



Minutes
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission Meeting
Via Zoom Video Conferencing – April 19, 2021, 5:00 p.m.

Member Jurisdiction Representatives		
Augusta County	City of Staunton	Staff
✓ Butch Wells	✓ Carolyn Dull, Vice Chair	✓ Bonnie Riedesel, Executive Director
✓ Pam Carter	✓ Sharon Angle	✓ Rebecca Joyce, Community Program Manager
✓ Vickie Moran	Rockbridge County	✓ Elizabeth McCarty, Deputy Director
✓ Leslie Tate	✓ Jay Lewis	✓ Lee Bell, Finance Director
Bath County	✓ Chris Slaydon	✓ Rita Whitfield, Office Manager
Edward Hicklin	Rockingham County	✓ Nathan Garrison, Regional Planner
City of Buena Vista	✓ Steven Schofield	✓ Grace Blanchard, Regional Planner
✓ Billy Fitzgerald	✓ Dewey Ritchie	✓ Nancy Gourley, Transit Manager
City of Harrisonburg	✓ Rhonda Cooper	✓ Devon Thompson, Transit Prog. Administrator
✓ Laura Dent	✓ Kim Sandum	✓ Manas Ranjan, Transportation Planner
✓ George Hirschmann, Secretary	City of Waynesboro	✓ Zach Beard, Transportation Planner
✓ Adam Fletcher	✓ Terry Short, Treasurer	✓ Rachel Salatin, Marketing Coordinator
Highland County	Rusty Johnson	✓ Pat Lancey, Fiscal Technician
✓ David Blanchard		✓ Lee Bell, Finance Director
City of Lexington		Others
Frank Friedman, Chair		✓ Don Hindman, Shenandoah Rail Trail
		✓ Jordan Bowman, Litten & Sipe
		✓ Jason Tyree, Buena Vista

Call to Order

Governor Ralph Northam declared a state of emergency in Virginia on March 12, 2020, in response to COVID-19. In light of this emergency, the April 19, 2021, CSPDC meeting was conducted via Zoom Video Conferencing. The April 19, 2021, Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission Zoom Video Conference was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Acting Chairperson Terry Short.

Public Comment

Acting Chairperson Short opened the floor to the public for comments. There were no public comments.

Minutes

Acting Chairperson Short presented the minutes from the February 1, 2021, CSPDC Commission Zoom Video Conferencing meeting. Ms. Dull moved, seconded by Ms. Carter, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Executive Director Report

Under Executive Director's Report, Ms. Riedesel reported on the American Rescue Plan Act. She stated that staff has been following and tracking the Act and providing updates to localities as information is received on the \$2 trillion federal relief bill. Ms. Riedesel reported that the 21 localities are poised to receive an estimated \$119 million in funds through this Act which is based on population, and cities and towns are based on a modified CDBG formula. She reported on the four broad categories for allowable uses of funds and noted that guidance from the U.S. Treasury Department on final allocations and allowable costs are expected this month. Ms. Riedesel noted that localities have until December 2024 to use the funds.

Ms. Riedesel reported on the status of the Lewis Street Transit Hub property in Staunton, noting that the closing will be held on April 20, 2021. She stated that the property, owned by American Shakespeare Center, will be purchased for \$185,000 for the continued use of the BRITE Transit Hub.

Ms. Riedesel introduced and welcomed two new staff members: Pat Lancey, Fiscal Technician; and Manas Ranjan, new transportation planner. She announced that staff member Hunter Moore and her husband welcomed a baby boy in February.

Ms. Riedesel ask the following staff members to give an update on various projects the Commission is currently working on.

Ms. McCarty gave an update on GO Virginia, noting that the GO Virginia State Board awarded the Shenandoah Valley Partnership (SVP) \$821,000 in GO Virginia funds to improve six sites in GO Virginia Region 8. She reported on the work to be performed and the location of the six sites. Ms. McCarty stated that the total budget for the Site Enhancement Program is \$1,916,359 and is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2022. She noted that CSPDC staff will be providing grant administration services for the project. Ms. McCarty announced that the next GO Virginia Region 8 Council meeting will take place virtually on Tuesday, April 27, 2021.

Ms. Blanchard reported on the City of Buena Vista's CDBG Planning Grant. She stated that on April 1, Commission staff assisted the City in making application for a CDBG competitive grant in the amount of \$1,000,000. Ms. Blanchard noted that if awarded, funds will go towards downtown revitalization projects, including streetscape improvements, wayfinding signage, and a façade grant program. She stated that the project will facilitate economic growth and increase community activity in the City of Buena Vista's downtown.

Mr. Garrison gave an update on the Town of Goshen's CDBG Planning Grant. He stated that since January, the CSPDC has been assisting the Town of Goshen in preparing a grant application to determine the feasibility of converting part of an old school building into a mixed-use Community Center and public park space. Mr. Garrison reported on the various services the Center will provide. He noted that the application was submitted on April 1st for a total funding request of \$50,000 and if awarded, the CSPDC will provide grant administration services for the project.

Ms. Salatin gave an update on the Agricultural Enterprise Center Feasibility Study. She reported on a survey that was conducted on the Study that received 69 completed responses and 37

interviews with potential facility users and buyers. Ms. Salatin stated that the consultants, New Venture Advisors, presented three potential operating models and the “Shenandoah Specialty Meat & Produce Hub” was chosen for further development. Ms. Salatin stated that a draft of the report is currently under review and the final report will be shared in May.

Treasurer’s Report

Acting Chairperson Short presented for consideration the Treasurer’s Report for February 2021 (attached to file minutes). Mr. Bell gave a review on the Treasurer’s Report. He stated that he was working on the FY 22 budget and a draft will be presented to the Executive Committee in May, and the Full Commission in June for consideration. A question was raised by Mr. Fletcher and responded to by Mr. Bell regarding the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) inadvertently submitting for approval to and approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) a budget amount of \$7,621 less than they intended to submit. Mr. Fletcher asked about the status of the annual member assessment in which Ms. Riedesel explained that due to the coronavirus pandemic and the expected hardship put on local government budgets, plans to increase the per capita assessment by 10 cents were postponed last fiscal year. Ms. Riedesel noted that the jurisdictions have received their budget requests with the increase in the annual member assessment rate from 70 cents per capita to 80 cents per capita, effective July 1, 2021. Mr. Fitzgerald moved, seconded by Mr. Hirschmann, to approve the Treasurer’s Report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Recognition of New Commissioner

Acting Chairperson Short introduced and welcomed Mr. Dewey Ritchie, new representative for Rockingham County.

Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail Presentation and Consideration of Support Resolution

Acting Chairperson Short introduced and welcomed Mr. Don Hindman, Project Director for the Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail Partnership. Mr. Hindman gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail. He noted that the Exploratory Partnership is an unincorporated coalition of public, private, and non-profit organizations formed in November 2019 to transform an unused single-track railroad corridor from Front Royal to Broadway into a multi-use 50-mile trail. Mr. Hindman stated that the Governing Council of the Partnership is made up of 16 members representing the localities and organizations along the trail and encompasses 2 planning districts, 2 counties, and 8 towns. He noted that the Partnership is working collaboratively to support trail development and revitalization efforts throughout the corridor. Mr. Hindman reported on a feasibility study being conducted by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, with the help of VDOT, to study the feasibility of a Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail project. He stated that the feasibility study is an important next step in the ongoing exploration of converting the discontinued rail line into a multi-purpose trail

Acting Chairperson Short presented for consideration a Resolution to Support the Development of the Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail. Ms. Riedesel reviewed the Resolution, noting that the Resolution endorses the conversion of the 48-mile discontinued railroad to a multiuse trail for alternative transportation and recreation. The CSPDC resolves to join with other trail localities in seeking the support of regional, state, and federal agencies and the railroad’s owner, Norfolk Southern Corporation, toward the goal of development of the trail. Ms. Sandum moved, seconded

by Ms. Dull, for approval of the Resolution supporting the development of the Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Consideration of BRITE Contract Amendment with VRT (BAF #21-2)

Acting Chairperson Short presented for consideration the BRITE Contract Amendment with the Virginia Regional Transit (VRT). Ms. Gourley reviewed two addendums, noting that the first addendum includes the potential of two contract extensions and exercises the initial two-year extension for provision of transit service in Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024. This two-year extension is projected at approximately \$3.7 million dollars, funded with a combination of FTA, DRPT, local jurisdiction, and private transit partner funds. Ms. Gourley reviewed the second addendum, which is for the provision of the Afton Express service connecting Staunton, Augusta County and Waynesboro to Charlottesville and Fifth Street Station in Albemarle County. She noted that the CSPDC was awarded a demonstration grant to fund the startup and initial operations of the Afton Express in the amount of \$387,654 and will be combined with local match participation from the cities of Staunton, Waynesboro, and Charlottesville, Augusta and Albemarle counties, and the University of Virginia. Ms. Gourley stated that the term of this contract addendum in the amount of \$750,000 covers the period from service startup in 2021 through Fiscal Year 2024 to coincide with the term of Addendum 1. She noted that the CSPDC Procurement Policy requires the Commission to authorize all contracts in excess of \$100,000 in value. Ms. Riedesel noted that Mr. Jordan Bowman, Esq. with Litten & Sipe, was present to answer any questions. Mr. Fitzgerald moved, seconded by Mr. Hirschmann, to authorize the Executive Director to execute the two addendums to the turnkey transit contract with VRT to: (1) exercise the first extension to the turnkey contract to continue delivering the BRITE transit services through June 30, 2024; and (2) provide the initial term of the Afton Express service from Staunton, Fishersville, and Waynesboro to Charlottesville. Motion was carried unanimously.

Upon the departure of Acting Chairperson Terry Short due to a prior commitment, Mr. Butch Wells assumed the role of Acting Chairperson for the remainder of the meeting.

Consideration of FY22 Rural Transportation Planning Grant Application (BAF #21-3)

Acting Chairperson Butch Wells presented for consideration FY22 Rural Transportation Planning Grant application (attached to file minutes). Mr. Beard gave a brief review on the program, noting that the program will provide \$58,000 and CSPDC will provide a \$14,500 match. He stated that the match is financed using member assessment revenues and funds will be used for program administration; transportation-related grant writing for member localities; transportation planning assistance offered to rural localities; rural long-range transportation planning; completion of a rural corridor or intersection plan; assistance and support of the State's efforts related to transportation planning, including data collection; and development of performance measures in transportation planning, and bicycle and pedestrian planning. Mr. Fitzgerald moved, seconded by Ms. Carter, to approve the Resolution authorizing application for the FY22 Rural Transportation Planning Grant application. Motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Commonwealth Intergovernmental Review Process (CIRP)

Acting Chairperson Wells presented for consideration Commonwealth Intergovernmental Review Process (CIRPs). Ms. Angle moved, seconded by Ms. Carter, to endorse the staff recommendations on agenda items 9A-9C. Motion carried unanimously. They are as follows:

- A. An application submitted by Shenandoah Community Capital Fund, Inc. for EDA FY21 Build to Scale Program for \$750,095 to the Economic Development Administration's FY 2021 Build to Scale Program. Funding will be used for the REV Initiative, which focuses on creating a regional tech entrepreneurship strategy for the Shenandoah Valley, effectively telling the story of tech entrepreneurs and workers both inside and outside the Valley, building an interactive, digital ecosystem map to increase access to resources across the region, and the development of tech incubation programs for scalable tech ideas and entrepreneurs. Staff recommends endorsement of the project.

- B. An application submitted by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Inc. for Support for the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for \$2,134,627 for full-time equivalent staff to implement the detailed work plan. The full-time CAC Coordinator will support the mission of the CAC, respond to requests; lead the completion of the cooperative agreement's annual activities, outputs and final outcomes; support committee operations with critical output tasks such as securing meeting facilities pursuant to procurement requirements, preparing meeting materials; and assisting with CAC communications and outreach. Staff recommends endorsement of the project.

- C. An application submitted by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Inc. for Support for the Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) and Local Leadership Workgroup (LLW) for \$2,885,035 for full-time equivalent staff to implement the detailed work plan. Staff will be two full-time senior level staff coordinators and a full-time project assistant. Staff will provide assistance for the tasks designed to ensure that the LGAC and LLWG continue to meet the core purposes of advising, educating, and providing assistance to the Chesapeake Bay partnership, including the seven watershed jurisdictions and other non-federal partners, while also increasing LGAC's function as a conduit for information exchange with local officials and a vehicle for increasing local leadership and participation in watershed protection and restoration. Staff recommends endorsement of the project.

Other Business

Under Other Business, Ms. Riedesel presented for discussion the option of meeting in-person or virtually for future Commission meetings. She stated that Commission staff was looking into the technology of holding hybrid meetings in the future, which would combine virtual and in-person meetings. After discussion regarding holding Commission meetings virtually, it was the consensus of the participating members to hold the June 21, 2021, Commission meeting by Zoom video conferencing and then consider at that time whether to hold the August Commission meeting virtually or in-person.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion for adjournment was unanimously passed at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita F. Whitfield
Clerk to the Commission

Approved:

George Hirschmann
CSPDC Secretary