



NORTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA REGIONAL PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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North Central Board Meeting Wednesday, October 25, 2023 – 9:30 AM

Members – via Teams

Ann Losey	Cameron County
Cliff Clark	Cameron County
Dave Glass	Clearfield County
Jodi Brennan	Clearfield County
Kristy Smith	Clearfield County
Tracy Gerber	Elk County
Padraic McGrath	Elk County
Jeff Pisarcik	Jefferson County
Scott North	Jefferson County
Jim Sleigh	Jefferson County
Carol Duffy	McKean County
Richard Fry	McKean County
Susan Zook-Wilson	McKean County
Will Hunt	Potter County
Jill Martin-Rend	At-Large BC3@Brockway
Carolyn Newhouse	At-Large Bradford Alliance

Staff - via Teams

Jim Chorney
Amy Kessler
Ed Matts
Shelly Caggiano
Jenn Hibbard
Mary Lou Jessop

Chair Ann Losey called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM with the pledge to the flag.

QUORUM/INTRODUCTIONS

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

NEW BUSINESS

Resolutions

This resolution is typically signed every two years. However, they are changing things at the state level, so we are a bit early getting this signed.

Resolution No. 23-10-4003 was presented wherein North Central can enter into contracts with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and that North Central authorizes the Executive Director, and in his inability to do so for any reason, the Community Development/Regional Planning Director to execute an MOU with PennDOT, sign all routine contracts, continuations and amendments

on the Commission's behalf. In the past, the resolution has named specific persons to sign all routine contracts, etc.

This change is not only for this resolution but within the State's Single Application process because PennDOT is moving to their single application website which has been utilized by some of our other programs.

Chair Losey called for a motion to accept Resolution No. 23-10-4003 as presented.

Padraic McGrath moved to accept Resolution No. 23-10-4003 as presented, seconded by Will Hunt. Motion unanimously passed.

Building Committee Update and Recommendation

Ed reported that the Building Committee met on October 10 to discuss the bids that were received for the Office Build-out. Four bids were received, and they were comparable with the Scope of Work and References.

The recommendation from the Building Committee is to award the lowest bidder, Hallstrom Construction Inc., the contract for the construction of nine offices in the existing Teleconference Room in the amount of \$265,975.

The other bids received were from Fred Burns, Allison & Associates and Dagher Construction and the prices ranged from \$265,000 to \$300,000.

Chair Losey called for a motion to approve the recommendation of the Building Committee to award the contract to Hallstrom Construction.

Carol Duffy moved to approve the recommendation of the Building Committee to award the contract to Hallstrom Construction, seconded by Jeff Pisarcik. Motion unanimously passed.

Purchases – Grant Reimbursement

Ed noted these are reimbursements for the Keystone Communities Grant and the ARC POWER grant we have been waiting for and they should be coming through soon.

Therefore, we are requesting approval to reimburse grant money to the following projects:

McKean County - \$45,000 from the Keystone Communities Grant
Southwestern PA Corporation - \$47,500 from the Keystone Communities Grant
Southwestern PA Corporation - \$47,500 from the ARC POWER Grant
Alleghenies Broadband Inc. - \$182,812 from the ARC POWER Grant

Chair Losey called for a motion to approve reimbursement to those listed above as presented.

Dave Glass moved to approve the reimbursement to those listed above as presented, seconded by

Padraic McGrath. Motion unanimously passed.

Loans

Jenn presented the following loan for Board approval.

Ritz Theater, LLC, Clearfield, Clearfield County, has requested a loan in the amount of \$104,000 from USDA Intermediary Relending Program for 15 years at 4% for purchase of real estate and renovations. Purchase of the Ritz Theater and building renovations, including installation of new heating system, replace carpeting and seating in theater, update theater restrooms and purchase equipment. North Central's collateral will be second mortgage on real estate located at 111 East Market Street, Clearfield, subject to the mortgage of Mid-Penn Bank, assignment of rents and leases, first lien security interest on all business assets of the Ritz Theater, as well as the personal guarantee of the owners. Two part-time jobs will be retained, and two new full-time jobs will be created within three years.

Jenn added this recommendation is contingent on receiving a satisfactory appraisal at a certain loan value and we should be receiving that any day.

Dave Glass added that he knows the prior owners of the Ritz having grown up in Clearfield. He stated that there are apartments above the theater as well as two businesses beside it. Therefore keeping that space viable is really important for downtown and Clearfield.

With no other discussion, Chair Losey called for a motion to approve the loan to Ritz Theater, LLC.

Dave Glass moved to approve the loan to Ritz Theater, LLC, seconded by Carol Duffy. Motion unanimously passed.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Jim had several items he wanted to quickly talk about.

The first was regarding the EDA Tech Hub Strategy Development Grant we were awarded. EDA awarded 29 of these grants across the county and our area was one of them to receive the grant.

Jim had Amy give a brief update on what we know. There were 400 applications from across the country for the Tech Hub and Strategy Development Grants and as Jim said 29 were awarded and North Central was one of them. Eleven grants went to existing hubs.

What is interesting is that for FY 23, this program is funding \$500 million from the Chips and Science Act, which was authorized at \$10 billion. So they have only allocated 5% of the funding for this.

In order to get our collective act together so we can answer that these tech hubs can possess the assets, resources, capacity and potential to become globally competitive, we are forming a consortium and have committed partners that have been funding us to move forward with this. We will be adding to that and having additional press releases coming out.

It is exciting news but that can be a blessing and a curse. The fun part is going to be delivering this and pulling it all together with the capacity we have. This is where the real work begins; and we are going to be reaching out to a lot of people and expanding our consortium. When we started this process, it was just an idea and a small group of people and now that we have been awarded this, it is our opportunity to make our case for why we should be a tech hub.

Jim noted should our region be a tech hub and if we get that designation, that is where the big money is. They were talking anywhere in the range of \$50 to \$75 million awards.

Amy feels if we can pull this together and make a very compelling case, that could literally be \$40 – \$70 million to each tech hub region that could come to our region. As you know most of the world's powdered metal is here, so she thinks we can tell that story and those businesses are certainly the economic drivers creating good family sustaining jobs in most of our counties.

We are looking forward to this and members of the industry that have been talking to us are certainly interested as well.

When asked who our committed funding partners are, besides North Central there is the Ben Franklin Technology Partners, Advanced Metal Powder, Hoeganaes, Penn State DuBois and the North Central Workforce Development Board.

Those who sent letters of support include the Northwest IRC, Clearfield Metal Technology, Elk County Heat Treaters, Emporium Machining Technologies, Freeform Technology, Gasbarre Products, Horizon Technology Inc., Pennsylvania Powdered Metals, Thermostat, Thermistors Unlimited, the Materials Research Institute at Penn State University, Penn College of Technology, PennTAP, University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, St. Marys School District, Community Education Council for Elk and Cameron Counties and DCED.

Jim and Amy only found this news out when they were at an event in Westmoreland County on Friday. And it's amazing how fast the news got out. They have had people from OIBD, DCED and even APMI reach out. Everyone wants to be involved, which is good, because we want this to reflect what the needs of our region are and where we see it moving forward.

If anyone wants to be involved or has any ideas, don't be afraid to let Jim or Amy know. It's going to be a fun roller coaster ride for the next 18 – 24 months.

Jim also reminded the Board members to fill out the performance evaluation for the Executive Director's review. Sam worked really hard putting this into a new format so it will be easier for you to fill out and get the information to her.

These are due Wednesday, November 1.

Lastly, Jim noted the November meeting has been moved up due to the Thanksgiving Holiday and he strongly encourages anyone that wants to attend in person to please do so. The next meeting will be Wednesday, November 15, starting at 9:30 and will be in-person and virtual.

ADJOURN

With no other business, Chair Losey called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jeff Pisarcik moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Tracy Gerber. The meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Padraic McGrath, CPA
Secretary/Treasurer