

Minutes
Western Piedmont Council of Governments
Bimonthly Policy Board Meeting
Tuesday, May 22, 2018
Town of Hudson

Members Present:

Barbara Pennell, Chair
Bob Floyd, Jr., Vice-Chair
Jill Patton, Secretary
Johnny Berry, Treasurer
George Holleman, Past Chair
Robert Smyre, At-Large
Chip Black, At-Large
Wayne Abele, At-Large
Johnnie Carswell, Alternate
Mike Labrose
Ronnie Setzer
Donald Robinson
Dale Sherrill
Joie Fulbright
Kyle Hayman, Alternate
Dennis Anthony
Ben Honeycutt
Larry Chapman
Ben Willis
Joe Gibbons, Alternate
Marla Thompson
Forrest Fleming
Ronnie Thompson, Alternate
Jerry Hodge
Rick Justice
Gary McClure
Wayne Annas, Alternate
Keith Warren
Roy Sweezy, Alternate
Malla Vue
Tommy Luckadoo
Helen Chestnut
Larry Yoder
Amparo Alfaro
Elle Engstrom

Local Government/Agency:

Gamewell
Cedar Rock
Hickory
Connelly Springs
Taylorsville
Maiden
Valdese
Burke County
Burke County
Caldwell County
Cajah's Mountain
Catawba
Claremont
Conover
Conover
Drexel
Hildebran
Hudson
Lenoir
Lenoir
Long View
Morganton
Morganton
Newton
Rhodhiss
Rutherford College
Rutherford College
Sawmills
Valdese
Appointed
Appointed
Appointed
Appointed
Appointed
Appointed

Members Absent:

Josh Lail	Alexander County
Vacant	Brookford
Kitty Barnes, At-Large	Catawba County
Bob Benfield	Glen Alpine
Dr. Caryl Burns	Granite Falls
Sara Moses	Appointed

Guests/Others Present:

Scott Hildebran, Lenoir
Mary Carter, Gamewell
Tamara Brooks, Connelly Springs
Rebecca Bentley, Hudson
Janet Winkler, Hudson
Rick Shew, Hudson
Jonathan Greer, Hudson
Chase Winebarger, Catawba
Seth Eckard, Valdese
Todd Herms, Maiden
Sherri Bradshaw, Drexel
Don Beal, Conover
Kenneth Geathers, Rutherford College

WPCOG Staff Present:

Anthony Starr, Executive Director
Sherry Long, Assistant Executive Director/Community & Economic Development Director
Ashley Bolick, Director of Administrative Services and Human Resources
Andrea Roper, Finance Director
Scott Miller, Director of IT/GIS
Wendy Johnson, Director of Workforce Development
Alison Adams, Community & Regional Planning Director
Tom Bell, GIS Analyst
Trey Schweitzer, GIS Technician

Call to Order/Welcome

A regular meeting of the WPCOG Policy Board was called to order at 6:41 pm by Chair Barbara Pennell. Chair Pennell thanked the Town of Hudson for hosting the meeting. Mayor Janet Winkler welcomed the Policy Board to the Town of Hudson and to the Hudson Uptown Building.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting were considered. Mr. Joie Fulbright made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Larry Chapman offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business/Reports

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

2018 NCHFA Urgent Repair Program Assistance Policy, Procurement & Distribution Policy

Ms. Sherry Long, Assistant Executive Director & Community & Economic Development Director presented the 2018 Urgent Repair Assistance Policy & Procurement and Disbursement Policy to the board. The policy explains what the program requirements are and how the program will operated during the current cycle of funding.

Staff requested that the Policy Board adopt the Urgent Repair Assistance Policy & Procurement and Disbursement Policy.

Mr. Chip Black made a motion that the Board adopt the policies as presented. Ms. Jill Patton offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Workforce Development Board Reappointments

Director of Workforce Development, Wendy Johnson had obligations with the NCWorks Commission that did not allow her to be present. In her absence, Ms. Sherry Long requested that the Policy Board reappoint nine current Workforce Development Board members for another two year term. The following individuals' had expiring terms and where eligible for reappointment.

- Marty Waters, Owner, Marlin Chemical – Caldwell County
- Bill Burton, President/Owner, Jack Sipe Construction – Catawba County
- Glenn Privette, Director of Human Resources, Leviton Manufacturing Inc – Burke County
- Wayne Abele, Owner, Abele's Family Restaurant – Burke County
- John Wiley, Owner, Concept Frames – Catawba County
- Crystal Glenn, Executive Director, Workforce Development Innovation Center – Catawba Valley Community College
- Atticus Simpson, Vice President for Workforce and External Affairs, Western Piedmont Community College
- Malla Vue, District Director for Catawba, Caldwell, Burke, Alexander and Iredell counties, Goodwill Industries Northwest North Carolina
- David S. Demiter, Engineer, Norfolk Southern; Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Union

Mr. Larry Yoder made a motion that the Board re-appoint the nine current Workforce Development Board members for another two year term. Mr. Jerry Hodge offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Workforce Development Board New Appointment

Additional, Ms. Sherry Long requested that the Policy Board appoint a new Workforce Development Board member Randy Ledford, to fill the WIOA workforce board member required category: Adult

Education and Literacy, eligible under WIOA Title II. Randy Ledford is the Vice President of Instruction at Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute.

Staff requested the Policy Board to appoint Randy Ledford to the Workforce Development Board membership for a two-year term.

Mr. George Holleman made a motion that the Board appoint Randy Ledford as a new Workforce Development Board members for a staggered two year term, 2018 - 2019. Mr. Larry Chapman offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

IT Agreement for Internet/Network

Mr. Scott Miller, WPCOG Director of IT/GIS, presented to the Policy Board the proposed 2019 Catawba County Wide Area Network (WAN) Agreement. WPCOG utilizes a shared Internet connection via the fiber WAN. The Internet connection is purchased by Catawba County and the actual access point routes through the Catawba County computer network. WPCOG shares the cost of this access, roughly 33% and 66%, with Catawba County, then coordinates a cost sharing arrangement with Claremont, Conover, Long View, Maiden and Newton, whereby all of these local governments, WPCOG and Catawba County effectively share this service. Catawba County provides technical assistance for WAN/Internet access issues and provides/maintains both a security firewall and network address translation (NAT) services to allow matching of public IP addresses with private WAN IP addressing. Catawba County also provides routing services within the WAN.

Documentation of the cost sharing of the Internet access is through contractual agreements between WPCOG and Catawba County, and between WPCOG and each of the other participating local governments, Claremont, Conover, Long View, Maiden and Newton.

The following are changes to in the proposed Catawba County WAN Agreement for 2019:

- Agreement timeframe reduced from three years to one year with automatic annual renewal and a 90-day change/cancel clause for any party.
- Connection speed increased from dual 500MB connections to 1GB dual connections.
- Additional internet security added via AT&T Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) protection.
- Redundancy through AT&T and Spectrum
- The overall service cost per month has been reduced by \$1,434.00 and all of the Agreement participants share in the savings.

Staff requested that the Board approve the 2019 Catawba County WAN Agreement.

Mr. Chip Black made a motion that the Board approve the 2019 Catawba County WAN Agreement as presented. Mr. Joie Fulbright offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

WPCOG sUAS "Drone" Services for Local Governments

Mr. Trey Schweitzer, WPCOG GIS Technician presented information to the Board announcing the addition of a Small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS) services program, commonly known as "drone" services. This new offering for local governments includes photo and video production, as well as

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) integration. Mr. Schweitzer recently earned the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Small sUAS Rule (14 CFR part 107) certification. He reviewed how the new drone program functions and the benefits that it will provide to local governments and community organizations throughout the region. The services include:

- Promotional photos and videos of downtowns
- Festivals and natural beauty
- Use for utility infrastructure mapping
- GIS and inspections
- Site evaluations for land use and potential industry

Staff requested that the Policy Board provide feedback and guidance aimed at a successful launch of the new service.

Ms. Marla Thompson asked how WPCOG would be able to operate the drone at the WPCOG office building given the proximity to the local airport.

Mr. Schweitzer explained that staff had been in the process of gaining approval from the Hickory Regional Airport to operate the drone at the WPCOG office building and that the Hickory Regional Airport had been supportive and easy to work with.

Mr. Ben Willis asked how many drones WPCOG had and how many staff members could fly the drones.

Mr. Schweitzer answered that currently WPCOG had one drone in service but that a second drone was being ordered with additional camera features and functionality. Mr. Schweitzer is currently the only WPCOG staff member certified to fly the drone but a second staff member, Mr. Duncan Cavanaugh was currently studying to take the certification exam.

5th Amendment of FY 2017-2018 Budget

Ms. Andrea Roper, WPCOG Finance Director, presented to the Policy Board the proposed 5th Amendment of the 2017-2018 Budget, reflecting a total budget of \$15,569,945 and an operating budget of \$6,233,462, represents a decrease of the total budget from the March 27th, 2018 budget amendment of \$52,961.

The 5th Amendment of the 2017-2018 Budget includes:

- A \$46,313 decrease in Community Development to adjust for actual expenses for the current fiscal year.
- Economic Development decreased \$28,029 to adjust for actual expenses for the current fiscal year.
- Regional Public Housing increased by \$15,911 to reflect actual revenues earned.
- Area Agency on Aging increased by \$17,379 due to provider funds being returned.
- Compensated Absences increased by \$17,112 to reflect actual expenses.
- Unemployment expense decreased by \$21,866 to reflect the actual expenditure for the current fiscal year.
- Contingency decreased by \$89,984 due to the use of those funds for the current fiscal year and the allocation of those funds to Reserve for Future Use, for use in the FY 18-19.

- All other changes to the expenditure lines reflect normal program needs and year-end adjustments.
- Regional Public Housing Special Revenue Funds decreased due to the reduction of reserve funds being used.

Staff requested that the Policy Board review and approve the Fifth Amendment of the 2017-2018 Budget.

Mr. Chip Black made a motion that the Board approve the 5th Amendment of the 2017-2018 Budget as proposed. Mr. Larry Chapman offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

FY 18-19 Budget Hearing & Adoption

Chair Pennell asked if there was a motion that the Policy Board open a public hearing to receive public comment on the proposed 2018-2019 budget.

Mr. Bob Smyre made a motion that the Board open the public hearing. Ms. Jill Patton offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Andrea Roper, WPCOG Finance Director, presented the 2nd Reading of the 2018-2019 Budget, reflecting a total budget of \$15,164,629 and an operating budget of \$5,755,992 which represents an increase of the total budget from the March 27th, 2018 budget amendment of approximately .28% or \$42,108.

The 2nd Reading of the 2018-2019 Budget includes:

- 54 full and part-time staff positions
- Town planning services for 9 local governments
- Community and Regional Planning added funding for data center requests using WPCOG dues and interim planner contract. Anticipated contracts are now fully funded for this department.
- The Aging budget decreased by \$5,762 due to the decrease in Project C.A.R.E. and the H.O.P.E. grant.
- Workforce Development decreased by \$11,115 to reflect a decrease in fringe and indirect anticipated costs from the 1st reading.
- Salaries increased by \$11,592 due to the addition of a PT employee in the Regional Public Housing department.
- No rate increase for health insurance for the FY 18-19 budget. An anticipated increase of 8% was initially budgeted for, creating a decrease of \$24,399 in group insurance expenses.
- Contingency decreased \$21,481 due to those funds being utilized in the FY 18-19 budget.
- Fund Balance Appropriated increased due to the addition of funding for data center requests.
- The Regional Public Housing Special Revenue Fund increased by \$25,309 to reflect the use of unrestricted net proceed reserve funds.
- About \$178,544 in anticipated contracts for FY 18-19. The unfunded areas at this point are within Community Development and GIS/IT.

The Chair asked for comments. There were no comments made from the public.

Mr. Joie Fulbright made a motion that the Board close the public hearing. Mr. Chip Black offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Larry Yoder made a motion that the Board approve the budget ordinance and FY2018-2019 Budget as presented. Mr. Larry Chapman offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Intra-Regional Cooperative Agreement

Mr. Anthony Starr, WPCOG Executive Director presented the NC Association of Regional Councils of Government (NCARCOG) Intra-Regional Cooperative Agreement. The NCARCOG is the designated regional forum for the state's Regional Councils of Governments formed pursuant to GS 143-341 and 160A-470. The Intra-Regional Cooperative Agreement facilitates the sharing of services from one Council of Governments (COGs) to another for the purpose of increasing service to its member local governments.

This agreement was drafted as an update to an earlier agreement to encourage cooperation between COGs. This agreement makes the COG service available in one region available to all local governments across the state.

Staff requests the Policy Board to review and approve the Intra-Regional Cooperative Agreement.

Mr. Wayne Abele made a motion that the board approve the NCARCOG Intra-Regional Cooperative Agreement as presented. Mr. Jerry Hodge offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Staff Updates

Mr. Starr welcomed Alison Adams, WPCOG Community & Regional Planning Director, to her first Policy Board Meeting.

Mr. Starr passed out the NCARCOG 2018 State Legislative Agenda. He announced that May 30th would be the first COG Legislative Day and that Forum representatives, Wayne Abele, Kitty Barnes and Chair Barbara Pennell would be traveling to Raleigh that day along with staff to speak with area legislators about these legislative issues.

Ms. Sherry Long announced the departure of Senior Planner, Leah Martin. Leah is leaving WPCOG after 29 years of service to join the City of Claremont. Leah's last day will be June 29. Ms. Long thanked Leah for all her hard work within the region over the past 29 years and wished her luck in her new endeavors.

Adjournment

Mr. George Holleman made a motion that the meeting adjourn at 7:29 pm and the motion was seconded by Mr. Johnny Berry. The motion passed unanimously.