



Central Virginia Planning
District Commission
828 Main Street, 12th Floor
Lynchburg, VA 24504
Office: (434) 845-3491
cvpdc.org

Central Virginia Planning District Commission Executive Committee Meeting – Draft Minutes May 16, 2024

Meeting Location: CVPDC Offices
828 Main Street, 12th Floor
Lynchburg, VA 24504

Members Present:

Frank Rogers, Campbell County
Tom Lawton, Campbell County
Greg Patrick, City of Lynchburg, Proxy for Wynter Benda
Jeff Helgeson, City of Lynchburg, Vice-Chairman
Jeremy Bryant, Amherst County
Drew Wade, Amherst County
Terry McGhee, Town of Appomattox
Reggie Bennett, Town of Altavista
Gary Shanaberger, Town of Altavista Town
John Spencer, Appomattox County
Ken Wolfskill, Appomattox County
Bruce Johannessen, Town of Bedford
John Sharp, Bedford County

Member Joining Virtually:

Sara McGuffin, Town of Amherst

Staff Present:

Alec Brebner
Sandy Dobyms
Kelly Hitchcock
Mariel Fowler

Others Present:

Lauren Stuhldreher, Va EDA Representative – Guest Speaker

1. Welcome and Introductions

Alec welcomed the board and noted that Chairman Richard Conner was delayed by an emergency. Vice-Chairman Jeff Helgeson chaired the meeting and called it to order at 5:06 p.m.

2. Consideration of Requests for Electronic Participation

Sara McGuffin joined the meeting virtually. Alec asked that the Commission acknowledge her electronic participation. Frank Rogers made a motion to approve Sara McGuffin's virtual participation in the meeting. Gary Shanaberger seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

3. Special Guests: Responding to Economic Development in the Region

Lauren Stuhldreher, Virginia Economic Development Representative, with the U.S. Economic Development Administration gave an overview of the Economic Development's organization, how the department works, and some of their funding opportunities. She also discussed how those may connect with our region and how we can potentially work together in the future. Lauren shared the goal of the EDA's mission is really to help prepare localities for economic success by supporting community-led economic development. Our region would be considered in the Philadelphia region so we would be competing with the northeastern United States for funding opportunities. In her capacity as the representative for Virginia, Lauren works with stakeholders across the state on potential project opportunities, helping them through project development, funding opportunities and assisting with the application completion to ensure it looks as competitive as possible.

Lauren gave an overview of Virginia's Economic Development Districts. There are 13 of our 21 PDCs serving as economic development districts. This is Lauren's first point of contact for the regions. They know their regions and localities the best. They do a lot of the field work to identify potential projects and can connect them to Lauren. The first step to become an Economic Development District is to have an comprehensive economic development strategy. Once the study is completed, a PDC can apply to be an economic development district. Once designated an Economic Development District, a PDC receives an annual allocation of funds to provide technical assistance within its region.

Lauren explained that the EDA has investment priorities: Equity, Recovery & Resilience, Workforce Development, Manufacturing, Technology-Based Economic Development, Environmentally Sustainable Development, and Exports & Foreign Direct Investment. These may change occasionally but this list has been in place for a while now. When considering projects, EDA likes to see that every considered project aligns with at least one, if not more, of these investment priorities. It really is easy to connect an economic development project with one if not more, as they are broad-based.

Lauren then moved on to the regional funding opportunities (Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA), Public Works, Planning, Technical Assistance, Research and Evaluation, Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF), Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and Revolving Loan Funds (RLF) that she would assist with you

through the Philadelphia office. Economic adjustment assistance and public works are the most utilized funding opportunity. Lauren then discussed the differences between various funding opportunities, as well as funding match requirements and timelines. The presentation ended with Lauren thanking the board for inviting her and told the board that if they had questions now or in the future just reach out. Her information is (215) 764-0427, lstuhldreher@eda.gov.

Gary Shanaberger, Town Manager, Altavista, thanked Lauren for all her work she's been doing with their public works director, Tom. They are trying to secure a grant and Lauren has been great to work with. Gary highly recommended getting connected with Lauren if you have any possible projects that she can help you with.

4. Minutes

a. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes, March 21, 2024

Jeff asked if there were any changes to the minutes. He had one on page 6, the name Hagelson needs to be changed to Helgeson. No discussion or other changes were made. A motion to approve the minutes with the change was made by Frank Rogers and seconded by Gary Shanaberger. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

b. Approval of Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, April 11, 2024

Jeff asked if there were any changes to the minutes. No discussion or changes were made. A motion to approve the Executive Committee minutes was made by Frank Rogers and Seconded by Gary Shanaberger. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

5. Town of Bedford CRISI program funding application

Alec updated the commission on Bedford's grant application for a consolidated rail infrastructure improvement program that the Commission was asked to do an intergovernmental review at the March meeting. Alec mentioned that he had been in contact with Mary Zirkle and that the Town is pursuing funding for federal programs to bring a passenger rail station to the Town of Bedford. The cost for this project is \$23 million, and needless to say, the town will need assistance. Alec supplied the Commission with an intergovernmental review form for their consideration. Alec mentioned that in reviewing the PDC's records he didn't see that the Planning District Commission had contemplated regional support for this project. He would be happy to write a letter of support for the application but felt that it would probably be worthwhile to get the Commission to vote on supporting this project.

Bruce Johannessen, the Town's representative to the Commission, added that rail infrastructure in the town has long been discussed. It would be an ideal situation not only for Bedford's town people but also for people from Smith Mountain Lake. He stated that he would appreciate the Commission's consideration for Bedford to start the project by getting a beginning funding source for this project.

Alec proposed a letter of support from the Commission to be included with the application. Frank Rogers made a motion to authorize staff to submit a letter of support along with an intergovernmental review form that endorses the region's support for the project. The motion was seconded by Drew Wade. Upon further discussion, Frank asked staff to please let the Commission know if there are other planning instruments and other formal opportunities for us to endorse and support the project as a region.

Jeff asked if there was any financial obligation of the Commission. Alec answered no.

All were in favor, and the motion passed.

6. Rural Transportation Planning Work Program

Alec provided the Commission with a document to be provided to VDOT detailing how the \$58,000 program funding will be spent as part of the state planning research grant. Of the 2000 square miles in the region with 260,000 people, half qualified as rural under state and federal transportation programs. The other part falls into urban jurisdiction. The state planning program provides details of the work and highlights assisting the Town of Bedford as they have expanded their boundaries and taking inventory of their stormwater infrastructure. There are also some technical assistance items in there as well.

Alec asked for the Commission to adopt a resolution that would authorize staff to submit to the World Work program.

Motion for approval as presented was made by Frank Rogers and seconded by Gary Shanaberger. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

7. 2024 Community Development Priorities

Alec informed the Commission that this is an annual exercise that in the past was scheduled for March. Per Jefrado Granger, the new timeline will be preparation of CDBG priorities in April for submittal by May to DHCD. Alec included in the package a document that identifies regional priorities and gives a projection of projects that might be submitted in the upcoming application cycle. The categories that the region is ranked highest in do better than the statewide competitions for dollars.

Jeremy Bryant made a motion to approve the 2024 Community Development Priorities. Drew Wade seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

8. Fiscal Year 2025 Work Plan & Budget

Alec gave an overview of the budget. This document has been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Executive Committee, which includes the chairman and chief administrative officers of each of the member governments. Sandy worked hard to put it all in order. Alec highlighted priority projects and revenue

cuts to the workforce development board. Alec updated the Commission on Kelly's successful application for participation in USDOT's Thriving Communities Program. This program is to develop plans for the area around the Amtrak stations.

Alec informed the Commission of some staff changes at CVPDC. Kirsten Trautman is no longer with us. The new staff member will start the first Monday in June. We are hoping to fill the Planner position next as that has been vacant for a while.

We have several new projects, which include some traffic projects. In total, we have 10 new projects starting now or in the near future.

Tom asked what new revenue was available to fund the planner position held vacant. Alec explained that revenue was available within existing grants.

The Executive Committee presented the motion to adopt the budget as presented. As a recommendation from committee, it's a motion that needs no second. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

9. Organizational Reports

Alec shared a link for the US EPA local Leadership survey. DEQ is asking for specific feedback about their program, as it pertains to the Chesapeake Bay, from both administrators and elected officials. Alec asked the members to please provide them any the feedback you may have.

Kelly commented that when we hear Chesapeake Bay it seems a long way away, but please consider our local water in our own areas. The City of Lynchburg's program has really tried to push this where there are additional dollars that come from the state for DEQ. Our department has really been able to do a lot. So again, although it says "Chesapeake Bay," just think of your local waters.

Alec handed out a flyer from the Workforce Development Board. The flyer is for the upcoming hiring job fair they will be hosting. This organization does a lot with two staff members. If you are in the area around Odd Fellows Road, stop in and see what they do for the region.

The next item is the rotation of the chairmanship as prescribed by the bylaws. The elections will be next month so Alec will be reaching out to the elected officials.

Alec thanked Terry McGhee the work done as treasurer supporting the PDC staff.

10. Other Business and Regional Roundtable

Jeff discussed the need for localities to reach out to the Governor's office regarding the State budget. The State has now changed the calculation for the SOQ funding formula standards of quality funding where they had the at-risk component, which

was not normally included in the required local effort. Now, it's been included in the local effort. Jeff explained how this could really make big changes to localities' budgets. Jeff encouraged Commissioners to reach out to their delegates and ask them to take another look at Bill 624.

Frank congratulated Kelly's success with the grant and expressed his excitement to see 10 new endeavors at PDC. He is seeing a lot of good activity. He wanted to express his appreciation.

Alec congratulated Campbell County on being one of four successful applicants to the brand-new SE Crescent Regional Commission program. It was the only conventional site development project that was awarded the grant. In response, Frank credited the hard work to Bob Campbell and the economic development staff.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was entertained by Jeff Helgeson. Frank Rogers made the motion to adjourn. Drew Wade seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

X _____
Secretary

Date