collect environmental, economic, and recreational data to form a GIS-based assessment of Dan River Sub Basin restoration priorities. The basic output of the project would be a document and a website that synthesizes all the pertinent data to the sub basin from both states and both US EPA regional offices into one point. The target area for the effort includes 16 counties in North Carolina and Virginia. The Dan River Sub Basin, at 3,300 square miles, covers one-third of the larger Roanoke River Basin that traverses both states west to east. This would be a basin-wide effort to collect environmental, economic, and recreational data from diverse stakeholders from both NC and VA and then integrate it into a GIS-based assessment that will help determine watershed restoration and conservation priorities. The data would be used to determine 10-20 watersheds of focus and would be presented in a document form and also maintained on a website hosted by Piedmont Triad COG (the WPPDC can essentially have it on its website via a link). The proposed project would be largely data acquisition and GIS-based planning, but its purpose would be to provide a basis for further restoration work, including project implementation.

It was noted that, through this sub-basin management approach, appropriate strategies would be created to improve conditions in the diverse topography of the largely rural Dan River basin. As needed, unique management efforts would be recommended for each 14-digit Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUC) that is determined to be a restoration

priority. This approach would require the coordination of the Piedmont Triad COG and the West Piedmont Planning District Commission, and it would involve the input and participation of multiple diverse stakeholders, and would utilize the following six-step approach:

- 1) Collect and collate environmental, economic, and recreational data from both NC and VA stakeholders, and normalize the data so it is directly comparable. This would include the water quality and data recommended by the TMDLs conducted by NC DENR and VA DEQ in 2005 and 2008, respectively. Launch and maintain a website that presents this data for stakeholder review, access, and use.
- 2) Using Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis of land use and landscape characters to generate a raster that offers a metric reflecting watershed stresses and conditions. Higher-ranking pixels in this raster would ideally reflect more stressful watershed conditions.
- 3) Through analysis of current impaired waters data, determine the validity of the preceding GIS analysis and its accuracy in predicting stressful watershed conditions. GIS analysis would be adjusted to better predict impaired watershed conditions.
- 4) Examine the raster data for concentrations of high-ranking pixels, and rate the corresponding 14-digit HUCs as priority local watersheds. This would ideally result in a discrete group of 10 – 20 top priority 14-digit HUCs within the Dan River Basin.
- 5) Characterize these priority watersheds in greater detail, describing the land uses, growth conditions, landscape characters, and local policies that are contributing to impaired water quality conditions. This approach would permit planning staffs the ability to transfer this analysis to similar sub-basins.
- 6) Recommend specific restoration planning efforts for these top-priority local watershed sub-basins, and designate all state, regional, and local organizations that can contribute to these ends.

Through this sub-basin management approach, it was anticipated that appropriate strategies would be created to improve conditions at the local scale. As needed, unique management efforts would be recommended for each watershed. This narrative approach would require both PTCOG and WPPD to gather data from relevant organizations and agencies to ensure immediate use by local stakeholders. PTCOG had noted that both organizations would be collaborating to share skills and knowledge to ensure accuracy and implementation of the final assessment and recommendations. It had also noted that, as for the future, more intensive future efforts could be financed through federal and state grants, as well as direct technical assistance contracts with communities throughout the River Basin.

The Executive Director noted that this was an informational item for consideration of Board action at the meeting in order to respond to PTCOG's request.

At its earlier session, Executive Committee members had expressed concern that acting with the Council of Governments on this program might lead into a situation where the Planning District Commission's position in regard to opposition to interbasin transfer might be compromised.

Following discussion, Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Astin, to authorize the PDC to participate in the study. The motion failed, with Mr. Davis, Mr. Seale, and Mr. Astin voting in the affirmative and Mrs. Burnette, Mrs. Lawson, Mr. Adams, Mr. Casey, Mr. Greer, Mr. Weiss, Mr. Knight, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Blair, Mr. George, and Mr. Reynolds voting no.

THE BOARD:

Voted to instruct the Executive Director to advise that the PDC would not to participate in a Bi-State Study with the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments, Greensboro, NC – Dan River Basin Restoration Analysis & Strategy Project supported with funds anticipated from a federal 205(j) grant.

24. REQUEST BY VA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF VA DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE'S STARS BULL MOUNTAIN RADIO TOWER PROJECT—DEQ PROJECT # 09-202S—PATRICK COUNTY – WPPDC/P(09)69

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality had requested the Commission's review and comment on an Environmental Impact Report review for the Bull Mountain Radio Tower Project that is part of the Statewide Agencies Radio System (STARS). The Virginia State Police plans to construct a 180-foot tall self-supporting lattice tower and associated communications equipment on Bull Mountain in Patrick County that is at the terminus of Fire Trail Lane, approximately 2 miles north from the intersection of Tudor Orchard Road and Bull Mountain Road in Patrick County. The Statewide Agencies Radio System program is an upgrade to the State Police's 1977 land mobile radio system. The concept of the program is a shared system composed of the twenty state agencies that use two-way radio communications as regular part of their operations. The tower and equipment would be enclosed within a 55-foot by 60-foot fenced compound. The proposed equipment and an emergency generator would be housed in a 12-foot by 34-foot slab on grade shelter. Project plans called for two 1,000-gallon propane tanks to be installed underground in a 17.5-foot by 20-foot by 5-foot excavation, to fuel an emergency generator to insure continuous power for operations. Approximately 490 linear feet of trenching would be required to install underground utilities, propane lines, and the grounding system; the trenching operations would result in excavation of approximately 2,205 cubic feet (81.5 cubic yards) of soil. The propane tank excavation would move 1,750 cubic feet of soil. Excavated soils would be used on site to backfill the trenches and excavation or transported to permissible location for disposal according to federal, state,

and local regulations. Best management practices such as silt fencing, seeding, mulching, placing of straw or gravel on all exposed soils shortly after disturbance during construction would be used to prevent soil erosion. Eventually, the tower sites would grow to 94 locations and the network they serve would have alternative paths, or loops, to provide continuous, high reliability in the event of path outages. Forty-five of these tower sites will be used for the actual two-way communications with the user's mobile and portable radios. From these sites, the Commonwealth personnel would receive quality, statewide, mobile radio coverage. STARS would be one of the first geographically statewide systems to employ digital trunked technology in the VHF 150 MHz band. Virginia would also be one of the first states to employ an Integrated Voice and Data (IV&D) land mobile radio architecture, which uses the same mobile radio for both voices and law enforcement computer communications. Virginia would have statewide mobile data coverage. Integrating the voice and data networks saves the Commonwealth the expense of a separate data infrastructure and an additional radio/modem in each vehicle.

The Environmental Impact Report's mitigation section indicated that the proposed project was not anticipated to adversely affect the project site area or surrounding environment. The Virginia State Police planned to adhere to a list of guidelines in an effort to minimize impact to the project site and surrounding area. The items covered included:

- Applicant must follow all applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and requirements. They must obtain and comply with all required permits prior to initiating work on the project. No staging of equipment or construction activities would begin until all permits were obtained.
- Best management practices such as silt fencing, seeding, mulching, placing of hay or gravel on all exposed soils shortly after disturbance would be used to prevent soil erosion.
- If project activities include the stockpiling of soil or fill on-site, the project applicant would cover these soils to help prevent fugitive dust and soil erosion.
- Any excess excavated material would be removed for disposal at an appropriately permitted facility. No material would be deposited in flood plain or wetland areas.
- To reduce temporary impacts to air quality, the applicant would be required to water down construction areas when necessary.
- Running time of fuel-burning equipment would be minimized and engines would be maintained to reduce the emission of pollutants.
- Any hazardous material discovered, generated, or used during implementation of the proposed project would be disposed of and handled in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.
- All construction activities would be conducted by trained personnel in compliance with the standards and regulations of OSHA to protect worker safety.
- If artifacts of archaeological remains are encountered during construction, work in the vicinity of these findings would be discontinued, and the applicant would immediately notify the VDHR and Native American Organizations, as well as the local authorities, if necessary.

Based on information provided and gathered, cumulative impacts to the project vicinity were not expected. Based on the results of the report, no irreversible environmental changes are anticipated to occur from the proposed installation of the STARS site on Bull Mountain. In the course of the study efforts, the following areas were addressed as was necessary: topography; geology, seismicity, and soils; farm and forest land protection; water resources, groundwater, surface water, and water quality; floodplain management considerations; terrestrial and aquatic environments; wetlands; threatened and endangered species; wilderness and designated wildlife areas; visual resources; noise; traffic and circulation; parks and recreation areas; streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds; scenic highways and Virginia Byways; erosion and sediment control; land use and zoning; air quality; and cultural resources.

Mr. Astin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to make a favorable comment on the environmental review request. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

THE BOARD:

Voted unanimously to make a favorable comment on the environmental review request.

25. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that, at the last meeting, the Board had agreed to hold its combined November-December meeting on December 3rd; however, Chairman Kolendrianos had asked that the Board consider moving the meeting to December 10th. Several members noted that December 10th would work better for them.

THE BOARD:

Agreed to hold its combined November-December meeting on December 10th instead of December 3rd.

26. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Robert W. Dowd, AICP
Executive Director