



NORTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA REGIONAL PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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North Central Executive Committee Meeting Wednesday, July 24, 2019

Members

James Thomas	Cameron County
Mark McCracken	Clearfield County
Matthew Quesenberry	Elk County
Jeffrey Pisarcik	Jefferson County
Carol Duffy	McKean County
Douglas Morley	Potter County

Staff

James Chorney
Amy Kessler
Cheryl DePanfilis
Christine Perneski
Edward Matts
Jennifer Hibbard
Mary Lou Jessop

Guests

Debra Thompson	Strategy Solutions, Inc.
Jay Breneman	Strategy Solutions, Inc.
Thomas Beveridge	Coppolo & Coppolo
Brian Stockman	Ridgway Record

Chair Quesenberry called the meeting to order at 9:30 with the pledge to the flag.

QUORUM/INTRODUCTIONS

There was a quorum for the meeting.

Matt reported that Elk County Planning Director, Jodi Foster's husband passed away suddenly on Sunday and the entire courthouse family is grieving. Jodi had been working on a Multi-Modal Grant and Matt wanted to recognize and thank Amy for her stepping in and working with Tracy to help get this grant put together.

MINUTES

On the agenda under Minutes, it showed we were approving the May 22 Minutes. This should have been the minutes from the June 26 Executive Committee Meeting.

With no corrections or amendments to June 26, 2019, Executive Committee Minutes, Doug Morley moved to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Jeff Pisarcik. Motion unanimously passed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Quesenberry called for an Executive Session at 9:37 regarding Personnel.

Jeff Pisarcik moved to go into Executive Session, seconded by Carol Duffy. Motion unanimously passed.

Chairman Quesenberry called for a motion to come out of Executive Session at 10:35 AM.

Jeff Pisarcik moved to come out of Executive Session, seconded by Doug Morley. Motion unanimously passed.

The regular meeting resumed at 10:35 AM.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Quesenberry called for a motion to approve James E. Chorney as Executive Director of North Central.

Jeff Pisarcik moved to approve James E. Chorney as Executive Director, seconded by Doug Morley. Motion unanimously passed.

Financial Reports

Regarding the Financial Reports, Jim said this is year end and they are still making final changes to some of the grants to do the closeouts. We were successful in spending the dollars that were allotted to us. The reports in total show we are within budget for the year so everything ended very well for the programs as far as expenditures are concerned.

With no other comments or questions on the June Financial Reports, Jeff Pisarcik moved to accept the Financial Reports as presented, seconded by Carol Duffy. Motion unanimously passed.

A95s

A95 2746 was reviewed which is for 2018 McKean County Community Development Block Grant for various projects throughout McKean County. Mark McCracken acknowledged receipt of the A95 as presented, seconded by Doug Morley. Motion unanimously passed.

Correspondence

There was one piece of Correspondence and that was a letter from Tom Coppolo, our Solicitor. He is expecting to become District Attorney for Elk County between now and the end of the year. With that in mind Tom will be handing the practice over to Thomas Beveridge. Everything will remain the same as it is now. Tom will become District Attorney sometime between now and the end of the year.

This is for information only.

Discussion ensued if we should do an RFP for a new solicitor. If so this process should be started now and not wait until Tom is appointed District Attorney.

Jim stated we can start looking at the process now and have something to present at the August meeting. Jim also said this is no reflection on the work that Coppolo and Coppolo have done for us in the past. The RFP will be sent to the Executive Committee prior to it being presented at the August meeting with a please respond by _____ date.

Jenn asked if this RFP will cover the work Tom does for the Loan Department. She said that anything Tom signs or files for the Loans is done at additional cost and wanted to know if there should be a separate contract for the attorney or continue doing as is being done currently.

Jim said that is something we would probably want to predetermine as to whether we have those as separate contracts or services provided by an attorney or whether we add it into one big RFP. The only concern Jim would have in putting all of it together is we have to separate those services out for charging to grant purposes. The normal retainer is through our Indirect Cost, where his services are charged directly to the Loan Program.

Tom is a non-voting member of the Loan Review Committee and there is the expectation that he calls in for part of those meetings and she isn't sure if this is something that should be continued. Regarding the additional services he charges us on an as-needed basis, he does all the Loan document preparation for Loan closings and she does rely on him for legal advice on as far as lending is concerned.

Jim said his recommendation would be looking at two separate RFPs for the process only because you might be able to negotiate a retainer fee for all the services you require for the Loan Review portion of it. That way we can keep the cost separate as well.

Jeff suggested Jenn write down what things Tom does regarding loans as well as what he does for North Central in reviewing various things.

Purchases

There were no Purchases for the month.

Resolutions

There were no Resolutions for the month.

Loans

A E Resources, Inc., Lewis Run, McKean County, has requested a loan in the amount of \$45,000 from the Economic Development Administration Revolving Loan Fund for 7 years at 3%. This money is for the purchase of equipment. North Central's collateral will be first lien security interest on equipment to be purchased and second lien security interest on all business assets subject to the first lien security

interest of Northwest Bank and the personal guarantee of the owner. Five new jobs will be created within three years. The projected annual average hourly rate will be \$24.00/hour plus 20% benefits.

Doug Morley moved to approve the loan to A E Resources, Inc., seconded by Jeff Pisarcik. Motion unanimously passed.

Broadband

Regarding Broadband, included in the mailing was a press release that North Central, along with the Northwest Commission, has received \$300,000 to provide Broadband connectivity to unserved or underserved areas in our regions. North Central and Northwest will partner to complete five pilot projects in Cameron, Clarion, Forest and Jefferson counties and are ready to go.

Ed has completed a bunch of projects and is working with Zito Media to supply fiber to a few people in Curwensville. Regarding the Ormsby project in McKean County they trying to coordinate a lift to get to the top of the telephone pole to get that project started. The tower company is coordinating all this so hopefully the project can get started next week.

Jim also stated we have applied for the EDA Vertical Asset Study. We expect to hear back hopefully within the next month or so. Once we hear back we will start to take inventory in the six-counties as far as vertical assets and start working with the school districts to start talking about doing speed testing for all the areas as well.

Amy added EDA has everything they need from us and was going through an internal Philadelphia review and hopefully they approve it within the next couple weeks.

Matt congratulated Ed on his work to get the \$300,000 with Northwest.

Ed said it was a lot of work to get the funding and to convince the legislators that they are good projects. The idea is to prove a pilot and we are going to do several different types of projects to prove that it can be done and how it can be duplicated in other areas.

Matt noted that Rural Broadband is one of CCAP's 2019 priorities and all of the members have said "what does that mean" and this is the beginnings of what that means. We have to get a toe-hold into somewhere to find out what's going on because they can establish the targets they need to aim for.

Ed also said he is trying to leverage other money. There may be other funds available; however, we don't have clear direction of where those funds may be or how we go about getting them.

DISCUSSION

At the Full Board meeting Bob Rusiewski will present the projects and their rankings to be submitted to ARC for funding approval.

Matt said the information for the Organizational Budget for FY 2019-2020 was provided and that will need to be approved retroactive to July 1, 2019. Within that are the line items including the salaries and things needed to fit into the positions that we have. In order to make this all work we do need to have formal approval on the Organizational Budget.

Doug Morley moved to approve the Organization Budget for FY 2019-2020 retroactive to July 1, seconded by Jeff Pisarcik. Motion unanimously passed.

Jim said within that budget there are two things being proposed to happen. We are going to put the Fiscal Director position out to internal staff to try to fill that position. We are going to be promoting Ed Matts, within the budget effective July 1, to the position he has been doing for the last year from when Jim Swanson left. Ed will be Director of Information Systems.

Every three years we put our audit out to RFP. This was done in June and we received two RFPs for consideration. One was from SB & Company, who have been our auditors for the past three years, and the second was received from Zelenkoske Axelrod from Pittsburgh. The proposals were very comparable. Jim will forward these to the Audit/Finance Committee, along with the scoring sheet, for scoring prior to the August meeting. At the August meeting a recommendation will be made for the new auditing firm for the next three years.

Jim stated that on August 26 at 2:00 PM, Congressman Thompson will be holding a summit here at North Central. Representatives from the USDA, ARC and SBA will be attending. Tim Thomas, Federal Co-Chair of ARC, is scheduled to be here for that summit, along with Gary Reed from the USDA and someone from SBA. Hopefully Deborah Pontzer will be at the Full Board meeting and will have more information then. If not Jim said Deborah was working on a flyer that we will be sending out to everyone very soon.

Doug didn't know that Donna Hottel, Procurement and WEDnet Director, resigned until he read the HR report in the mailing.

Jim said this happened very quickly. Donna had approached us about some items she wanted in order to remain with North Central. These were discussed with her; some of the items at that particular point couldn't be addressed. Most of her items had to do with salary. We tried to work with her as far as lightening her workload and getting her additional help to afford her more time. This was not acceptable; she had what she wanted as far as her criteria and we couldn't meet that, so she tendered her resignation at that point.

On a positive note Jim said we had Crystal Bille start as our PREP/Engage! Coordinator. Crystal took over the position Kristi Wendel had. We also hired a person for the Procurement Outreach Specialist position. Barbara Brennen will be starting next week to fill that position. She has practical experience with local companies as well as having a degree in Supply Chain Analysis which will help in her new position.

In the Transportation Department, Robert 'Bert' Lahrman was hired as Transportation Planning Coordinator and started on July 1.

Matt would like to make a change to, instead of receiving a monthly report from Departments, about a week or two before our next meeting if a news release could be sent out letting the Committee know of personnel changes, grants awarded, anything relevant that would be useful for them to know. In particular for Matt to keep track of so he doesn't forget something and the Committee can be aware of what is going on beforehand.

Jim said they talked about this taking place of the monthly department reports. They want to have a more condensed version of it saying here are the highlights of the things that are happening rather than providing a formal report, unless you feel that formal report is useful.

Doug said it should be just a 'need to know' version.

Matt again congratulated Jim and thanked him on behalf of the Board. They appreciate his hanging in there with them and helping them navigate. This hasn't been easy process, but with Jim's cooperation and good work he has done over the many years, has made it much easier. The Board will be here to support you.

The next North Central Executive Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 28, at 9:30 AM in the Teleconference Room.

ADJOURN

With no additional items to be discussed, Chair Quesenberry called for a motion to adjourn. Jeff Pisarcik moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Doug Morley. The meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Freeburg
Secretary/Treasurer