

s-OiuWestern Piedmont Council of Governments
Bimonthly Policy Board Meeting and Public Hearing
Tuesday, May 28, 2013
Rutherford College Town Hall

Members Present:

Chip Black, Chairman
Bob Smyre, Vice-Chairman
Kitty Barnes, At-Large
Barbara Pennell, At-Large
George Holleman, At-Large
Cheryl Pritchard
Bob Floyd
Nicky Setzer
Don Beal
Kyle Hayman, Alternate
Johnny Berry
Chris Abernathy
Trudy Simpson, Alternate
Dr. Caryl Burns
Karen Robinson
Larry Chapman
Merlin Perry
Dr. Alfred Hamer
Forrest Fleming, Alternate
Allen Spencer, Sr.
Gary McClure
Wayne Annas, Alternate
Charles Taylor
Amparo Alfaro
Jerry Hodge

Local Government:

Valdese
Maiden
Catawba County
Gamewell
Taylorsville
Cajah's Mountain
Cedar Rock
Claremont
Conover
Conover
Connelly Springs
Glen Alpine
Glen Alpine
Granite Falls
Hildebran
Hudson
Lenoir
Morganton
Morganton
Rhodhiss
Rutherford College
Rutherford College
Non-Elected
Non-Elected
Non-Elected

Members Absent:

Darrell Robertson, Secretary
Mary Bess Lawing, Treasurer
Wayne Abele, Past Chairman
Bruce Meisner, At-Large
Danny Ritchie
Mike Labrose

Alexander County
Newton
Burke County
Hickory
Drexel
Caldwell County

MINUTES: WPCOG Policy Board

Tuesday, May 28, 2013

Page 2

Members Absent (continued):

Trena Kirby	Sawmills
Sue Noblitt	Brookford
Jeff Hendron	Catawba
Vernon Moyer	Long View
Ann Smith	Non-Elected
Everett McNair	Non-Elected

Others/Guests Present:

Bill Satterwhite, Rutherford College Town Councilman
Kenneth Geathers, Manager, Rutherford College
Barbara Harmon, Manager, Rhodhiss
Tamara Brooks, Clerk, Connelly Springs
Todd Clark, Manager, Newton
Carl Greene
Jacob Flannick, Lenoir News Topic
Betty McCall, Glen Alpine Planning Board
Steve Lackey, Catawba County

Staff Present:

H. DeWitt Blackwell, Jr., Executive Director
Anthony Starr, Assistant Executive Director
Doug Laffon, Finance Director
Dana Roberts, Administrative Services Manager
Stephanie Hanvey, Section 8 Housing Director

Call to Order/Welcome

The regular bimonthly meeting of the WPCOG Policy Board was called to order by Chairman Black at 6:40 pm.

Chairman Black introduced several guests, including Cheryl Pritchard, a new Board member representing the Town of Cajah's Mountain, and Stephanie Hanvey, the new WPCOG Section 8 Housing Director. Mrs. Hanvey has been employed by the WPCOG for 20 years, working previously in the workforce development and community development programs.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

There were no additions or corrections to the minutes of the March meeting and they were unanimously approved on motion by Mr. Beal and seconded by Ms. Robinson.

MINUTES: WPCOG Policy Board

Tuesday, May 28, 2013

Page 3

Unfinished Business/Updates

There was no business.

New Business

HUD Revisions to Family Definition for Section 8 Housing Program

Mr. Starr stated that the Department of Housing and Urban Development issued new regulations requiring Section 8 programs to update their definition of a family. The current Administrative Plan defines a family as: 1) Two or more persons related by blood, marriage or operation of law as stipulated in NC State Law with the exception for two people 62 years or older (of the same sex) who live together for the well-being of each other. 2) Eligible singles who are 62 years old, handicapped or disabled, or the remaining member of a tenant family. The goal of the new regulations is to provide Section 8 assistance regardless of marital status, actual or perceived sexual orientation, or gender identity. The new HUD definition says that a family includes, but it is not limited to, regardless of marital status, actual or perceived sexual orientation, or gender identity the following:

- 1) Any single person including elderly, displaced, disabled, etc.
- 2) A group of persons residing together and such group includes but is not limited to: a) a family with or without children, or b) an elderly family, c) a disabled family, d) a displaced family, or e) the remaining member of a tenant family.

Mr. Starr said that HUD mandates that the change be made and board approval is not required. He said, however, the change may be controversial and he wanted Board members to be made aware so they are prepared to answer any questions that may arise.

Rewards to Section 8 Housing Administrative Plan

Mrs. Hanvey reported the WPCOG received news of budget shortfalls in housing vouchers due to sequestration, resulting in a 7% cut in the program budget as well as a potential 11.75% cut in administrative funds. Several changes to the Section 8 Administration are necessary to address the funding reduction. Mrs. Hanvey noted that this action would typically be made by the Policy Board but due to time restrictions that require a public hearing to be held 45 days prior to amending the plan, staff asked the Board to pass a resolution authorizing the Executive Committee to enact these changes at its June 27 meeting. This would result in a cost savings of \$37,000.

A motion was made by Mr. Setzer and seconded by Mr. Beall to adopt a resolution authorizing the Executive Committee to enact changes to the Section 8 Housing Administrative Plan at its June 27 meeting. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

MINUTES: WPCOG Policy Board

Tuesday, May 28, 2013

Page 4

Consideration of Assistance/Disbursement and Procurement Policies for Single-Family Rehab Programs in Alexander and Catawba Counties

Mr. Blackwell indicated the WPCOG is required to adopt these policies to outline how the programs will be operated, i.e. eligibility requirements, application process, type work to be completed, bidding and contractual arrangements. There was some discussion and the Policy Board unanimously approved the Assistance and Procurement/Disbursement Policies for Alexander and Catawba County Single-Family Rehabilitation Programs, on motion by Mr. Beal and second by Mr. Smyre.

Chairman Black suggested that a staff person involved in this program attend a future meeting to explain more about Single-Family Rehab and give an example of the impact it has had on a families in the region.

Consideration of FY 2013-14 Budget on Second Reading

Mr. Starr reviewed major changes made after the first reading of the budget in March. He explained other budget/ personnel information including the challenges the organization faces due to several funding reductions. Mr. Starr noted that the proposed budget eliminates or reduces several staff positions including the elimination of one part-time housing inspector, elimination of two housing specialists (one due to retirement), the elimination of one community development position, the reduction of one administrative position by one half due to retirement, and the furlough by one day per week for one secretary. He assured board members that the adjustments will position the WPCOG well for the future.

Chairman Black convened a public hearing at 7:10 pm to entertain comments or questions about the FY 2013-14 budget. There were no persons present who wished to be heard and the public hearing was closed at 7:11 pm.

There were no further questions about the budget and Mr. Beal made a motion to approve the FY 2013-14 budget ordinance. The motion was seconded by Ms. Robinson and passed unanimously.

Consideration of FY 2012-13 Budget Amendments

Mr. Laffon reviewed proposed amendments to the FY 2013 budget. The amendments result in a 1.25 percent decrease from the previous budget revision made in November, and a decrease of less than two tenths of one percent from the original budget adopted in May 2012. He noted some of the amendments are necessary due to the retirement of several employees and vacant positions. Other factors that necessitated these revisions are scaling back on several programs included in the November budget revision, tightening of program budgets at yearend, computer upgrades, installation of additional equipment for the HVAC system, etc. Mr. Laffon said the budget amendments decrease the budget by \$202,612, resulting in a balanced budget of \$15,996,400 and an operating budget of \$4,934,152.

MINUTES: WPCOG Policy Board

Tuesday, May 28, 2013

Page 5

There was a brief discussion and Dr. Hamer made a motion to approve the budget amendments as presented. Mr. Chapman seconded and the motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Department Updates

Mr. Blackwell reported that Sheila Dotson, Workforce Development Director, will retire on July 31. He said she had served the WPCOG and the region during a difficult economic period and she will be missed.

Mr. Blackwell gave an update on the State reorganization mentioned at the last meeting. The study group has proposed that the state be divided into eight prosperity zones. In this configuration our four counties would remain together and 11 other counties would be included in the zone. He said this is the version closest to what we had recommended. Our focus will be to make our four counties the center of this 15-county region.

Mr. Blackwell announced the retirement of Dana Roberts on July 1. Mrs. Roberts will be out of the office the month of July, as required by the Local Government Employees Retirement System, and return August 1 on a half-time basis. It was noted that Mrs. Roberts served the WPCOG and the region well for more than 40 years.

Other Business

Bimonthly Financial Report

Chairman Black directed Policy Board members to direct any questions about this report to Doug Laffon.

Next Meeting

The Town of Maiden will host the next meeting on July 23 at the new Maiden Town Hall.

Adjournment

There was no further business to come before the Board and the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana B. Roberts, Clerk to the Board