

THOMAS JEFFERSON PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION (TJPDC)

Draft Minutes, June 4, 2020

Commissioners Present:

Dale Herring – Greene County
Dylan Bishop – Nelson County
Keith Smith – Fluvanna County
Andrea Wilkinson – Greene County
Tony O’Brien – Fluvanna County
Donna Price – Albemarle County (7:05 pm)
Lisa Green – City of Charlottesville (7:11 pm)
Bob Babyok – Louisa County (7:28 pm)

Commissioners Absent:

Eric Purcell – Louisa County
Ned Gallaway – Albemarle County
Jesse Rutherford – Nelson County
Michael Payne – City of Charlottesville

Staff Present:

Chip Boyles, Executive Director
Christine Jacobs, Chief Operating Officer
David Blount, Deputy Director - Legislative Liaison
Lucinda Shannon, Transportation Program Manager
Jessica Hersch-Ballering, Transportation Planner

Guests Present:

Sean Tubbs, Piedmont Environmental Council, Citizen
Peter Krebs, Piedmont Environmental Council, Citizen

Note: The Governor has declared a state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the nature of this declared emergency makes it impracticable or unsafe for the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission to assemble in a single location. This meeting was held utilizing electronic virtual communication with the Zoom software application, and in accordance with virtual meeting procedures and policies as outlined in Item 4.0-01 of the Virginia state budget (HB29), as effective April 24, 2020. A recording of the meeting was made available to the public on June 6, 2020 www.tjpd.org.

1. Call to Order: Dale Herring called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. He started with an overview of the electronic meeting protocols, to include, informing participants that the meeting was being recorded, that roll call votes would be verbal, that all participants should keep their microphones on mute unless speaking, that the chair will verbally identify who makes a motion and seconds the motion, and that public comments are limited to 2 minutes. He informed participants that TJPDC staff was monitoring the meeting for those requesting to join the meeting late or for unexpected interruptions to the meeting. Ms. Jacobs then read the names of all Commissioners for the roll call. Results of the roll call are noted above.

2. Matters from the Public:

- a. Comments by the Public: None
- b. Comments provided via email, online, web site, etc.: None
- c. Presentations: None



3. Consent Agenda: The consent agenda consisted of the draft minutes from the May 7, 2020 Commission Meeting and the Quarterly Financial Report through April 30, to include: the April Dashboard Report, the April Profit & Loss Statement, the April Balance Sheet and the April Accrued Revenues Report

Action Items:

1. Minutes of the May 7 Commission Meeting:
 2. Quarterly Financial Reports
- **On a motion by Donna Price, seconded by Lisa Green the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the May 7, 2020 meeting.**

4. Resolutions:

a. Election of FY21 Officers: The Commission acted as the nominating committee notifying the Commission of the recommended slate of officers over ten days in advance of the June 4, 2020 meeting and recommended the following slate of officers:

- i. Dale Herring, Chair
- ii. Jesse Rutherford, Vice Chair
- iii. Keith Smith, Treasurer
- iv. Chip Boyles, Secretary

- **On a motion by Donna Price, seconded by Lisa Green, the Commission unanimously agreed to accept the nominations presented.**

There were no additional recommendations for officer nominations from the floor.

- **On a motion by Donna Price, seconded by Andrea Wilkinson, the commission unanimously approved the election of the recommended slate of officers.**

b. FY21 Rural Transportation Smart Scale Funding Support: Mr. Boyles gave an overview on the number of projects that each locality and the MPO could submit for Smart Scale. He noted that a summary of each project was included in the meeting packet. Mr. Babyok asked if projects received priority if they were located within two jurisdictions. Mr. Boyes shared that, no, they did not get priority but that the local governments could prioritize their projects. Ms. Price asked if the MPO was submitting projects for both Albemarle and Charlottesville. Mr. Boyles shared that Charlottesville did not request any projects to be submitted by the MPO this round.

- **On a motion by Donna Price, seconded by Bob Babyok, the commission unanimously approved the FY21 Rural Transportation Smart Scale Funding Support Resolution.**

c. FY21 Rural Transportation Smart Scale TJPDC Request: Ms. Greene asked if projects were connecting to Charlottesville, but not located in Charlottesville, were they City or County project. Mr. Boyles responded that a project would be a County project if located only in the County.

- **On a motion by Donna Price, seconded by Lisa Green, the commission unanimously approved the FY21 Rural Transportation Smart Scale TJPDC Requests Resolution.**

3. Lease Extension for 401 Water Street: Mr. Boyles shared that he continues to look for other sites for lease or purchase. The current building lease expires August 31, 2020. He would prefer to own (since the TJPDC has been leasing for over 45 years). Two years ago, a building committee was formed. To date, there have been no viable options in a central location with ample meeting space.

The current landlord has confirmed that he will not be doing any renovations, other than minor improvements. The lease renewal would include 3% annual inflation with 4% for the first year. The TJPDC is currently paying \$12.35/square foot and utilities are included. Many comparable spaces go for \$20-\$22/square foot with utilities not included. There was a brief discussion about whether the central location of Charlottesville made purchase less feasible. Also, the USDA loan is not eligible within City limits so the County of Albemarle would be centrally located with ample meeting space and ease of commute for staff coming from all localities.

4. **On a motion by Andrea Wilkinson, seconded by Donna Price, the commission unanimously approved the pursual of a lease extension and, after review of the building committee, the acceptance and signature of a 5-year lease agreement on the current building.**

e. Appointment of David Blount as TJPDC Freedom of Information Officer (FOIA): Public bodies are required to have a FOIA officer to review requests. The last General Assembly decision included regional governments in the public body requirements. As Deputy Director, and in his work as the Legislative Liaison, David Blount was recommended for appointment as the FOIA officer. Ms. Green asked if the FOIA role would stay with the Deputy Director position should there be staff turnover. Mr. Boyles stated that the role would be dependent upon the individual and not the position. Mr. Blount shared that the code stipulated that the officer should be a person with knowledge in this area.

- **On a motion by Donna Price, seconded by Andrea Wilkinson, the commission unanimously approved the Resolution to Appoint David Blount, Deputy Director, as the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) officer.**

5. New Business:

a. Legislative Report: Mr. Blount provided an overview of the memo that was included in the commission packet. He highlighted the following: 1. April state revenue collections fell over 26% from the same period last year (\$700 million). 2. State officials are expecting revenue collections to drop \$1 billion for FY20 and at least another \$1 billion for FY21. 3. State transportation revenues are expected to decline sharply, due to their reliance on retail sales taxes, motor vehicle sales taxes and motor fuel taxes. 4. Revenues to Virginia localities may decline by over \$500 million from losses in sales taxes, meals, transient occupancy, service fees and delinquent payments, and FY21 local revenues could decline by \$1.5 billion or more. 6. There is an expected re-forecast of state revenues in August. A special session of the General Assembly is expected to be called to consider access to reserve funds, lower revenue projections, and budget-cutting amendments. 7. Localities across Virginia are slated to receive more than \$644 million in federal Cares Act money around the first of June to include, Albemarle - \$9.5 million, Charlottesville - \$4.1 million, Fluvanna - \$2.4 million, Greene - \$1.7 million, Louisa - \$3.3 million, and Nelson - \$1.3 million. 8. Nearly \$215 million in CARES Act funding will be sent to Virginia school division in the fall. Allowable uses for the dollars are very flexible, and applications for the funding are due August 1. 9. A final summary of action on legislative bills from the 202 session was distributed in the most recent Legislative Update and is available at the link provided in the memo included in the meeting packet.

b. COVID-19 CARES Act Local Funding: Mr. Boyles shared that the Mayor and Chairs meeting was very successful and included both the Health Department and 4 high-level administrators from UVA. Mr. Boyles noted that a memo from Aubrey Lane, Virginia's Secretary of Finance, was included in the meeting packet. There was a brief discussion about the challenge of knowing if spending was eligible and if it could be done by the expiration date of the grant. Mr. Herring noted that with the need for Broadband, was it possible for localities to join to expand coverages as long as there were not ongoing costs. Mr. Blount shared that they could do so if it was for distance learning or telework but that

projects could not ‘expand capacity’ of the localities. Mr. Herring shared that the Mayors and Chairs meeting was extremely helpful in relaying information to the region.

6. Executive Director’s Report:

- a. Executive Director’s Report: The TJPDC remains strong in its financial position. Net quick assets are \$752,999 with over 7 months of available operating expenses on hand. One area of concern is that the unrestricted cash on hand is at \$102,049 which is 1 month of average monthly operating expenses. The target level is 4 months. This is due to several outstanding payments for work completed. After instituting an improved billing system for work completed, we received \$106,946 so far in May. In April there was a positive net gain of nearly \$4,000 with an anticipated fiscal year net Gain of \$26,000. 83% of the fiscal year is complete and we have received 88% of our total budgeted income. As of April, we have total current assets of \$1,062,550 and total fixed assets of \$10,109. We currently have enough remaining in our grant contract balances to cover average monthly expenses for May and June.
- b. TJPDC Office Activities of COVID-19: COVID-19 has not hurt the TJPDC’s work productivity. Staff will continue to work remotely through at least July 6th with an anticipated return of alternating days to limit staff contact.
- c. Regional Broadband Partnership Update: A draft framework for the creation of a Regional Broadband Partnership is included in the meeting packet. The draft is to obtain the Commission’s direction for staff’s moving the effort forward. The partnership is intended to be a convening and information sharing for bridge-building between stakeholders. Mr. Boyles asked that commissioners email him or Mr. Herring if they had suggestions, questions or comments. Adoption of the framework will be considered at the August commission meeting.
- d. Monthly Staff Activity Report: The report is included in the meeting packet and is for review only.
- e. Other office items: Mr. Boyles highlighted activities of the TJPDC detailed in the memo included in the meeting packet.

7. Other Business:

a. Roundtable Discussion by Jurisdiction:

- Albemarle County: Ms. Price complimented the Fluvanna water tower. She noted that Albemarle was considering a gradual reopening from COVID remote work. The Community Development office continues to stay open, but few other offices are open to the public. The county has continued relatively normal operations. The county is seeking to expand broadband coverage especially since independent businesses have limited accessibility. They are using buses for hot spots. The supervisors are closely watching the budget and are concerned with a reduction in state funds.
- Nelson County: Ms. Bishop shared that the planning commission would begin meeting in July, but that meetings have not occurred to date. She noted that public hearings were on hold until then. She shared that the Claudius Crozet tunnel would be opening in August.
- Louisa County: Commissioner Babyok noted that their board was conducting live meetings w/ six-foot social distancing and up to 10 public participants in the room with alternate row seating. They continue to live stream meetings and have a live telephone bank. The last board meeting included a resolution against racism that included discussion on how they could ‘put teeth into it.’ A public meeting will be scheduled with leaders of prominence in the county. Mr. Babyok shared his disappointment in the Census reporting since so much funding is riding on the responses. To date, only 45% of Louisa residents have responded to the Census. Mr. Boyles shared that Louisa and

Nelson may have the lowest response rate due to the prevalence of 2nd homes, so the percentage does not accurately represent those residing in the county.

- City of Charlottesville: Commissioner Greene shared that the Planning Commission has not yet met but will be testing their first virtual meeting with a public hearing. The comprehensive plan continues to make progress with their #CvillePlansTogether work available on the Neighborhood Develop Services webpage. The council continues to work on the budget.
- Fluvanna: Commissioner O'Brien shared that Fluvanna has continued to operate without the public in person. There has been a great deal of discussion on how to use the CARES Act funding. The county was considering business grants, advertising the use of masks. Mr. O'Brien would like to hear how others are using their CARES money. The water tower is now up and painted.
- Greene County: Commissioner Wilkinson passed her time to Commissioner Herring. Commissioner Herring shared that the board continued to meet and that there were concerns with the impact of Phase II on the schools. With half of the students in the buildings at one time the bus routes would double, increasing expenses. Greene is concerned about the number of families that would consider homeschooling and how it would impact their locality. Mr. Herring shared that the Planning Director in Greene was working with UVA on telemedicine opportunities and the selection of a site in Greene. The board is considering the uses of their CARES Act funding. They are grateful for the money but also concerned about spending it correctly. They have concerns that if they do spend it incorrectly, they will not have the money to repay the state. The board plans to adopt their FY21 budget at the next meeting.

c. Next Meeting – August 6, 2020 (No July meeting): Commissioner Herring thanked everyone for their participation and suggested that next month's meeting would also be electronic. Commissioners will hear from Chip on how to participate.

8. Adjournment:

- **On a motion by Lisa Green, seconded by Andrea Wilkinson, the Commission unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 pm.**