

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING  
May 20, 2020  
ZOOM Meeting**

**Convened: 10:00 A.M.**

**Adjourned: 11:30 A.M.**

**Members In Attendance:**

Hon. Debbie Baughman  
Hon. Randy Bunch  
Hon. Laura Burke  
Mrs. Sharon Clapper  
Hon. Barry Dallara  
Hon. Colleen Dawson  
Hon. Bruce Erb  
Mr. Jim Foster  
Hon. Scott Hunt

Hon. Josh Lang  
Mr. Tom Luciano  
Ms Beth McGregor  
Hon. Mark Sather  
Hon. Jeff Thomas  
Hon. Pam Tokar-Ickes  
Hon. Gerald Walker  
Hon. Scott Walls  
Mr. Arthur Wilkin

**Others In Attendance:**

Mr. Daniel Bowers  
Mr. Brandon Carson  
Mr. George Gvozdich  
Mr. Steven Howsare

Mrs. Trudy Mitchell  
Mrs. Debbi Prosser  
Ms Deborah Shaffer  
Mrs. Susan Whisler

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Commissioner Erb, President, called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

Commissioner Erb explained that due to the COVID-19 pandemic and in concert with Governor Wolf's mandate for social distancing, the SAP&DC meeting was being held through the ZOOM platform. He requested that members keep their microphones muted except when speaking and that individuals say their name when speaking especially when making a motion and be courteous and not interrupt another speaker.

He then requested a roll call which was taken by Mrs. Deborah Shaffer.

**MINUTES, March 18, 2020:**

A motion was entered by Commissioner Lang to approve the March 18, 2020 Board of Directors' meeting minutes, as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Clapper and was unanimously approved.

**FINANCE REPORT:**

Mr. Daniel Bowers, SAP&DC Director of Finance, presented the Accounts Payable/General Fund Ending Balance, reviewed some of the larger expenses and reported no changes to the information submitted. He also provided a summary of available Commission funds and reported that SAP&DC remains in a good cash position.

A motion was entered by Mr. Lucinano approve the Accounts Payable/General Fund Ending Balance, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and was unanimously approved.

**SAP&DC FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020 OPERATIONAL BUDGET:**

Mr. Daniel Bowers, Director of Finance, explained that for Fiscal Year 2020-2021, SAP&DC's budget was again prepared and designed through a collaborative effort with all members of SAP&DC's management team. He reported that the process went smoothly due to the hard work and cooperation of all management team members.

Mr. Bowers then provided members with a summary of items included as part of SAP&DC's Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget and reviewed the budget in detail. Mr. Bowers also stated that the budget contained a proposed 3% wage increase for employees.

He explained that the budget is balanced with a projected revenue of \$8,875,308 which represents an overall decrease of \$344,185 from the 2019-2020 budget. The largest decrease was due to a reduction in Workforce funding, down 22%. However, due to the diligence and careful spending decisions by the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board there is carryover money available to assist in covering this loss.

Mr. Bowers also stated that proposed new funding for FY 2021 will be presented by Mrs. Trudy Mitchell and Mr. Brandon Carson.

A motion was entered by Mr. Luciano to approve SAP&DC's Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Operational Budget, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lang and was unanimously approved.

**BUSINESS LENDING SERVICES:**

Mrs. Trudy A. Mitchell, Director, Business Lending Services, presented and reviewed the actions taken by the Loan Review Committee.

The applications for Casey J. Carowick and Jeremy H. & Kaitlyn Imler were approved, as presented. The applications are now presented to the Board of Directors for concurrence.

A motion was entered by Commissioner Thomas to concur with the actions taken by the Loan Review Committee, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Walls and was unanimously approved.

Mrs. Mitchell explained that under the EDA CARES Act, SAP&DC was invited to apply for up to \$4.5 million to recapitalize its EDA Revolving Loan Fund. If SAP&DC applies for and is granted full funding, there exists the possibility of utilizing 10% (approximately \$400,000) for administration purposes. The funds must be used within 24 months and is intended for companies that have been affected by COVID-19, but it may be possible to modify the work plan to include broadband. This funding is not competitive, but SAP&DC must meet the criteria. Once developed, Mrs. Mitchell will provide guidelines to the SAP&DC Board of Directors members.

**COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) RESOLUTION:**

Mr. Bandon Carson, Director, Planning & Community Development, explained that the Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires the Commission's Board of Directors to certify that, through its meetings, there has been opportunity to review and act upon proposed EDA programming. Accordingly, a resolution in support of SAP&DC's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy planning process and the activities undertaken by the SAP&DC for the Southern Alleghenies Region is now presented for approval.

For the EDA CARES Act supplement to the CEDS a resolution is also required stating that the CEDS work is undertaken regionally. SAP&DC staff is working on completion of a resolution; however, each individual county must also pass a similar resolution and provide it to SAP&DC Planning Division staff.

A motion was entered by Commissioner Thomas to approve the Resolution in support of SAP&DC's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy planning process and the activities undertaken by the SAP&DC for the Southern Alleghenies Region. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Walker and was unanimously approved.

**EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROJECTS:**

Mr. Brandon Carson explained that SAP&DC is designated by the Federal Office of Management and Budget (under E.O. 12372) to review requests for Federal financial assistance within its six-county service area for concurrence with relevant regional planning documents. Two projects requesting federal financial assistance were presented as consistent with the Commission's overall Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

A motion was entered by Commissioner Walker to approve the Projects Under Executive Order 12372, as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Clapper and was unanimously approved

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD REPORT:**

Mrs. Susan Whisler, SAWDB Director, presented a request to reappoint Ms Cheryl Rose, Fulton County Medical Center; Mr. Ron Aldon, Somerset County Chamber of Commerce; and, Ms Tina Pelesky, Bureau of Professional Occupations and Affairs, to the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board (SAWDB). All three members are in good standing and contribute greatly to the work of the SAWDB. It is, therefore, recommended that all three members be reappointed to a three-year term.

A motion was entered by Mrs. Clapper to approve the reappointment of Ms Cheryl Rose, Mr. Ron Aldon and Ms Tina Pelesky to a three-year term on the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board. The motion was seconded by Ms McGregor and was unanimously approved.

Mrs. Whisler reported that a cut of 13.5% is expected in Workforce funding, however, due to the diligence and careful spending decisions by the Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board there is carryover money available to assist in covering this loss.

Mrs. Whisler also announce that the CareerLinks may reopen in mid to late June. The reopening, however, is being carefully reviewed to ensure the safety of employees and clients by having personal protection equipment and protocols in place that are in line with the recommendations of both the Commonwealth and the CDC. Commissioner Tokar-Ickes inquired as to why the CareerLinks are not opening sooner. Mrs. Whisler stated that although the CareerLinks are not currently open employees are working remotely and clients are continuing to

receive all required services. She again stated that it is imperative that the CareerLinks reopen with the safety of both employees and clients as the top concern.

**OTHER BUSINESS & INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

Mr. Carson reported that the Commission's server is over five years old and with the increased demands on it due to employees working remotely under COVID-19 guidelines it needs replaced. There are monies in the current 2019-2020 for making this purchase. Two quotes were received and considered. It is recommended that the server be purchased from CDW, the company submitting the low bid of \$9,000.

SAP&DC will be contemplating the purchase of another server in Fiscal Year 2020-2021 to assist with the growing technology needs of the Commission. This purchase was included in the 2020-2021 Operational Budget presented and approved earlier in this meeting.

A motion was entered by Commissioner Dallara to approve the purchase of a new server for the Commission through CDW, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Walker and was unanimously approved.

Mr. Steven Howsare, Executive Director, presented the letter that was approved by electronic vote and sent to Governor Wolf on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020 requesting consideration for moving the region's counties to the "Yellow Phase" under COVID-19 protocols. The letter is now presented for concurrence by the full Board and to be recorded in the minutes.

A motion was entered by Mr. Luciano to concur with the electronic vote authorizing the letter to Governor Wolf requesting consideration for moving the region's counties to the "Yellow Phase" under COVID-19 protocols. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lang and was unanimously approved.

Mr. Carson reported that SAP&DC was invited by the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) to apply for \$400,000 in funding from its CARES program. These are noncompetitive funds that will not require match and are to aid in the recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance investments will support a wide range of non-construction and construction activities, including Revolving Loan Funds, in regions across the country experiencing severe economic dislocations brought about by the coronavirus pandemic.

Examples of projects that EDA may fund through its CARES Act Recovery Assistance include economic recovery planning and preparing technical assistance strategies to address economic dislocations caused by the coronavirus pandemic, preparing or updating resiliency plans to respond to future pandemics, implementing entrepreneurial support programs to diversify economies, and constructing public works and facilities that will support economic recovery, including the deployment of broadband for purposes including supporting telehealth and remote learning for job skills. This allows SAP&DC to utilize some of the EDA CARES Act funding to offset the cost for formation of a Broadband Co-op which is vital to the growth of the SAP&DC region. The hiring of a Disaster Recovery Coordinator is also allowable under the EDA CARES Act funding and this position may be critical to assisting the SAP&DC region in recovering from the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic and with the deployment of broadband. Mr. Carson is preparing a job description and once completed will present for approval to add the position to SAP&DC's staff complement.

EDA intends to deploy its CARES Act funding as quickly, effectively, and efficiently as possible, and in a manner that meets communities needs. Therefore, it is imperative that SAP&DC is ready to accept and utilize these funds quickly.

Mr. Howsare reported that the renovations are almost complete on the building, therefore, he executed the lease extension that was previously approved by the board.

He then reminded members that the next SAP&DC Board of Directors meeting will be held Wednesday, July 15, 2020. Members will be kept informed as to how the meeting will be conducted whether in person or via Zoom.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Josh Lang

Secretary