

**Minutes**  
**Western Piedmont Council of Governments**  
**Bimonthly Policy Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday, March 27, 2018**  
**Morganton Community House**

**Members Present:**

Bob Floyd, Jr., Vice-Chair  
Jill Patton, Secretary  
Johnny Berry, Treasurer  
George Holleman, Past Chair  
Robert Smyre, At-Large  
Kitty Barnes, At-Large  
Chip Black, At-Large  
Wayne Abele, At-Large  
Johnnie Carswell, Alternate  
Ronnie Setzer  
Dale Sherrill  
Joie Fulbright  
Kyle Hayman, Alternate  
Dennis Anthony  
Dr. Caryl Burns  
Larry Knight, Alternate  
David Williams, Alternate  
Ben Honeycutt  
Larry Chapman  
Ben Willis  
Joe Gibbons, Alternate  
Marla Thompson  
Forrest Fleming  
Ronnie Thompson, Alternate  
Rick Justice  
Gary McClure  
Wayne Annas, Alternate  
Roy Sweezy, Alternate  
Sara Mose  
Malla Vue  
Tommy Luckadoo  
Helen Chestnut  
Elle Engstrom  
Larry Yoder

**Local Government/Agency:**

Cedar Rock  
Hickory  
Connelly Springs  
Taylorsville  
Maiden  
Catawba County  
Valdese  
Burke County  
Burke County  
Cajah's Mountain  
Claremont  
Conover  
Conover  
Drexel  
Granite Falls  
Granite Falls  
Hickory  
Hildebran  
Hudson  
Lenoir  
Lenoir  
Long View  
Morganton  
Morganton  
Rhodhiss  
Rutherford College  
Rutherford College  
Valdese  
Appointed  
Appointed  
Appointed  
Appointed  
Appointed  
Appointed

**Members Absent:**

Barbara Pennell, Chair	Gamewell
Josh Lail	Alexander County
Vacant	Brookford
Mike Labrose	Caldwell County
Donald Robinson	Catawba
Vacant	Glen Alpine
Jerry Hodge	Newton
Keith Warren	Sawmills
Amparo Alfaro	Appointed

**Guests/Others Present:**

Scott Hildebran, Lenoir  
Donald Duncan, Conover  
Jerry Church, Granite Falls  
Bryan Steen, Burke County  
Chris Wagoner, Rhodhiss  
Logan Shook, Cahah's Mountain  
Todd Clark, Newton  
Todd Herms, Maiden  
Chase Winebarger, Catawba  
Sherri Bradshaw, Drexel  
Kenneth Geathers, Rutherford College  
Louis Vinay, Morganton  
Sonja Marston, Morganton  
Sally Sandy, Morganton  
Wendy Cato, Morganton  
Ethan Smith, Morganton  
Sidney Simmons, Morganton  
Catherine Renbarger, Claremont

**WPCOG Staff Present:**

Anthony Starr, Executive Director  
Sherry Long, Assistant Executive Director/Community & Economic Development Director  
Ashley Bolick, Director of Administrative Services and Human Resources  
Andrea Roper, Finance Director  
Jason Toney, Communications Specialist  
Wendy Johnson, Director of Workforce Development  
Stephanie Hanvey, Director of Regional Housing Authority

### **Call to Order/Welcome**

A regular meeting of the WPCOG Policy Board was called to order at 6:39 pm by Vice-Chair Bob Floyd. Vice-Chair Floyd thanked both the City of Morganton and Burke County for hosting the meeting.

### **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the previous meeting were considered. Mr. Joie Fulbright made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Bob Smyre offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Unfinished Business/Reports**

There was no unfinished business.

### **New Business**

#### Section 8 Housing Administrative Plan

Regional Housing Director, Stephanie Hanvey presented the 2018 Section 8 Housing Administrative Plan. Each year, the Regional Housing Authority (RHA) is required to send to the United States Housing and Urban Development (HUD) the Western Piedmont Regional Housing Authority's Annual Plan with any amendments from the previous year. Included with this year's administrative plan amendments is a change in the applicable payment standards for WPCOG Section 8 Housing tenants. HUD has published new Fair Market Rents for 2018. Payment standards for an efficiency, one, two, and three bedroom units will be increased to help make them more affordable for tenants. The board has been provided the complete summary of the amendments for board approval. The required public hearing was duly advertised and notice was given to clients. The required public hearing is scheduled for 9:00 am on Monday, March 26, 2018. Staff would like to make this plan effective April 1, 2018. The Annual Plan is due to HUD by April 15, 2018.

Staff requested that the Policy Board approve the Section 8 Housing Administration Plan Amendments to become effective April 1, 2018.

Mr. Chip Black made a motion that the Board approve the Section 8 Administrative Plan Amendments including the change in the applicable payment standards effective April 1, 2018. Ms. Jill Patton offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Adoption of Burke ESFR'18 Policies

Assistant Executive Director and Community & Economic Development Director, Sherry Long presented the 2018 Burke County Essential Single-Family Rehabilitation Program (ESFR) Assistance Policy & Procurement and Disbursement Policy. These policies explain program requirements and how the program will operate during this cycle of funding. The funding agency for the Essential Single-Family Rehabilitation Program is the NC Housing Finance Agency.

Staff requested that the Policy Board review and approve the Burke 2018 ESFR Assistance Policy & Procurement and Disbursement Policy.

Mrs. Kitty Barnes made a motion that the Board approve the ESFR'18 Assistance Policy and the Procurement & Disbursement Policy for Burke County as proposed. Mr. Bob Smyre offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment of FY 2017-2018 Budget

Finance Director, Andrea Roper presented the proposed 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the 2017-2018 Budget reflecting a total budget of \$15,622,906 and an operating budget of \$6,283,067 which represented an increase of the total budget from the November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 budget amendment of \$194,717.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the 2017-2018 Budget included:

- Environmental Protection increased by \$57,910 to reflect actual grant amount for the 319 Septic Tank Grant.
- A \$3,961 decrease in Community Development to adjust for actual contract amounts.
- Community and Regional Planning increased \$6,003 due to the addition of a new planning contract.
- Economic Development increased \$68,584 to reflect several new building reuse projects.
- An increase of \$14,219 in GIS/IT to reflect FY 16-17 funds held for future use.
- Regional Public Housing increased by \$15,212 due to reserve funds being used.
- Area Agency on Aging increased by \$21,538 due to the addition of the NC4A program.
- Chargeable salaries decreased and compensated absences increased due to a vacancy in the Transportation Department and an increase in actual compensated absences taken.
- Retirement, group insurance, workers compensation, and unemployment costs decreased due to the transportation position vacancy.
- Contractual increased by \$115,363 due to the 319 Septic Tank grant and costs associated with transportation programs.
- Supplies increased by \$9,489, mainly due to supplies needed for GIS/IT.
- Contingency and Reserve for Future Use increased \$7,206 and \$116,233, respectively, due to the addition of several new programs where funds will be used at a later date.
- All other changes to the expenditure lines reflect normal program needs.
- Regional Public Housing Special Revenue Funds increased by \$15,212 due to the use of reserve funds.

Staff requested that the Policy Board review and approve the 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the 2017-2018 Budget.

Mr. Johnny Berry made a motion that the Board approve the 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the 2017-2018 Budget as proposed. Mr. Joie Fulbright offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of FY 2018-2019 Budget

Finance Director, Andrea Roper presented the proposed 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of the 2018-2019 Budget that reflected a total budget of \$15,122,521 and an operating budget of \$5,739,193 which represented a decrease of the total budget from the November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 budget amendment of approximately 2% or \$305,668.

Some key parts of the budget are uncertain at this time and that is somewhat normal for the first reading. The 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of the 2018-2019 Budget includes:

- 53 full and part-time staff positions

- WPCOG dues rate increased by \$.10 per capita.
- Allocated \$5,000 toward OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) trust.
- EDA and ARC grants were moved from General Government to Economic Development.
- Town planning services for 9 local governments
- Administration of several new community development projects (building reuse, infrastructure, economic development, etc.)
- A group insurance increase (\$15,297) reflecting a health insurance increase of 8%. We will not receive quotes until early May for FY19 and this number will be adjusted at that time. The increase could be much lower but this budget takes a cautious approach.
- The large decrease (\$373,366) in contractual is attributed to the current fiscal year SFR and URP projects that ended.
- Contingency decreased \$250,802 due to those funds being utilized in the FY 18-19 budget.
- Regional Public Housing Special Revenue Funds increased by \$110,700 to reflect the use of unrestricted net proceed reserve funds.
- Aging Special Revenue Funds decreased by \$51,999 due to increased programmatic costs.
- About \$274,137 in anticipated contracts for FY 18-19. The unfunded areas at this point are within the Community and Regional Planning, GIS/IT and Economic Development.

Staff requested that the Policy Board review and approve the 1st Reading of the 2018-2019 Budget.

Mr. Bob Smyre made a motion that the Policy Board approve the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of the 2018-2019 Budget as proposed. Mr. Chip Black offered a second. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Code Enforcement

Executive Director, Anthony Starr presented to the Board information about a potential new Regional Code Enforcement Service. On December 21, 2017, the Executive Committee directed staff to explore the creation of a regional code enforcement service for its local governments. Code enforcement is a growing issue for our local governments with higher housing vacancy rates, an aging housing stock, neighborhood blight issues, etc. Most local governments are not well-equipped to handle the growing need for code enforcement given the specialized knowledge and training required. The Vacant and Substandard Housing Taskforce discussed the concept of a regional service but code enforcement extends beyond minimum housing standards to include overgrown property, illegal trash dumping, junked vehicles, etc.

WPCOG staff have been working on gathering information and planning details regarding a variety of factors. The intent is to launch the service in the 2018-2019 fiscal year depending on local government interest and action. Some factors under consideration include:

- Identifying interested local governments
- Determining the necessary number of code enforcement positions
- Start-up costs including vehicles, equipment, software
- Training costs
- Personnel costs
- Aligning municipal codes if needed
- Management of the code enforcement staff

The Executive Committee reviewed this issue at its February meeting and supported moving ahead. Currently, thirteen (13) local government have expressed an interest in participating in this new program.

Staff requested that the Policy Board provide feedback and guidance aimed at a successful launch of this new service. WPCOG staff will provide an update and additional information regarding the details and progress.

#### Staff Updates

Mr. Anthony Starr reported that the new Transportation Planning Manager, Brain Horton would start on Monday, April 2, 2018. Additionally, Mr. Starr announced via a draft press release that Alison Adams would join WPCOG on April 23, 2018 as the new Community & Regional Planning Director.

Director of Administrative Services & Human Resources, Ashley Bolick made announcements concerning upcoming WPCOG events.

Director of Workforce Development announced that the NCWorks Commission would hold a meeting in Catawba County during May.

Ms. Sherry Long provided an ARC Update.

#### Adjournment

Mr. Jonny Berry made a motion that the meeting adjourn at 7:21 pm and the motion was seconded by Mr. Bob Smyre. The motion passed unanimously.