

**Minutes**  
**Western Piedmont Council of Governments**  
**Bimonthly Policy Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday, May 28, 2019**  
**First Baptist Church, Granite Falls NC**

**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  
Kitty Barnes, At-Large  
Larry Yoder  
Johnnie Carswell, Alternate  
Ronnie Setzer  
Lloyd Robbins, Alternate  
Mike Labrose  
Donald Robinson  
Dale Sherrill  
Joie Fulbright  
Dennis Anthony  
Dr. Caryl Burns  
Larry Knight, Alternate  
David Williams, Alternate  
Ben Honeycutt  
Larry Chapman  
Joe Gibbons  
Ben Willis, Alternate  
Marla Thompson  
Forrest Fleming  
Jerry Hodge  
Gary McClure  
Helen Chestnut  
Amparo Alfaro

**Local Government/Agency:**

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

**Members Absent:**

James Weaver  
Bob Benfield

Brookford  
Glen Alpine

Rick Justice	Rhodhiss
Keith Warren	Sawmills
Elle Engstrom	Appointed
Malla Vue	Appointed
Sara Moses	Appointed
Tommy Luckadoo	Appointed
Casey Pope	Appointed

**Guests/Others Present:**

Mary Carter, Gamewell  
Logan Shook, Cahah's Mountain  
Tamara Brooks, Connelly Springs  
Sherri Bradshaw, Drexel  
Chase Winebarger, Catawba  
Todd Herms, Maiden  
Seth Eckard, Valdese  
Jerry Church, Granite Falls  
Barry Hayes, Granite Falls  
Martin Townsend, Granite Falls  
Jim Mackie, Granite Falls  
Scott Hildebran, Lenoir  
Rebecca Bentley, Hudson  
Kenneth Geathers, Rutherford College  
Christopher Todd, Sawmills

**WPCOG Staff Present:**

Anthony Starr, Executive Director  
Sherry Long, Assistant Executive Director/Director of Community & Regional Development  
Ashley Bolick, Director of Administrative Services and Human Resources  
Andrea Roper, Finance Director  
Wendy Johnson, Director of Workforce Development  
Jason Toney, Communications Specialist  
Alison Adams, Director of Community & Regional Planning

**Call to Order/Welcome**

A regular meeting of the WPCOG Policy Board was called to order at 6:45 pm by Chair Barbara Pennell. Chair Pennell thanked the Town of Granite Falls for hosting the meeting. Granite Falls Mayor, Barry Hayes welcomed the Policy Board to the Town of Granite Falls.

### **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**

#### Bus-Rail Service from Salisbury to Asheville

Ms. Alison Adams, Director of Community & Regional Planning presented a proposed resolution of support for bus-rail service from Salisbury to Asheville. The North Carolina Department of Transportation's Rail Division has agreed, subject to NC Legislative appropriation, to contract development and implementation of Amtrak Thruway bus service between Salisbury and Asheville. Within the four-county region, the communities of Morganton, Valdese, Hickory, and Conover would benefit from this service. A successful bus connection project could ultimately demonstrate support for restoration of passenger rail service.

Staff requests the Policy Board to support the creation of an attractive, marketable, and cost-effective rail-connection service for Western North Carolina that includes sufficient new funding for a two-year trial period by the North Carolina General Assembly.

Mr. Larry Yoder made a motion that the Policy Board adopt the resolution as presented in support of the NC General Assembly for NCDOT-Rail to establish Amtrak Thruway connecting bus service. Ms. Helen Chestnut offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

#### 2019 URP Assistance Policy & Procurement and Disbursement Policy

Ms. Sherry Long, Assistant Executive Director and Director of Community & Economic Development presented the 2019 North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) Assistance Policy and Procurement and Disbursement Policy for Alexander, Burke and Caldwell counties. WPCOG has been awarded \$200,000 by the NCHFA under the 2019 cycle of the Urgent Repair Program ("URP19"). This program will be used to provide urgent repair funds to twenty-seven (27) homes scattered throughout all towns, cities and municipalities in Alexander, Burke and Caldwell County in the 2019/2020 fiscal year. This program provides funds to assist very-low and low- income households with special needs in addressing housing conditions which pose imminent threats to their life and/or safety or to provide accessibility modifications and other repairs necessary to prevent displacement of very-low and low- income homeowners with special needs such as frail elderly and persons with disabilities and veterans.

This Assistance Policy describes who is eligible to apply for assistance under URP19, how applications for assistance will be rated and ranked, what the form of assistance is and how the repair/modification process will be managed. WPCOG has tried to design this URP19 project to be fair, open, and consistent with its approved application for funding and with NCHFA's URP Program Guidelines.

The funds provided by NCHFA come from the North Carolina Housing Trust Fund.

Staff request that the board adopt the 2019 Urgent Repair Assistance Policy & Procurement and Disbursement Policy.

Mr. Larry Yoder made a motion that the Policy Board adopt the 2019 Urgent Repair Assistance Policy & Procurement and Disbursement Policy as presented. Ms. Jill Patton offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Addendum to current ESFRLP Grants

Ms. Sherry Long, Assistant Executive Director and Director of Community & Economic Development presented an addendum to add and allow owner occupied double wide manufactured mobile homes to be rehabilitated to the current ESFRLP'S grants for the following counties: Burke #1830; Caldwell #1730; and McDowell #1731.

The current policy in the Household Eligibility section, item #6, Bullet #5, reads that no manufactured mobile homes are allowed to be rehabilitated with these programs.

The proposed addendum to the current open ESFRLP's grants would allow double-wide manufactured mobile homes whom are owner occupied to be rehabilitated. The homeowner would be required to own the home/land and would be required to use the property as their primary residence.

Staff requests that the board review and approve the addendum to add and allow double-wide manufactured mobile homes to be rehabilitated for Burke, Caldwell and McDowell Counties.

Mr. Johnnie Carswell made a motion that the Policy Board approve the addendum to add and allow double-wide manufactured mobile homes to be rehabilitated for Burke, Caldwell and McDowell Counties ESFRLP grants as presented. Mr. Chip Black offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

#### WIOA PY19 Plan Summary

Wendy Johnson, Director of Workforce Development presented information about the WIOA 2019 Plan Summary to the board. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires each Workforce Development Board (WDB) to develop and submit, in partnership with the local chief elected official, a comprehensive four-year plan. Four-Year Plans were last submitted in May 2016.

Annually, each WDB is to provide updates to the Comprehensive Four-Year Plan (PY 2016). The WIOA Program Year (PY) 2019 Plan is to provide current information and be effective July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020 and will include all current local policies. The PY19 Plan Summary must be made available for 30 days for public comment. The plan is located on the workforce website [www.westernpiemontworks.org](http://www.westernpiemontworks.org).

Staff request that the board review and provide feedback of the WIOA Program Year 2019 plan as needed.

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the FY 18-19 Budget

Andrea Roper, WPCOG Finance Director presented the 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the FY 18-19 budget to the board. The 5th Amendment of the 2018-2019 Budget reflects a total budget of \$19,187,815 and an

operating budget of \$6,327,508 which represents an increase of the total budget from the March 26th, 2019 budget amendment of \$2,492,050.

The 5th Amendment of the 2018-2019 Budget includes:

- General Government increased \$13,750 due to sponsorships received for the annual meeting.
- A decrease in Transportation to reflect actual charges for the current fiscal year.
- Community Development decreased by \$515,960 due several housing contracts being transferred to FY20.
- Community and Regional Planning increased by \$5,013 due to the addition of a new code enforcement contracts.
- A decrease of \$100,777 in Economic Development due to the transfer of several new projects to FY20.
- Regional and Public Housing decreased \$11,758 due to an increase in compensated absences for housing staff.
- Aging increased \$7,249 as a result of increased NC Association of AAA (NC4A) revenue and administering the Southeastern Association of AAA conference.
- Salaries decreased \$20,437 due to an increase in compensated absences of \$8,068 and the removal of a planning position.
- Retirement decreased \$1,182 due to the decrease in salaries.
- Travel decreased \$4,018 to better reflect actual expenses.
- Printing decreased \$11,031 due to the reallocation of funds to cover expenses for supplies and maintenance-equipment.
- Maintenance-Equipment increased \$20,369 to cover needed software support/backup.
- Annual Meeting expense decreased by \$16,626 due to the recoding of expenses to supplies
- Supplies increased \$26,032 to reflect an accurate amount of expected expenses for new projects.
- As a result of funds being utilized for the current fiscal year and programs being transferred to FY20 there is a decrease of \$19,126 and \$559,727, respectively, in Contingency and Reserve for Future Expense.
- OPEB Trust Allocation decreased \$18,299 to accommodate the increase in fringe expenses due to an increase in compensated absences and reduction in salary.
- Special Revenue Funds were increased to cover any late year provider costs.
- All other changes to the expenditure lines reflect normal program needs.

Staff requests Policy Board to review and approve the 5th Amendment of the 2018-2019 Budget. I move that the Board approve the 5th Amendment of the 2018-2019 Budget as proposed.

Mr. Chip Black made a motion that the Policy Board approve the 5th Amendment of the 2018-2019 Budget as proposed. Ms. Jill Patton offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

#### FY 19-20 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 2019-2020 budget.

Mr. Larry Yoder made a motion that the Board open the public hearing. Mr. Larry Chapman offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Andrea Roper, Finance Director, presented the 2nd Reading of the 2019-2020 Budget. The proposed 2019-2020 budget reflects a total budget of \$19,564,276 and an operating budget of \$6,703,969 which represents an increase of the total budget from the March 26th, 2019 budget amendment of approximately 16.8% or \$3,292,874.

The 2nd Reading of the 2019-2020 Budget includes:

- 56 full and part-time staff positions
- WPCOG dues rate increased by \$.10 per capita per board approved 3-year plan.
- Financial Administration Services for three local governments and one local non-profit.
- Town Planning Services for 12 local governments.
- Code Enforcement Services for 10 local governments.
- Storm Water Partnership Services were added for 12 local governments.
- ADA Planning Services were added for two local governments
- Administration of two new urgent repair projects.
- GIS revenues reduced due to the end and reduction of two GIS projects.
- The Aging budget increased \$136,956 due to the administration of the Southeastern Association of AAA (SE4A) conference and the North Carolina AAA (NC4A).
- Salaries increased by \$41,742 due to the addition of two new positions in the Community and Regional Planning department.
- No rate increase for health insurance for the FY 19-20 budget. An anticipated increase of 8% was initially budgeted for, creating a decrease of \$23,291 in group insurance expenses.
- Contingency increased \$112,362 due to new project revenues being allocated for future use in FY 19-20 budget.
- Reserve for Future Use decreased \$64,071 due to funds being utilized for the FY 19-20 budget.
- Fund Balance Appropriated decreased due to the reduction in anticipated contracts.
- About \$97,824 in anticipated contracts for FY 19-20. The unfunded areas at this point are within Community Development.
- Special Revenue Funds increased to accommodate client/provider costs.

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

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

Mr. Larry Yoder made a motion that the Board approve the budget ordinance and FY2019-2020 Budget as presented. Mr. Forrest Fleming offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Recognition of Outgoing Board Member

Chair Pennell thanked outgoing board member, Mayor Robert Smyre of Maiden for his service to WPCOG. Mayor Smyre served as the Policy Board Chair from 2014-2015 and as a Policy Board Delegate from 2006-2019.

#### Executive Committee Vacancy

Chair Pennell discussed the Executive Committee Vacancy that would result from the retirement of Mayor Bob Smyre effective June 30, 2019. Mayor Smyre currently occupies an at-large seat on the Executive Committee. The terms of officers and members of the Executive Committee are based on the

calendar year and elections normally occur during the November meeting of the Policy Board. When vacancies occur after the November meeting, the bylaws instructs the Executive Committee to “recommend appointment of a member to fill the vacancy at the next regularly scheduled Policy Board meeting.”

The Executive Committee may choose any delegate of the Policy Board to fill the remainder of the term for this at-large seat. Approval of the appointment by the Policy Board is required.

The Executive Committee recommends the appointment of Lenoir Mayor Joe Gibbons to fill the unexpired term of Mayor Bob Smyre on the Executive Committee effective July 1, 2019.

Mr. Wayne Abele made a motion that the Policy Board appoint Mayor Joe Gibbons to the at-large seat of the Executive Committee effective July 1, 2019. Mr. George Holleman offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Staff Updates

Mr. Anthony Starr provided an update to the board on the WPCOG generator project. WPCOG received three bids for the project. The lowest of the three came from Smart Electric at \$127,500.

Ms. Sherry Long announced that she and her staff are looking to submit grant applications this month totaling over \$3 million.

#### Adjournment

Mr. Larry Chapman made a motion that the meeting adjourn at 7:09 pm and the motion was seconded by Ms. Helen Chestnut. The motion passed unanimously.