

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
September 15, 2020
Commission Office**

Convened: 10:00 A.M.

Adjourned: 11:00 A.M.

Members In Attendance:

Hon. Debbie Baughman
Hon. Randy Bunch
Hon. Laura Burke
Mr. Jay Cessna
Mrs. Sharon Clapper (via Zoom)
Hon. Barry Dallara (via Zoom)
Hon. Bruce Erb

Hon. Scott Hunt
Ms Beth McGregor
Ms Donald E. Rhodes, II
Hon. Jeff Thomas
Hon. Pamela Tokar-Ickes
Hon. Gerald Walker
Hon. Scott Walls

Others In Attendance:

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

Ms Regina Klevan
Mrs. Trudy Mitchell (via Zoom)
Ms Deborah Shaffer (via Zoom)
Mrs. Susan Whisler

CALL TO ORDER:

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

Commissioner Walker announced that Mrs. Sharon Clapper, Hon. Barry Dallara, Ms Trudy Mitchell, and Ms Deborah Shaffer were participating via Zoom.

MINUTES:

A motion was entered by Commissioner Bunch to approve the July 21, 2021, Board of Directors and the August 27, 2021, Personnel Committee Meeting minutes, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Thomas 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 Commissioner Erb to approve the Accounts Payable/General Fund Ending Balance, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Walls 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 Everite Door Company, Inc., Gynecology Care Specialist, LLC, Outdoor Supply, Inc. and Weaver Sanitation Services, Inc. were approved, as presented. Mrs. Mitchell reported that the application for Weaver Sanitation Services, Inc. from Bedford County had already been approved by PIDA. All applications are now presented to the Board of Directors for concurrence.

Mrs. Mitchell then presented applications submitted under the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) Cares from Andrew R. & Jennifer Heltzel and Uncle D's Sassy Glass Winery. The application for Uncle D's was from Clearfield County but was authorized for consideration by SAP&DC. The applications were approved, as presented, and are now presented to the Board of Directors for concurrence.

A motion was entered by Commissioner Hunt to concur with the actions taken by the Loan Review Committee relative to the loan applications, as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cessna and was unanimously approved.

SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD REPORT:

Mrs. Susan Whisler, SAWDB Director, reported that annually the SAWDB provides its draft budget to the region's local elected officials for review and concurrence. Mrs. Whisler then presented and reviewed the PY 2021 budget detail explaining the different sources of revenue administered by the Board, the budget's cost categories, and approved level of funding. She further explained that this budget represents a fluid document and that the SAWDB has the ability to move money between the Adult and Dislocated Worker allocations as

well as obligating funds from the Reserve line. Mrs. Whisler then informed members that this budget represented over \$6 million in funding for SAP&DC and the region.

Mrs. Whisler also reported that the Altoona Public Library had finished its renovations and that the Blair County CareerLink had moved back into its location at the library.

A motion was entered by Mrs. Clapper to approve the SAWDB PY 21 budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms McGregor 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 Tokar-Ickes to approve the Projects Under Executive Order 12372, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baughman and was unanimously approved.

ALLEGHENIES BROADBAND UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS:

Mr. Brandon Carson, Director, Planning and Community Development Division, reminded members of the Regional Broadband study that was completed approximately 18 months ago. The study focused primarily on the expansion of wireless internet services in our six counties in order to expand services as quickly as possible in a cost-effective manner.

ABI is in the implementation phase of the study now. The implementation is being done in a three-tier approach. Tier 1 being areas that are lacking connectivity but have existing vertical assets. This allows SAP&DC to access American Rescue and ARC funds to assist with the process for two wireless projects; Tier 2 is the NTIA funding strategy. This is for areas that lack connectivity and also lack vertical assets to expand wireless service. Tier 2 takes more time and more resources. There is the \$20 million request into NTIA to assist with this and an application has also been submitted to ARC for a power grant in the amount of \$750,000. The award of the ARC grant is going to be announced tomorrow and is for the construction of four towers in

southeastern Bedford County, an area that is currently heavily relying on DSL service. Bedford County is also committing resources. The project is moving forward; but it will take 12 to 18 months before any structures are available; and, Tier 3 is for fiber considerations. Fiber is what is needed to grow our communities in the coming years in terms of connectivity. It is important to get to a place where fiber can be offered to residential and business customers.

ABI is, therefore, proposing the completion of a Regional Fiber-Optic Network design for Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset counties in order to provide a framework for the construction of a reliable, high-speed fiber-optic network that will have a positive impact on the region in the foreseeable future. Mr. Carson provided a timeline for the project design work.

The cost to complete this effort is estimated between \$175,000-\$250,000. Collaboration among the counties will result in a high-level design for a fiber-optic network that can be constructed in phases, as funding becomes available. Mr. Carson stated that ABI will be seeking funding from a variety of sources including SAP&DC's six counties. Commissioner Thomas stated that no one should expect immediate results; the process could take anywhere from five to ten years.

OTHER BUSINESS & INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

Steven Howsare, Executive Director, planned to present revisions to several of SAP&DC's Personnel Manual Policies which had been recommended by SAP&DC's labor attorney shortly before the Board meeting was to be held. However, SAP&DC's labor attorney and solicitor decided that they would like to make additional revisions to several of the policies. It was, therefore, decided to hold approval of all the policies until the November 17, 2021, Board of Directors' meeting.

A motion was entered by Commissioner Thomas to table the revisions to SAP&DC's Personnel Policies Manual until the SAP&DC Board of Directors meeting scheduled for November 17, 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baughman and was unanimously approved.

The Personnel Committee should also have a recommendation for awarding the contract for the salary study at the November 17th Board meeting. Three proposals were submitted and following presentations two are still being considered while awaiting further information from the proposers.

The next SAP&DC Board of Commissioners meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 17, 2021. A Finance Committee will be held at 9:00 AM prior to the SAP&DC Board meeting to present and review SAP&DC's FY 20-21 audit.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Hunt

Secretary