



NORTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA REGIONAL PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

49 Ridgmont Drive, Ridgway, PA 15853

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North Central Board Meeting
Wednesday, July 26, 2023 – 9:30 AM

Members – via Teams or In Person

| | |
|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Ann Losey | Cameron County |
| Cliff Clark | Cameron County |
| Dave Glass | Clearfield County |
| Jodi Brennan | Clearfield County |
| Matt Quesenberry | Elk County |
| Eric Wolfe | Elk County |
| Tracy Gerber | Elk County |
| Padraic McGrath | Elk County |
| Jeff Pisarcik | Jefferson County |
| Scott North | Jefferson County |
| Carol Duffy | McKean County |
| Tom Kreiner | McKean County |
| Richard Fry | McKean County |
| Will Hunt | Potter County |
| Doug Morley | Potter County |
| Jill Martin-Rend | At-large BC3@Brockway |
| Pam Streich | At-large Workforce Solutions |
| Carolyn Newhouse | At-large Bradford Area Alliance |

Staff - via Teams or In Person

Jim Chorney
Amy Kessler
Samantha Mitchell
Ed Matts
Shelly Caggiano
Chris Perneski
Sherry Dumire
Jenn Hibbard
Mary Lou Jessop

Guests

| | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Brad Moore | Congressman Thompson's Office |
| Erik Pages | EntreWorks Consulting |
| Brian Stockman | Ridgway Record |

Chair Ann Losey called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

QUORUM/INTRODUCTIONS

Roll call was taken and there was a quorum for the meeting.

MINUTES

With no corrections or amendments to the May 24 and June 28, 2023 Board Minutes, Jeff Pisarcik moved to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Richard Fry. Motion unanimously passed.

PRESENTATION

Regional Assessment of Access to Capital for Business

Erik Pages of EntreWorks Consulting did a power point presentation at the Board meeting.

The North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning & Development Commission collaborated with the consulting firms of Business Development Advisors & EntreWorks Consulting to perform an **Assessment of Access to Capital for Businesses and Entrepreneurs** in our six-county service region. The objective of the study was to gain insight into the resources that are available to our local businesses and entrepreneurs for accessing capital and determine if there are financing gaps/needs that exist in our regional market.

Insights and findings from this outreach will ultimately be used to develop future enhancements to our lending program and explore new initiatives that can address these needs and challenges and strengthen our regional entrepreneurial ecosystem.

As the final stage of the process, the consultants presented an overview of the Report to the Loan Review Committee on July 25, North Central Board of Directors on July 26 and NC PREP and CEDS on July 27. The presentation addressed the goals and objectives of the study, an overview of the region's small business landscape, existing resources, gaps and then recommendations and next steps.

A copy of Erik's presentation was in the Board mailing packet.

NEW BUSINESS

Financial Reports

With no corrections or additions to the March and April Financial Reports, Pam Streich moved to accept the Financial Statements as presented, seconded by Dave Glass. Motion unanimously passed.

Regional ARC Pre-Application Submissions

In previous years, the ARC Applications were presented to the Board to be ranked and approved before submitting to ARC. That has changed and the Board is no longer asked to approve these applications.

However, for the Board's information Sherry Dumire gave a brief update on the Pre-applications that are ready to be submitted to ARC. She also noted that they have a couple of applications that are in the works a that still need some work before they can be moved forward. ARC accepts applications on a rolling basis, so that won't be a problem. ARC did ask for the first initial push that applications be in by August 17.

1. Sandy Township – Industrial Drive Sewer Extension – Phase 3 – This project has a total cost of \$1,429,375 and is requesting \$600,000 from ARC. Project will include construction of

approximately 3,600 linear feet of gravity main, 3,000 feet of pressure sewer main, 12 manholes and a sewage pumping station to extend the sanitary sewer lines to allow for additional development of the industrial park.

2. Bradford – City Water Authority – Lafferty Hollow Industrial Park Water Improvements – This project has a total cost of \$3,219,000 and is requesting \$1,447,350 from ARC. The Bradford City Water Authority will install a pumping station near the East Main/South Kendall intersection and replace an aging water main along South Kendall Avenue needed to handle the increased water pressure from the new pump station. They will also extend a 12-inch water line from South Kendall Avenue to Lafferty Hollow Industrial Park to connect a minimum 220,000-gallon water storage tank in the Lafferty Hollow Industrial Park.
3. Dickinson Center, Inc. – St. Marys Building Project – The total project cost is \$7,857,679 and is requesting \$750,000 from ARC. This project will construct a new 12,000 sq.ft. two-story building in downtown St. Marys. This facility will house the Dickinson Center’s program offices, meeting spaces and support areas to serve the residents of Elk and Cameron Counties. Construction project is expected to begin in January 2024 with completion projected for April 2025.
4. Triangle Works Collaborative LLC – McKean County Incubator – Accelerator Facility – Phase 1 – This project has a total cost of \$2,000,000 and is requesting \$1,000,000 from ARC. Phase 1 funding will be utilized on site work, core and shell construction, with additional costs for building permit/inspection fees, as well as professional fees.
5. North Central Community – Capacity and Technical Assistance Response Program for North Central Pennsylvania – The total cost of this project is \$200,000 and is requesting \$200,000 from ARC. That application would be to continue our Community Capacity Program to continue to provide services to non-profits, municipalities, even business assistance and residential assistance. Through this program we receive projects across the board, and we assist people with matching up their funding sources with their program.
6. Cameron County Chamber of Commerce – Innovation Center – This project is nearly ready to go. The total project cost is \$498,100 and is requesting \$345,000 from ARC. This is to purchase a vacant building in downtown Emporium which will be converted into a USDA certified kitchen incubator products to allow businesses to take their products to market without the need to purchase and certify their own kitchen. The building will also provide space for remote workers and businesses to hold meetings, the Chamber to operate and local artisans to sell their items.
7. North Central – ARC Partnership for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) – The total ARC request is \$653,633 and is requesting \$346,425 from ARC. North Central is seeking long-term sustainable ARC funding to provide enhanced rural economic development assistance to businesses throughout the North Central Region of Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter Counties. This application proposes to provide businesses access to a broad range of regionally based and needs-driven economic development technical assistance for the purpose of enhancing opportunities, capitalization and market expansion and diversification resulting in increased sales and job growth.
8. The Lutheran Home at Kane – Emergency Generator – The total project cost is \$243,000 and is requesting \$121,500 from ARC. The purpose of the grant request is for The Lutheran Home at Kane to purchase a 400-kw standby diesel generator to ensure the facility has one generator to power the entire senior living community. The Lutheran Home is currently expanding their

facility to include a new wing and kitchen. The new generator is necessary to power the entire facility.

Sherry said we will continue to work with applicants and try to get pre-applications ready to go so we can get more ARC dollars to our region.

A95s

There were no A95s.

Correspondence

There was no Correspondence.

Purchases

There were no Purchases.

Resolutions

There were no Resolutions.

Loans

Jenn had one loan to review.

Bugling Bull LLC, Benezette, Elk County, has requested a loan in the amount of \$61,600 from the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority (PIDA) CED for 10 years at the rate of 3.75% for building addition. Addition of a 30' x 30' building addition to accommodate a new food processing room and additional retail and storage space. The project also includes the purchase of homemade fudge and candy apply equipment and retail displays. North Central's collateral will be second mortgage on the real estate located at 104 Winslow Hill Road, Benezette; as well as the personal guarantee of the owners and corporate guarantee of Kunes Castle Corporation. Two full-time jobs and seven part-time jobs will be retained.

With no questions, Chair Losey called for a motion to approve the loan to the Bugling Bull LLC.

Jeff Pisarcik moved to approve the loan to the Bugling Bull, LLC, seconded by Pam Streich. Motion unanimously passed.

Audit and Finance Committee Recommendation

The Audit and Finance Committee met on July 12 to discuss and review the North Central Organizational Budget for FY 24.

They are requesting approval of the North Central Organizational Budget for FY 24.

As there were several questions regarding this budget and some wanted to see the full budget that the Audit and Finance Committee reviewed which Shelly will send out after the meeting, Dave Glass made the motion to table this discussion until the August 23 meeting to give the Board time to review the complete budget, seconded by Jim Sleigh. Motion unanimously passed.

Building Committee Update and Recommendation

Jim gave a brief update. The bid package prepared by ARS Engineering for the build-out plan for the building meets all the necessary requirements. This has been thoroughly reviewed and appropriately budgeted for. The recommendation from the Building Committee is to proceed with advertising the bid package.

Chair Losey called for a motion to proceed with advertising the bid package.

Pam Streich moved to approve the motion to proceed with advertising the bid package, seconded by Jeff Pisarcik. Motion unanimously passed.

Executive Committee Recommendation

The Executive Committee met on June 26 with Jim Chorney and Samantha Mitchell to discuss North Central's current salary structure and various issues that have come to light with the current salary scale. Some of the issues are the stagnation of the starting wages since 2012, retention and recruiting concerns as well as the length of time has decreased for how long it now takes current employees to hit the max range of the levels within the scale.

The recommendation from the Executive Committee to the Board of Directors is to grant North Central the approval to move forward with the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to hire a consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of North Central's salary structure. The factors going into such an analysis will be clearly detailed within the RFP and reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee prior to advertising for services.

When asked if the Executive Committee was going to see the RFP before sending it out, Jim stated they would, and to the entire board if they want to see it as well.

Pam stated that Workforce had just gone through this process; and for North Central, it is long overdue. It is recommended that this be done every three to five years.

Chair Losey called for a motion to grant North Central the approval to move forward with the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to hire a consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of North Central's salary structure.

Scott North moved to approve the motion to grant North Central the approval to move forward with the Request or Proposal (RFP) process to hire a consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of North Central's salary structure, seconded by Pam Streich. Motion unanimously passed.

Tax Assessment Discussion

Jim reported that all the paperwork was filled out for the tax exemption and was submitted to the Tax Assessment Department on Friday, July 21. It will be about two- three weeks for the determination as to whether the building is exempt and if exempt, what portion. There is the portion leased by Keystone Rural Health that could potentially still be taxable.

We are waiting for that determination from the County Solicitor and once that determination is made, we will then determine what our next steps are. We still have the appeal hearing that we applied for the reassessment.

Jim will keep the Board informed.

Discussion

Jim had several things to add.

When Sherry gave the update on the ARC Pre-Application Submissions, one included our Community Capacity Program we are currently running and is providing some good results.

One thing we are doing which is a bit of a new approach for us is besides the Call for Projects we have been putting out lately, Elise Grovanz of our staff, is going around and spending time in the communities to try to make it easier for our municipalities to come and see her and talk about potential programs.

The first event was held in Jefferson County on Tuesday, July 25.

Jim asked Jeff or Scott if they wanted to add anything.

Jeff said it was very successful and they would be very happy if she went down every week. She met with four municipalities, and he said it turned out very well.

Jim provided the upcoming dates in the other counties.

- August 1 from 11 AM – 4 PM at North Central
- August 3 from 11 AM – 3 PM will be at the Cameron County Courthouse
- August 8 from 11:30 AM – 4 PM at the Clearfield County Commissioners' Office
- August 10 from 12 PM – 3 PM at the Gunzburger Building in Coudersport
- August 22 from 11 AM – 4 PM will be at the McKean County Planning Commission

Dave reported the Clearfield County Commissioners' Meeting for August 8 has been cancelled due to CCAP. He didn't know if Elise wanted to cancel the event or not.

Amy stated that Elise was going to attend the Commissioners' Meeting and then meet with Jodi Brennan. So she'll still meet with Jodi that day and attend the Commissioners' Meeting at another time.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 23, beginning at 9:30 AM and will be Virtual to approve loans we may have.

Another thing Jim spoke on is the North Central Attendance Policy in our By-laws, 'Failure to attend three (3)

consecutive Board meetings without excuse shall constitute a resignation from the Board.' If you are not able to attend a meeting, please let Mary Lou know so it will be an excused absence.

Lastly Jim wanted to thank staff as there is a lot of work being done. Whether it was the Capital Needs Assessment, the ARC Pre-Application submissions, the Organizational Budget, they are all doing a great job and thought it was worth recognizing.

Before adjourning Carolyn Newhouse wanted to know more about the outreach Elise is doing in our counties.

We received funding several years ago to start the Community Capacity Program. What we have been seeing and hearing is many of our municipalities don't have the capacity to be able to apply for grants.

This funding permitted us to hire a person (Elise) to help provide that technical assistance. That is her responsibility and we have done Call for Projects, along with mailings, to reach out to our municipalities.

Elise has coordinated with either the chief clerk or county planner to secure space in each county so that municipalities have a chance to talk to her.

She has scheduled one-half hour slots at each location, with a 15-minute break between each meeting. She will fill out the project intake form for them. And having the county planner at the meetings will allow the municipalities to ask any questions they may have with the planner.

Once the form is filled out, we will start matching with potential funding and try to help them get an application in to solve their problems.

Commission North added at the Jefferson County meeting they had four municipalities come in to see Elise and there was a good exchange of ideas and other possibilities. The municipalities that took advantage of it and were very pleased and the County hopes it continues.

Adjournment

With no other business for discussion, Chair Losey called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jeff Pisarcik moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Richard Fry. The meeting adjourned at 10:45 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Padraic McGrath, CPA
Secretary/Treasurer