



Bi-Monthly Policy Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 23, 2021—6 PM

Remote Participation Meeting

Agenda Item	Presenter	Action Requested
Call to Order/Welcome	Chairman Bob Floyd, Jr.	
Roll Call	Ashley Bolick	
Minutes of Previous Meetings	Chairman Floyd	Yes
EDA Cares Act Grant Story Book Mapping	Alison Adams	No
Unifour HOME Consortium	Sherry Long	No
myFutureNC Resolution of Support	Wendy Johnson	Yes
Workforce Development Board Reappointments	Wendy Johnson	Yes
Regional Housing Authority Annual Administrative Plan	Stephanie Harvey	Yes
Regional Housing Authority Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Action Plan	Stephanie Harvey	Yes
6th Amendment of the FY 2020-2021 Budget	Andrea Roper	Yes
1st Reading of the FY 2021-2022 Budget	Andrea Roper	Yes
Other Business		
Executive Director's and Staff Reports		
WPCOG Virtual Annual Meeting - Thursday, April 22, 2 pm		
Next Meeting - Tuesday, May 25, 2021, 6 pm		
Adjournment		

Notes: Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the March 23, 2021 Policy Board meeting will be conducted electronically via Zoom and will be live streamed to the WPCOG Facebook page. Board members are asked to join the meeting by using the login information provided by email. Persons needing special assistance should contact Ashley Bolick at 828-485-4221 prior to the meeting.

Minutes
Western Piedmont Council of Governments
Bimonthly Policy Board Meeting
Tuesday, January 26, 2021
Video/Conference Call Meeting

Members Present:	Local Government/Agency:	In-person/Remote Participation
Bob Floyd, Jr., Chair	Cedar Rock	Remote
Jill Patton, Vice-Chair	Hickory	Remote
Johnny Berry, Secretary	Connelly Springs	Remote
George Holleman, Treasurer	Taylorsville	Remote
Barbara Pennell, Past Chair	Gamewell	Remote
Kitty Barnes, At-Large	Catawba County	Remote
Chip Black, At-Large	Valdese	Remote
Joseph L. Gibbons, At-Large	Lenoir	Remote
Larry Yoder	Alexander County	Remote
Johnnie Carswell, Alternate	Burke County	Remote
Dale Sherrill	Claremont	Remote
Joie Fulbright	Conover	Remote
Kyle Hayman, Alternate	Conover	Remote
Dennis Anthony	Drexel	Remote
Dr. Caryl Burns	Granite Falls	Remote
Ben Honeycutt	Hildebran	Remote
Larry Chapman	Hudson	Remote
Marla Thompson	Long View	Remote
Ronnie Williams	Maiden	Remote
Chris Jernigan	Morganton	Remote
Jerry Hodge	Newton	Remote
Allen Spencer	Rhodhiss	In Person at WPCOG
Amparo Alfaro	Appointed	Remote
Tommy Luckadoo	Appointed	Remote
Helen Chestnut	Appointed	Remote
Erisha Lipford	Appointed	Remote
Jeanna Price	Appointed	Remote
Members Absent:		
James Weaver	Brookford	
Mike Labrose	Caldwell County	
Donald Robinson	Catawba	
Sheila Perkins	Glen Alpine	
Ronnie Setzer	Cajah's Mountain	
Gary McClure	Rutherford College	
Keith Warren	Sawmills	
Malla Vue	Appointed	

Randy Burns

Appointed

Guests/Others Present:

Ko Tang Cha-Moses, Martin Starnes & Associates, Remote

Scott Hildebran, Lenoir, Remote

Donald Duncan, Conover, Remote

Sherri Bradshaw, Drexel, Remote

Jerry Church, Granite Falls, Remote

WPCOG Staff Present:

Anthony Starr, Executive Director, In-person at WPCOG

Sherry Long, Assistant Executive Director, In-person at WPCOG

Ashley Bolick, Director of Administrative Services and Human Resources, In-person at WPCOG

Andrea Roper, Finance Director, In-person at WPCOG

Jason Toney, Communications Specialist, In-person at WPCOG

Stephanie Hanvey, Director of Regional Housing Authority, In-person at WPCOG

Call to Order/Welcome and Roll Call

A regular meeting of the WPCOG Policy Board was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair Bob Floyd. Chair Floyd thanked the board for joining the remote meeting and the first meeting of 2021. Chair Floyd asked the board clerk for a roll call. The roll call was completed and names recorded for the meeting minutes. Chair Floyd said that he would ask for a motion for all items requiring board approval at the nominating committee presentation.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting were considered. There were no corrections or questions.

Unfinished Business/Reports

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

Recognition of New Board Member

Chair Floyd recognized the newest member of the Western Piedmont Council of Governments Policy Board, Ms. Erisha Lipford. Ms. Lipford is an appointed delegate from Caldwell County and she works at Caldwell UNC Health Care. Chair Floyd thanked Ms. Lipford for her willingness to serve on the board.

Audit Presentation

Ms. Ko Tang Cha-Moses, Senior Manager, Martin Starnes & Associates, CPA, thanks the board for allowing Martin Starnes & Associates to complete the WPCOG fiscal year audit for 2019-2020. The annual audit of the WPCOG financials is required by law and various regulations of funding entities. Ms. Cha-Moses informed the board that Martin Starnes would be issuing an unmodified opinion of the WPCOG financial statements, meaning that all WPCOG financial statements are presented, in all material respects, in accordance with applicable financial

reporting standards. Additionally, Ms. Cha-Moses thanked WPCOG Finance Director, Andrea Roper and staff for their cooperation during the audit. Ms. Cha-Moses reviewed the following financials.

WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS
 JUNE 30, 2020**

GENERAL FUND	
Total Assets	\$ 2,413,952
Total Liabilities and Deferred Inflows	660,239
Fund Balance	1,753,713
Total Revenues	6,138,097
Total Expenditures	6,132,184
Total Transfers	-
Net Change in Fund Balance	5,913

BUILDING GENERATOR PROJECT	
Total Assets	\$ 10,328
Total Liabilities and Deferred Inflows	-
Fund Balance	10,328
Total Revenues	-
Total Expenditures	63,462
Total Transfers	-
Net Change in Fund Balance	(63,462)

WIOA	
Total Assets	\$ 216,289
Total Liabilities and Deferred Inflows	209,750
Fund Balance	6,539
Total Revenues	1,242,161
Total Expenditures	1,240,781
Total Transfers	-
Net Change in Fund Balance	1,380

AGING	
Total Assets	\$ 787,348
Total Liabilities and Deferred Inflows	776,274
Fund Balance	11,074
Total Revenues	2,993,616
Total Expenditures	2,993,361
Total Transfers	-
Net Change in Fund Balance	255

SECTION 8	
Total Assets	\$ 1,020,438
Total Liabilities and Deferred Inflows	370,601
Fund Balance	649,837
Total Revenues	5,264,593
Total Expenditures	5,146,123
Total Transfers	-
Net Change in Fund Balance	118,470

OPEB PENSION TRUST	
Total Assets	\$ 90,019
Total Liabilities and Deferred Inflows	-
Net position	90,019
Total Revenues *	90,019
<i>* employer contributions</i>	
Net Change in Fund Balance	90,019

AGENCY FUNDS	
CASH	
FUTURE FORWARD	\$ 149,918
SISTER CITIES	30,271
SE4A	9,986
NC4A	14,953
	<u>\$ 205,128</u>

Ms. Cha-Moses said that they would be submitting to the Local Government Commission (LGC) the completed audit by the end of the week.

Mr. Chip Black asked if it was unusual for the audit presentation to be done in January for the year ending June 30, 2020. Ms. Cha-Moses answered that because of the COVID-19 pandemic the LGC extended the deadline for completed audits to January 31, 2021 and that the WPCOG audit would not be considered late.

4th Amendment of FY 2020-2021 Budget

Ms. Andrea Roper, Finance Director, presented the 4th Amendment of the 2020-2021 Budget reflecting a total budget of \$21,504,659 and an operating budget of \$7,633,941 which represents a decrease of \$427,307 from the November 24, 2020 budget amendment.

The 4th amendment of the 2020-2021 Budget includes:

- Transportation and Environmental Protection decreased \$48,430 and \$373,535, respectively, due to the delay of the environmental health partnership. The project is expected to begin next fiscal year.
- Community and Regional Planning decreased \$11,002 due to the delay of a drone project.
- Salaries, retirement and group insurance decreased due mainly to the delay of the environmental health partnership.
- Contractual increased \$55,859 in order to cover a temporary contract employee to assist with the additional CARES Act work in the Area Agency on Aging Department.
- Travel decreased due to the reduction in travel because of the pandemic.
- The rent/lease-building expense line decreased \$70,000 due to the delayed environmental health partnership lease with Caldwell County.
- Supplies decreased \$44,546 due to the delay of the environmental health partnership and to help offset the cost of the temporary contract employee in the aging department.
- Capital Outlay-Equipment decreased \$18,067 as a result of the delay to purchase a vehicle for the environmental health partnership.
- Contingency decreased \$34,893 due to funds being reallocated to other expense lines and to better align with actual costs in the current fiscal year.
- OPEB Trust allocation decreased \$35,777 due to the loss of fringe funding because of the reduction in salaries.
- All other changes to the expenditure lines reflect normal program needs.

Staff requests Policy Board to review and approve the fourth amendment of the 2020-2021 Budget.

Chair Floyd asked for questions, there was none.

FY2021-22 WPCOG Assessments for Local Governments

Mr. Anthony Starr, WPCOG Executive Director presented proposed dues assessments for fiscal year 2021 – 2022 to the board. Each year, the WPCOG assesses dues to its local governments per its charter and bylaws. The proposed assessments for FY22 reflect a 0.5% increase in population and a total increase of required assessments of 5.45%. The total increase is primarily attributed to the required match increase for MPO federal funds.

The general assessments rate is increased from 80 to 81 cents per capita to adjust for annual inflation. With the population increase, this generates an increase of \$5,316.19.

The assessments also include the required match for the MPO per federal and state requirements. The federal funding for the MPO is increasing 15.9% for FY21-22 and thus increases the required match for local governments, an increase of \$21,445 from the current fiscal year. The significant increases in work for the MPO make the increase justified and necessary to fulfill the required update to the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) in light of the following factors:

- FY2021-2022 is the most work-intensive year for the 2050 update, due to the extensive outreach and data collection done at the beginning of a Plan update.
- The NCDOT funding crisis has forced a re-prioritization of existing needs, when past updates largely could expand upon already funded needs.
- With tighter funding comes tougher choices, which requires more surveying and analysis to help inform tough decisions.
- Our recent Federal Certification strongly recommended the next MTP update expand its resiliency considerations and environmental justice analysis.
- Travel demand model inputs must be updated from the 2020 Census and decide transportation analysis zone changes.

The assessment table shows all the assessments including the required Water Resources dues, no increase in those dues, and optional dues for Sister Cities. If you would like to join Sister Cities and have not recently paid those dues, contact Anthony Starr or Ashley Bolick for assistance.

Decrease in Regional Housing Authority(RHA) Applicable Payment Standards

Ms. Stephanie Hanvey, WPCOG Regional Housing Authority Director, presented new payment standards issued by HUD. The Public Housing Program with HUD determines the amount of assistance provided to clients through publishing a schedule of fair market rent rates based on the housing type. Those rates directly affect the payment standards that housing authorities use for providing rental voucher assistance. In October 2020, HUD published a decrease in the new fair market rent rates for our region for 2021. Those rates were to take effect in October 2020. Typically, fair market rents increase each year. However, this year, they decreased. This decrease caused our current payment standards for one and two bedroom units to be higher than the HUD fair market rent rates allowable percentages. HUD regulations require the WPCOG to lower its one and two bedroom payment standards.

RHA staff and many other housing authorities across the country felt that lowering the payment standards for our tenants would create a burden on new and existing tenants by lowering the amount of rental assistance provided. The RHA requested a re-evaluation of our fair market rents and HUD granted an extension of three months. This allowed us to continue using the 2020 payment standards while we evaluated options for our new and current tenant population.

HUD allows housing authorities the option to do surveys to amend the fair market rent rates. These surveys typically cost approximately \$60,000.00 to \$75,000.00 and often not enough information is collected to produce a favorable result. RHA staff is considering dividing the WPCOG jurisdiction into several small area fair market rent areas by zip codes. This would allow us to use different payment standards in different zip codes based on the fair market rent for that area.

Staff wanted to make the board aware that the WPCOG RHA is now being required by HUD to decrease our payment standards to the 2021 rates governed by the fair market rent rates that were published in October 2020. HUD regulations allow housing authorities ninety days to begin using updated payment standards. Therefore, these payment standards were effective January 1, 2021. RHA staff continues to work with HUD regarding the possibility of utilizing Small Area Fair Market Rents in some of the regions zip codes to help make the decrease less burdensome to tenants.

Mr. Chip Black asked what, if any, impact the Regional Housing Authority has had due to the COVID eviction moratorium. Ms. Hanvey answered that the RHA has seen minimal impact but that the RHA did receive additional CARES Act funding to assist in non-payment situations due to the COVID pandemic.

Mr. Dennis Anthony asked if the change in payment standards would affect only new tenants or both current and new tenants. Ms. Hanvey answered that the new payment standards would be applied to all new tenants and that the RHA had two years to adjust current tenants’ payment standards to the new rates.

Chair Floyd asked for a single motion for the items requiring board action, the approval of the minutes, audit presentation, 4th amendment of the FY 2020-2021 budget and FY 2021-2022 dues assessment.

Ms. Jill Patton made a motion that the board approve and adopt the minutes from the November 24, 2020 meeting, accept the audit report as presented, approve the 4th Amendment of the FY 2020-2021 Budget as proposed and approve the FY 2021-2022 assessments as presented. Mr. Joe Gibbons offered a second. A roll call vote was called by Chair Floyd.

Larry Yoder	Yes	Bob Floyd	Yes	Jill Patton	Yes
George Holleman	Yes	Barbara Pennell	Yes	Marla Thompson	Yes
Johnnie Carswell, Alt	Yes	Dr. Caryl Burns	Yes	Ronnie Williams	Yes
Johnny Berry	Yes	Larry Chapman	Yes	Jerry Hodge	Yes
Dennis Anthony	Yes	Joseph L. Gibbons	Yes	Erisha Lipford	Yes
Sheila Perkins	Not Present	Allen Spencer	Yes	Helen Chestnut	Yes
Ben Honeycutt	Yes	Keith Warren	Not Present	Amparo Alfaro	Yes
Chris Jernigan	Yes	Kitty Barnes	Yes	Tommy Luckadoo	Yes
Gary McClure	Not Present	James Weaver	Not Present	Randy Burns	Not Present
John “Chip” Black, Jr.	Yes	Donald Robinson	Not Present	Jeanna Price	Yes
Mike Labrose	Not Present	Dale Sherrill	Yes	Malla Vue	Not Present
Ronnie Setzer	Not Present	Joie Fulbright	Yes		

The motion passed.

Staff Updates

Mr. Anthony Starr reviewed the Executive Director’s Report outlining both current and upcoming projects by department.

- Some staff continue to telework but all staff work at least four days per week in the office.
- To-date there has been no employee-to-employee transmission of COVID at the WPCOG office building.
- The entire Administration team has begun work on this year’s WPCOG Annual Meeting preparations. While it may look different from previous years, it is sure to be an event worth attending. Mark your calendars for Thursday, April 22. More details to come.
- We recently experienced a premature failure of one of our HVAC units for the building. It appears that most of the HVAC units will fail within the next couple of years due to the problems experienced when we moved into the building in 2012. To replace the entire system would cost in excess of \$200,000. Staff is considering options and plans for the eventual replacement of the other 8 units and the control system. More information will be provided at a future date.

- The AAA has used all CARES Act funding for Alexander County and it is expected that funds for Caldwell County will be exhausted by the end of January.
- Community and Economic Development staff are currently administering 72 grants for local governments.
- Currently, 160-D rewrites for Drexel (finished), Cahah's Mountain, Hildebran, Gamewell and Rutherford College are being conducted this month.
- The Annual WNC Air Quality Conference was held on December 11th, 2020 in partnership with Lenoir-Rhyne University. The virtual format operated smoothly with over 126 attendees. The Water Quality Conference held in September gained an additional 230 attendees for a total of 356 persons trained by the events.
- Planning staff has begun providing supervision and hiring of vacant positions for Caldwell County Environmental Health. Indication from DHHS is that administrative updates will be completed later this year. At earliest WPCOG could begin administering full Environmental Health services fall of 2021 or early 2022. Staff have reached out to local legislators about the possibility of local legislation but it is unclear at this time if that will be a viable option.
- The RHA has approximately 1,200 families on the waiting list.
- Workforce Development staff, Leslie Farris and Matthew Xiong, are still doing a great job helping create Virtual Job Fairs for employers. Virtual workshops are planned monthly and job fairs as needed/requested. We are partnering with the City of Hickory to post our workshops and job fair information on their website and in their newsletters. Since July 2020 – December 2020 we have provided 14 virtual job fairs.
- There are currently over 8,000 job opening across the WPCOG region.

Adjournment

Chair Floyd reminded the board of the next meeting scheduled for March 23, 2021 then he adjourned the meeting at 6:43 pm.

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION
WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
POLICY BOARD**

MEETING DATE: March 23, 2021

SUBJECT: EDA Cares Act Grant Story Book Mapping

PRESENTER: Alison Adams, Community and Regional Planning Director

ATTACHMENTS: None

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

The Storybook Mapping Project is one of three EDA Cares Act grant projects for the WPCOG. The purpose of the project is to highlight the opportunities and places within the region that promote quality of life to help engage and attract new and retain current workforce talent, industry and business in the region. The purpose also aligns with WPCOG CEDS goals.

Industries that are successful look to locate to areas where employees will want to live, work and play. It saves the companies money from the cyclical pattern of hiring, rehiring and training. They are able to attain quality personnel. The quality of life storybook tool will allow businesses/corporations (future and current) to have a quick access to information to attract future employees. This tool quickly and easily provides drone footage of locations of interest across the region in four major categories.

At the November 24 Policy Board meeting, a demo of the GIS storybook mapping application was shared. The project at that time was in the infancy stages. There are four main areas of focus across Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba counties - recreational experiences, places of interest, agricultural opportunities and gathering spots. Over the course of the last three months there has been an intense focus on the recreational component of the project. Staff met with the Town/City/County Managers and recreational staff throughout the region to obtain feedback and ideas. Staff has taken over 120 hours of drone footage to attach to designated regional locations within the application. We will be reviewing the recreational experiences portion of the storybook map.

The next steps are as follows:
Places of interest (May 2021)
Agriculture (September 2021)
Gathering spots (January 2022)

We will continue to collaborate and engage partners throughout the region in the specific categories to obtain information, receive feedback and ideas, and help market the tool.

Click [here](#) to access a video summary of recreational opportunities within our region.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

Staff requests the Policy Board to provide feedback and guidance. No formal action by the Board is needed at this time.

Suggested Motion: *None*

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION
WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
POLICY BOARD**

MEETING DATE: March 23, 2021

SUBJECT: Unifour HOME Consortium

PRESENTER: Sherry Long, Assistant Executive Director/ Community and Economic Development Director

ATTACHMENTS: 1. PowerPoint

SUMMARY OF REQUEST: The Unifour HOME Consortium is celebrating its twenty-fifth year serving the region in 2021.

In 1995, local governments in the region began discussing the formation of the Unifour Consortium. In July 1996 the Consortium, with the City of Lenoir as the lead entity, received its first allocation from the Department of Housing on Urban Development. Since then, \$24.7 million of HOME dollars have been brought to the region, leveraging an additional \$395 million.

In the past 25 years, the Consortium has provided down-payment assistance to over 3,000 first-time homebuyers and assisted in the development of 1,225 affordable rental units, including 380 for senior housing throughout the region.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development requires the HOME program to leverage a 25 percent match in order to receive funding. In the beginning, the Unifour Consortium's program was designed so that the match was generated from different sources, saving the local governments in the region over \$6 million.

Much of the success of the program is due to the City of Lenoir Finance Department. Over the years the City of Lenoir has written over 4,000 checks and completed 25 audits and annual reports for the Consortium. Lenoir Finance Department's ability to be flexible by providing checks to closing attorneys in a timely manner allowed the program to be reliable for homebuyers and lenders for the past 25 years.

As we look toward the next 25 years, the design of the down-payment assistance program is changing – going from \$5,000 per home to investing 20 percent of the purchase price up to \$30,000. Multi-family construction costs continue to rise and will make it challenging to provide affordable rental units. The Unifour Consortium will continue to support Habitat for Humanity chapters in all four counties.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

None required – information only.

THE UNIFOUR HOME CONSORTIUM

Celebrating 25 years
serving the Region



Western Piedmont
Council of Governments

Creative Regional Solutions Since 1968

Unifour HOME Consortium



- Founded in June 1995 by the 28 local governments in the region
- The City of Lenoir serves as the Lead Entity for the Consortium
- Grants provided under the HOME Investment Partnership Act through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- A total of \$24.6 million has been allocated and more than \$5.2 in program income has been received
- Purpose of Unifour Consortium is to plan and carry out regional housing activities to benefit low- to moderate-income beneficiaries

Down-Payment Assistance



- Primary program activity is the Down-Payment Assistance for First-Time Homebuyers
- Since inception, the Down-Payment Assistance program has helped over 3,000 first-time homebuyers
- The program has used \$18.5 million in Down-Payment Assistance funds to leverage more than \$250 million toward the purchase of homes

Non-Profit Assistance



- HOME funds are also used to provide assistance to Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs). These are Non-Profit Organizations (i.e. Habitat for Humanity, Blue Ridge Community Action, etc.) located throughout the region that are involved in housing-related services to benefit low-income families.
- Since inception, the program has allocated over \$5 million to 14 different organizations

Affordable Multi-Family Rental Development

Milstead Woods - Taylorsville

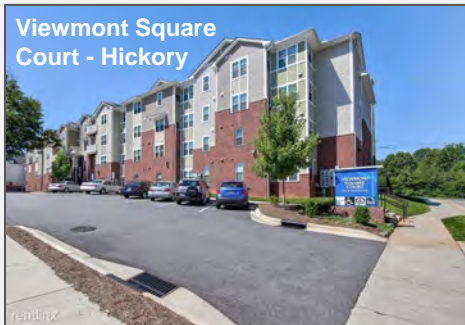


- Another component is the Multi-Family Housing activity that assists developers in gaining access to the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency's Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Loan program
- During the program's history, assistance has been provided for 20 different Multi-Family Housing projects located in all four counties. Approximately \$5.3 million in HOME funds have been allocated, with more than \$145 million in total investments. This has led to the development of 1,225 housing units, including 380 senior units.

Arbor Glen - Lenoir



Viewmont Square Court - Hickory



Sienna - Morganton



Unifour HOME Consortium



More than 3,000 single-family and multi-family homes financed



\$395 million in leveraged investment off \$23.8 million in direct funding



Developed 1,225 housing units, including 380 senior units



Serving the people and all 28 local governments in the region

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION
WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
POLICY BOARD**

MEETING DATE: March 23, 2021

SUBJECT: myFutureNC Resolution of Support

PRESENTER: Wendy Johnson, Workforce Development Director

ATTACHMENTS: 1. Summary Information
2. Resolution

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

myFutureNC is a statewide nonprofit organization focused on educational attainment and is the result of cross-sector collaboration between North Carolina leaders in education, business, and government.

myFutureNC's mission is to prepare North Carolina for the future by empowering individuals, strengthening communities, and ensuring our economic viability in a global economy.

myFutureNC is working across sectors and in communities throughout the state to:

- Close gaps in postsecondary attainment.
- Promote alignment between educational programming and business/industry needs.
- Ultimately improve the quality of educational opportunities for all North Carolinians.

On Feb. 20, 2019, myFutureNC unveiled its goal and bold vision for the future of education in our state: *"We will work to ensure that by 2030, 2 million North Carolinians have a high-quality credential or postsecondary degree."*

North Carolina has a skills gap and talent pipeline crisis so [myFutureNC](#), a state-led nonprofit, was created to move the [state's educational attainment goal](#) of 2 million by 2030 into action. To help facilitate local conversations and decision-making aimed at increasing education levels, myFutureNC has provided data profiles for each of the 100 North Carolina Counties. You can find all county profiles [here](#). Achieving our educational attainment goal is critical to keeping North Carolina at the top of business rankings and this goal will only be possible with the support of our Councils of Government across the state. [Over 150 organizations](#) have endorsed the goal and work of myFutureNC and they are now hoping to have endorsements from COGs across NC. The WPCOG logo and endorsement will be displayed on the myFutureNC website, along with the list of other endorsers.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

Staff requests the Policy Board to endorse myFutureNC and NC's educational attainment goal.

Suggested Motion:

I move that the Policy Board endorse myFutureNC and NC's educational attainment goal and adopt the attached resolution of support.

NORTH CAROLINA is at an important crossroad.

Together, we can set our state on a path to a more prosperous future.

As our economy grows, the vast majority of new jobs require education beyond a high school diploma—but **fewer than half** of North Carolinians ages 25-44 have a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential.

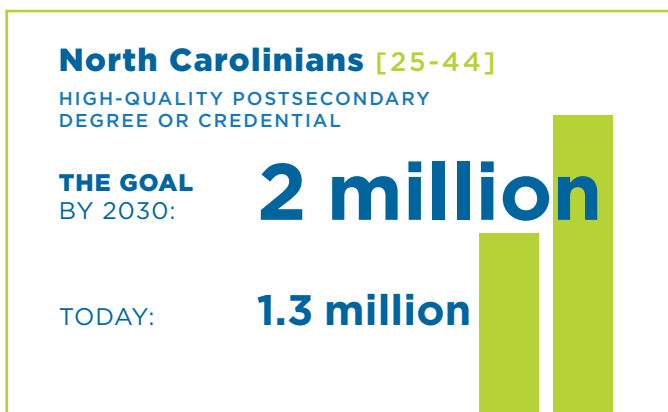
And North Carolinians from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are disproportionately affected. Far fewer earn postsecondary credentials than students with greater economic stability.

The result? Our education system and our economy are out of sync. Job seekers struggle to find jobs and employers struggle to find the talent they need to fill openings.

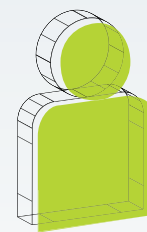
The way forward.

We're on a mission to completely close the educational attainment gap in North Carolina.

Our ambitious goal: Ensuring that by 2030, 2 million North Carolinians have a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential—more than doubling projected growth over the next 10 years.



This is one of the highest targets in the South, putting us on par with the highest-achieving states in the country.

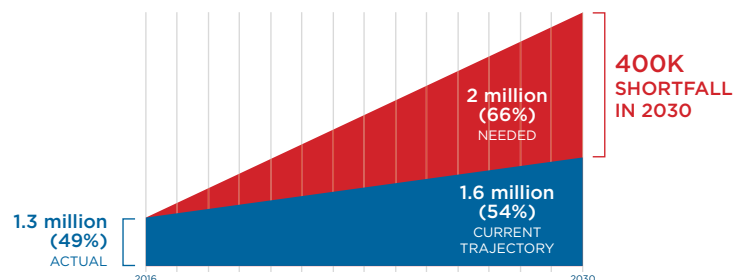


1/2
NC EMPLOYERS
NEED MORE HIREABLE WORKERS

67% **Jobs in NC**
ALREADY REQUIRING HIGH-QUALITY POSTSECONDARY DEGREE OR CREDENTIAL

49% **North Carolinians**
[AGES 25-44]
HAVE COMPLETED THAT LEVEL OF EDUCATION

We must act **NOW**. If we do nothing, by 2030, North Carolina fall short 400,000 individuals with the skills needed to fill our future jobs.



myFutureNC is a state-led, locally-owned talent development initiative that intentionally educates and upskills North Carolina's homegrown and in-migrant talent from birth to workforce.

myFutureNC supports the right of all North Carolinians – irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or geographic location – to achieve the level of educational attainment they need to succeed in school and in the workforce.

FEWER THAN

1/2

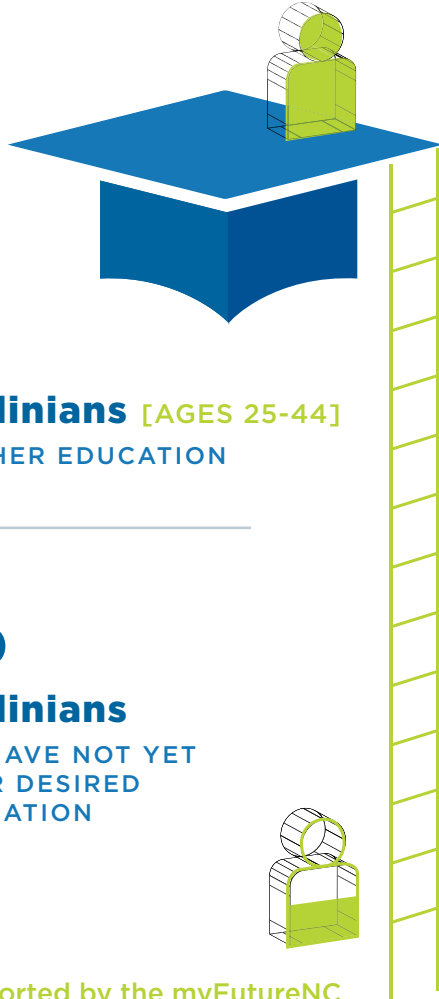
North Carolinians [AGES 25-44]
COMPLETE HIGHER EDUCATION

39%

North Carolinians

REPORT THEY HAVE NOT YET
REACHED THEIR DESIRED
LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Our work is supported by the myFutureNC Advisory Board of Commissioners, providing real-world insights and expertise about the challenges of improving postsecondary attainment across the state. All of the work of myFutureNC is demand-driven, based upon the needs of North Carolina businesses and of each county and region.



The path ahead is clear:

- 94%** North Carolinians say it's important for adults to have education beyond high school
- 70%** North Carolinians agree having education beyond high school is essential for getting a good job
- 81%** North Carolinians agree a good job is essential to having a high quality of life

myFutureNC:

- **Engages** local, regional, and statewide stakeholders to communicate the need for both greater educational attainment and deeper economic alignment to eliminate the gap between the skills employers require and the education and training available throughout the state.
- **Better aligns and coordinates** systems to support students at all levels, from pre-K education through high-quality certificate, associate, and higher-degree programs.
- **Catalyzes** innovative, effective ideas and identifies best practices that can be applied from the mountains to the coast, in our cities, towns, and rural areas.
- **Monitors** progress and improves our efforts each and every year.

Join our efforts.

myFutureNC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization focused on increasing the degrees and credentials required to meet the changing needs of North Carolina businesses, both today and into the future. myFutureNC seeks to reach this ambitious educational attainment goal by promoting cross-sector alignment and coordination between North Carolina leaders in education, business, and government. The organization's mission is to prepare North Carolina for the future by empowering individuals, strengthening communities, and ensuring our economic viability in a global economy.

Learn more and join us at [myFutureNC.org](https://myfuturenc.org).

Visit our website to view the full CALL TO ACTION report and all sources.

Resolution to Support the myFutureNC Attainment Goal

WHEREAS, myFutureNC is a statewide non-profit organization focused on educational attainment and is the result of cross-sector collaboration between North Carolina leaders in education, business and government; and

WHEREAS, The myFutureNC Commission has concluded that North Carolina should have a goal that 2 million North Carolinians will have a high-quality credential or postsecondary degree by 2030; and

WHEREAS, The Western Piedmont Council of Governments is committed to promoting community and economic development and the development of a well-trained workforce as the federally designated economic development district and the regional Workforce Development Board.

WHEREAS, The Western Piedmont Council of Governments along with other key partners, will help advance the educational attainment of students in North Carolina by implementing its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, goals and strategies the Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board, and coordinating and working with education, workforce development, and economic development partners throughout the region and the state.

WHEREAS, The Western Piedmont Council of Governments agrees that North Carolina faces a gap between the projected needs for citizens with high-quality credentials or postsecondary degrees and the attainment of those high-quality credentials or postsecondary degrees.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT:

1. The Western Piedmont Council of Governments supports the attainment goal of myFutureNC that 2 million North Carolinians should have a high-quality credential or postsecondary degree by 2030; and
2. The Western Piedmont Council of Governments along with leaders in business, education, state and local government, and community organizations will continue to foster partnerships to achieve the goal.

ADOPTED this 23rd day of March, 2021.

ATTEST:

Bob Floyd, Jr., Board Chair
Mayor of Cedar Rock, NC

Johnny E. Berry, Board Secretary
Mayor of Connelly Springs, NC

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION
WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
POLICY BOARD**

MEETING DATE: March 23, 2021

SUBJECT: Workforce Development Board Reappointments

PRESENTER: Wendy Johnson, Workforce Development Director

ATTACHMENTS: N/A

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Request Policy Board to reappoint ten current Workforce Development Board members for another two year term. The following individuals' terms are expiring and are eligible for re-appointment, July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023.

Josh McKinney, Vice President, Peoples Bank - All

Phyllis Johnston, VP Human Resources, Catawba Valley Medical Center – Catawba County

Jim Packer, Director Human Resources, Elite Comfort Systems – Catawba County

Jason Lingle, Director Innovative Energy Solutions, Blue Ridge Energy – Caldwell County

Dr. Jamie Conrad, Coordinator of Experiential Learning & Outreach, Lenoir Rhyne University - All

Dr. Tim Sims, Director of Federal Programs, Hickory Public Schools

Beth Mills, Unit Manager, Vocational Rehabilitation - Regional

Alan Wood, President & CEO, Burke Development – Burke County

Felicia Setzer, Regional Operations Director, Division of Workforce Solutions - Regional

Casey Kinard, President, Burke Fraternal Order of Police – Burke County

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED: Staff request the Policy Board to re-appoint the ten current Workforce Development Board members for another two year term, July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023.

Suggested Motion: *I move that the Board re-appoint the ten current Workforce Development Board members for another two year term, July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023.*

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION
WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
POLICY BOARD**

MEETING DATE: March 23, 2021

SUBJECT: RHA Annual Administrative Plan

PRESENTER: Stephanie Hanvey, RHA Director

ATTACHMENTS: 1. Annual Plan Amendments

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development requires all public housing agencies (PHAs) to prepare and adopt Annual and 5-Year agency plans. This year we are required to prepare and adopt an Annual Administrative Plan (July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022). HUD prescribes a standardized plan format for PHA plans, which provides very brief information relating to the day-to-day operations of the program. These plans provide public information about the way that the PHA's housing programs are operated and afford opportunities for client and public review and input. The public hearing was held at 9:00am on Monday, March 22, 2021. Upon board approval, the Annual Administrative Plan is due in the Greensboro HUD office no later than April 15, 2021.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

Staff is requesting that the board approve the PHA's Annual Administrative Plan (2021-2022) to be effective April 1, 2021.

Suggested Motion: I move that the policy board approve the PHA's Annual Administrative Plan for 2021 for their submission to HUD by April 15, 2021.

Chapter 6 page 6-47

Necessary and Reasonable Costs

WPCOG Policy - Current

Child care expenses will be considered for the time required for the eligible activity plus reasonable transportation time. For child care that enables a family member to go to school, the time allowed may include not more than one study hour for each hour spent in class.

To establish the reasonableness of child care costs, the PHA will use the schedule of child care costs from the local welfare agency. Families may present, and the PHA will consider, justification for costs that exceed typical costs in the area.

WPCOG Policy - Updated

Childcare expenses will be considered for the time required for the eligible activity plus reasonable transportation time. For childcare that enables a family member to go to school, the time allowed may include not more than one study hour for each hour spent in class.

Chapter 6 page 6-54

Changes in Payments Standards (Decreases)

PHA Policy - Current

If a PHA changes its payment standard schedule resulting in a lower payment standard amount, during the term of a HAP contract, the PHA will reduce the payment standard used to calculate subsidy for families under HAP contract as long as the HAP contract remains in effect. The PHA will provide the family with at least 12 months' notice that the payment standard is being reduced before the effective date of the change.

The PHA will not establish different policies for decreases in the payment standard for designated areas within their jurisdiction.

WPCOG Policy - Updated

If a PHA changes its payment standard schedule resulting in a lower payment standard amount, during the term of a HAP contract, the PHA will not reduce the payment standard used to calculate subsidy for families under HAP contract as long as the HAP contract remains in effect.

Chapter 7 page 7-2

Requirements for Acceptable Documents

WPCOG Policy - Current

Any documents used for verification must be must be dated within 60 days of the date they are provided to the PHA. The documents must not be damaged, altered or in any way illegible.

Print-outs from Web pages, copies, faxes, and emails are considered original documents. Any family self-certifications must be made in a format acceptable to the PHA.

WPCOG Policy - Updated

Any documents used for verification must be current at the discretion of the PHA. Printouts from Web pages, copies, faxes, and emails are considered original documents.

Chapter 7 page 7-5

Upfront Income Verification using Non-HUD Systems (Optional)

WPCOG Policy - Current

The PHA will inform all applicants and participants of its use of the following UIV resources during the admission and reexamination process:

- HUD's EIV system
- The Work Number

WPCOG Policy - Updated

The PHA will inform all applicants and participants of its use of the following UIV resources during the admission and reexamination process:

- HUD's EIV system

Chapter 7 page 7-5

Third-Party Written and Oral Verification

WPCOG Policy - Current

Third-party documents provided by the family must be dated within 60 days of the PHA request date.

If the PHA determines that third-party documents provided by the family are not acceptable, the PHA will explain the reason to the family and request additional documentation.

As verification of earned income, the PHA will require the family to provide the two most current, consecutive pay stubs.

WPCOG Policy - Updated

If the PHA determines that third-party documents provided by the family are not acceptable, the PHA will explain the reason to the family and request additional documentation.

As verification of earned income, the PHA will require the family to provide the two most current, consecutive pay stubs.

Chapter 7 page 7-6

Oral Third-Party Verification

WPCOG Policy - Current

In collecting third-party oral verification, PHA staff will record in the family's file the name and title of the person contacted, the date and time of the conversation (or attempt), the telephone number used, and the facts provided.

When any source responds verbally to the initial written request for verification the PHA will accept the verbal response as oral verification but will also request that the source complete and return any verification forms that were provided.

WPCOG Policy - Updated

In collecting third-party oral verification, PHA staff will record in the family's file the name and title of the person contacted, the date and time of the conversation (or attempt), the telephone number used, and the facts provided.

When any source responds verbally to the initial written request for verification, the PHA will accept the verbal response as oral verification.

Chapter 7 page 7-16

Family Members Receiving SSA Disability Benefits

WPCOG Policy - Current

For family members claiming disability who receive disability benefits from the SSA, the PHA will attempt to obtain information about disability benefits through the HUD Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system. If documentation from HUD's EIV System is not available, the PHA will request a current (dated within the last 60 days) SSA benefit verification letter from each family member claiming disability status. If the family is unable to provide the document(s), the PHA will ask the family to request a benefit verification letter by either calling SSA at 1-800-772-1213, or by requesting it from www.ssa.gov. Once the applicant or participant receives the benefit verification letter they will be required to provide it to the PHA.

WPCOG Policy - Updated

For family members claiming disability who receive disability benefits from the SSA, the PHA will attempt to obtain information about disability benefits through the HUD Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system. If documentation from HUD's EIV System is not available, the PHA will request a current SSA benefit verification letter from each family member claiming disability status. If the family is unable to provide the document(s), the PHA will ask the family to request a benefit verification letter by either calling SSA at 1-800-772-1213, or by requesting it from www.ssa.gov. Once the applicant or participant receives the benefit verification letter they will be required to provide it to the PHA.

Chapter 8 page 8-17

HAP Abatement

WPCOG Policy - Current

The PHA will make all HAP abatements effective the first of the month following the expiration of the PHA specified correction period (including any extension).

The PHA will accept the owner's certification that the HQS deficiency has been corrected. Payment will resume on an abated unit effective the day the certification is received.

WPCOG Policy - Updated

The PHA will accept the owner's certification that the HQS deficiency has been corrected. Payment will resume on an abated unit effective the day the certification is received.

The PHA will make all HAP abatements effective the first of the month following a 10 day mailed notice to the landlord.

Chapter 9 page 9-4

Requesting Tenancy Approval

WPCOG Policy - Current

The RTA must be signed by both the family and the owner.

The owner may submit the RTA on behalf of the family.

Completed RTA (including the proposed dwelling lease) can be submitted as hard copies, in-person, by mail, e-mail or by fax.

The family may not submit, and the PHA will not process, more than one (1) RTA at a time. When the family submits the RTA, the PHA will review the RTA for completeness.

If the RTA is incomplete (including lack of signature by family, owner, or both), or if the dwelling lease is not submitted with the RTA, the PHA will notify the family and the owner of the deficiencies.

Missing information and/or missing documents will only be accepted as hard copies, in-person, by mail, or by fax. The PHA will accept missing information over the phone, documenting clearly the conversation. The PHA will always contact the other party and notify of changes to the RTA, documenting the contact.

Example: the RTA does not state which party will pay 'other electric', and the lease is silent. The RTA contacts the owner who states that the owner will be responsible for 'other electric.' The PHA will document this phone call, and then is required to contact the family and inform of this change, documenting the contact with the family and the information shared.

When the family submits the RTA and proposed lease, the PHA will also review the terms of the RTA for consistency with the terms of the proposed lease.

If the terms of the RTA are not consistent with the terms of the proposed lease, the PHA will notify the family and the owner of the discrepancies.

Corrections to the terms of the RTA and/or the proposed lease will be accepted as hard copies, in-person, by mail, by e-mail or by fax.

Because of the time sensitive nature of the tenancy approval process, the PHA will attempt to communicate with the owner and family by phone, fax, or email. The PHA will use mail when the parties cannot be reached by phone, fax, or email.

WPCOG Policy - Updated

The family may not submit, and the PHA will not process, more than one (1) RTA at a time.

The PHA will notify the family and the owner if the RTA is incomplete, or if the dwelling lease is not submitted with the RTA. The PHA will accept changes to the RTA by telephone, email, fax or in-person.

If the terms of the RTA are not consistent with the terms of the proposed lease, the PHA will notify the family and the owner of the discrepancies.

Chapter 10 page 10-10, 10-11

Voucher Extensions and Expiration

WPCOG Policy - Current

The PHA will approve no extensions to a voucher issued to an applicant or participant family porting out of the PHA's jurisdiction except under the following circumstances: (a) the initial term of the voucher will expire before the portable family will be issued a voucher by the receiving PHA, (b) the family decides to return to the initial PHA's jurisdiction and search for a unit there, or (c) the family decides to search for a unit in a third PHA's jurisdiction.

In case (a) above, the voucher extension will be for 30 days past the date of the family's portability appointment with the receiving PHA, but never longer than 120 days from the initial voucher issuance. In cases (b) and (c) above, the voucher extension will be limited to one extension for 30 days.

The family must apply for an extension in writing prior to the expiration of the initial voucher term.

To receive or continue receiving assistance under the initial PHA's voucher program, a family that moves to another PHA's jurisdiction under portability must be under HAP contract in the receiving PHA's jurisdiction within 90 days following the expiration date of the initial PHA's voucher term (including any extensions). (See below under "Initial Billing Deadline" for one exception to this policy.)

WPCOG Policy - Updated

The PHA will approve extensions to a voucher issued to an applicant or participant family porting out of the PHA's jurisdiction under the following circumstances:

(a) the initial term of the voucher will expire before the portable family will be issued a voucher by the receiving PHA, (b) the family decides to return to the initial PHA's jurisdiction and search for a unit there, (c) the family decides to search for a unit in a third PHA's jurisdiction, (d) at the discretion of the PHA

In case (a) above, the voucher extension will be for **30 days** past the date of the family's portability appointment with the receiving PHA. In cases (b) and (c) above, the voucher extension will be limited to one extension for **30 days**.

To receive or continue receiving assistance under the initial PHA's voucher program, a family that moves to another PHA's jurisdiction under portability must be under HAP contract in the receiving PHA's jurisdiction within **90 days** following the expiration date of the initial PHA's voucher term (including any extensions). (See below under "Initial Billing Deadline" for one exception to this policy.)

Chapter 10 page 10-12

Sending Documentation to the Receiving PHA

WPCOG Policy - Current

In addition to these documents, the PHA will provide the following information, if available, to the receiving PHA:

- Social security numbers (SSNs)

- Documentation of SSNs for all nonexempt household members whose SSNs have not been verified through the EIV system

- Documentation of legal identity

- Documentation of citizenship or eligible immigration status

- Documentation of participation in the earned income disallowance (EID) benefit

- Documentation of participation in a family self-sufficiency (FSS) program

The PHA will notify the family in writing regarding any information provided to the receiving PHA [HCV GB, p. 13-3].

WPCOG Policy - Updated

In addition to these documents, the PHA will provide the following information, if available, to the receiving PHA:

- Social security numbers (SSNs)

- Documentation of SSNs for all nonexempt household members who's SSNs have not been verified through the EIV system

- Documentation of legal identity

- Documentation of participation in the earned income disallowance (EID) benefit

- Documentation of participation in a family self-sufficiency (FSS) program

The PHA will notify the family in writing regarding any information provided to the receiving PHA [HCV GB, p. 13-3].

Chapter 10 page 10-19

Initial Billing Deadline

WPCOG Policy - Current

The PHA will send its initial billing notice by fax or e-mail, if necessary, to meet the billing deadline but will also send the notice by regular mail.

WPCOG Policy - Updated

The PHA will send its initial billing notice by fax or e-mail.

Chapter 11 page 11-4

Conducting Annual Reexaminations

WPCOG Policy - Current

Families will be asked to provide all required information (as described in the reexamination notice) by mail or to any scheduled reexamination appointment. The required information will include a PHA-designated reexamination form, an Authorization for the Release of Information/Privacy Act Notice, as well as supporting documents or forms related to the family's income, expenses, and family composition.

Any required documents or information that the family is unable to provide at the time of the interview must be provided within 10 business days of the interview. If the family is unable to obtain the information or materials within the required time frame, the family may request an extension.

If the family does not provide the required documents or information within the required time period (plus any extensions), the family will be sent a notice of termination (See Chapter 12).

WPCOG Policy - Updated

Families will be asked to provide all required information (as described in the reexamination notice) by mail, email, fax or to any scheduled reexamination appointment. The required information will include a PHA-designated reexamination form, an Authorization for the Release of Information/Privacy Act Notice, as well as supporting documents or forms related to the family's income, expenses, and family composition.

Any required documents or information that the family is unable to provide at the time of the interview must be provided within 15 business days of the interview. If the family is unable to obtain the information or materials within the required time frame, the family may request an extension.

If the family does not provide the required documents or information within the required time period (plus any extensions), the family will be sent a notice of termination (See Chapter 12).

Chapter 11 page 11-8

New Family and Household Members Requiring Approval

WPCOG Policy - Current

Families must request PHA approval to add a new family member, live-in aide, foster child, or foster adult. This includes any person not on the lease who is expected to stay in the unit for more than 30 cumulative days within a 12-month period and therefore no longer qualifies as a "guest." Requests must be made in writing and approved by the PHA prior to the individual moving into the unit.

All adult family members must be added to the lease before the PHA will approve the additional family members.

When an adult is being added to the household, the head of household, spouse, or co-head must attend a face-to-face interview at the PHA. The new adult(s) is also required to attend. This includes foster adults and live-in aides. The family must complete a family declaration.

The PHA will not approve the addition of a new family or household member unless the individual meets the PHA's eligibility criteria (see Chapter 3) and documentation requirements (see Chapter 7, Part II).

The PHA will not approve the addition of a foster child or foster adult if it will cause a violation of HQS space standards.

If the PHA determines an individual meets the PHA's eligibility criteria and documentation requirements, the PHA will provide written approval to the family. If the approval of a new family member or live-in aide will cause overcrowding according to HQS standards, the approval letter will explain that the family will be issued a voucher and will be required to move.

If the PHA determines that an individual does not meet the PHA's eligibility criteria or documentation requirements, the PHA will notify the family in writing of its decision to deny approval of the new family or household member and the reasons for the denial.

The PHA will make its determination within 10 business days of receiving all information required to verify the individual's eligibility.

WPCOG Policy - Updated

All adult family members must be added to the lease before the PHA will approve the additional family members.

When an adult is being added to the household, the family must complete a family declaration. The PHA will not approve the addition of a new family or household member unless the individual meets the PHA's eligibility criteria (see Chapter 3) and documentation requirements (see Chapter 7, Part II).

The PHA will not approve the addition of a foster child or foster adult if it will cause a violation of HQS space standards.

If the PHA determines an individual meets the PHA's eligibility criteria and documentation requirements, the PHA will add the individual to the household. If the approval of a new family member or live-in aide will cause overcrowding according to HQS standards, the approval letter will explain that the family will be issued a voucher and will be required to move.

If the PHA determines that an individual does not meet the PHA's eligibility criteria or documentation requirements, the PHA will notify the family in writing of its decision to deny approval of the new family or household member and the reasons for the denial.

The PHA will make its determination within 10 business days of receiving all information required to verify the individual's eligibility.

Chapter 15 page 15-29

Homeownership Assistance Payments and Homeownership Expenses

WPCOG Policy - Current

The PHA's housing assistance payment will be paid directly to the lender.

It will be the family's responsibility to take the entire payment to the lender.

The PHA may make an exception if the family requests the payment to go directly to the lender, and this arrangement is acceptable to the mortgage company. If the assistance payment exceeds the amount due to the lender, the PHA must pay the excess directly to the family.

WPCOG Policy - Updated

The PHA's housing assistance payment will be paid directly to the lender.

Chapter 16 page 16-28

Down Payment Requirement

WPCOG Policy - Current

Before executing a repayment agreement with a family, the PHA will generally require a down payment of 10 percent of the total amount owed. If the family can provide evidence satisfactory to the PHA that a down payment of 10 percent would impose an undue hardship, the PHA may, in its sole discretion, require a lesser percentage or waive the requirement.

WPCOG Policy - Updated

The PHA will require no down payment.

Chapter 16 page 16-29

Payment Thresholds

WPCOG Policy - Current

The PHA has established the following thresholds for repayment of debts:

Amounts between \$1 and \$500 must be paid within 12 months.

Amounts between \$501 and \$1,000 must be repaid within 18 months.

Amounts under \$1,001 and \$5,000 must be repaid within 36 months.

Amounts owed over \$5,000 will be terminated from the program.

If a family can provide evidence satisfactory to the PHA that the threshold applicable to the family's debt would impose an undue hardship, the PHA may, in its sole discretion, determine that a lower monthly payment amount is reasonable. In making its determination, the PHA will consider all relevant information, including the following:

The amount owed by the family to the PHA

The reason for the debt, including whether the debt was the result of family action/inaction or circumstances beyond the family's control

The family's current and potential income and expenses

The family's current family share, as calculated under 24 CFR 982.515

The family's history of meeting its financial responsibilities

WPCOG Policy - Updated

The family's monthly share of the rent plus the monthly debt repayment amount will not exceed 40 percent of the family's month adjusted gross income.

If the family's monthly share of the rent already exceeds 40% of the family's monthly adjusted income, the PHA may, in its sole discretion, determine a monthly payment amount that is reasonable. In making its determination, the PHA will consider all relevant information, including the following:

The amount owed by the family to the PHA

The reason for the debt, including whether the debt was the result of family action/inaction or circumstances beyond the family's control

The family's current and potential income and expenses

The family's current family share, as calculated under 24 CFR 982.515

The family's history of meeting its financial responsibilities

The repayment amount will be recalculated at every Annual Recertification and Unit Transfer. The PHA will mail the family a statement with the Annual Recertification Rent Change Letter, which will inform the family of the new monthly repayment amount and remaining debt owed to the PHA.

If the family's debt exceeds \$5,000, the PHA may terminate housing payment assistance, at the PHA's discretion.

steChapter 17 page 17-31

Organization of the Waiting List – Project Based

WPCOG Policy - Current

The PHA will use the same waiting list for both tenant-based and PBV assistance. The PHA has the following PBV projects: Millside Manor

WPCOG Policy - Updated

The PHA will use the same waiting list for both tenant-based and PBV assistance. The PHA has the following PBV projects: Hickory Medical Properties, Millside Manor and Safe Harbor

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION
WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
POLICY BOARD**

MEETING DATE: March 23, 2021

SUBJECT: RHA Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Action Plan Amendments

PRESENTER: Stephanie Hanvey, Regional Housing Director

ATTACHMENTS: 1. WPCOG RHA Family Self-Sufficiency Action Plan Amendments

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

In 2019, the Regional Housing Authority staff updated our complete Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Action Plan. The plan was effective April 1, 2019. Housing authorities are required to send any administrative plan amendments to HUD annually. The proposed amendments are attached for board approval. Staff would like to send these amendments to HUD with the Annual Administrative Plan amendments. Staff would like these amendments to become effective April 1, 2021.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

Staff requests that the Policy Board approve the 2021 RHA Family Self-Sufficiency Action Plan Amendments with an effective date of April 1, 2021. These amendments will be sent to HUD by April 15, 2021.

Suggested Motion: I move that the Policy Board approve the RHA Family Self-Sufficiency Action Plan Amendments.

Page 2 – 6 Updated for graduates and mandatory slots

Maintaining Mandatory Minimum Program Size

Although the discretion to do so ultimately rests with the PHA, mandatory minimum program size can decrease as FSS participants graduate. Per the regulation, for each family that graduates from the program by fulfilling its FSS contract of participation on or after October 21, 1998, the mandatory minimum program size for a PHA's public housing or housing choice voucher FSS program is reduced by one slot. However, if a FSS slot is vacated by a family that has not completed its FSS contract of participation obligations, the slot must be filled by a replacement family which has been selected in accordance with the FSS family selection procedures [24 CFR 984.105(b)(3)].

PHA Policy - Updated

As of December 2020, 35 participants have graduated from the PHA's FSS program, bringing the current MMPS total to 90, with a mandatory minimum program exception of 35.

Page 2-8 Updated for current voucher number

2-II.B. ESTIMATE OF PARTICIPATING FAMILIES [24 CFR 984.201(d)(2)]

The PHA must state the number of eligible FSS families who can reasonably be expected to receive supportive services under the FSS program based on available and anticipated federal, tribal, state, local, and private resources

Estimate of Eligible Families – Updated

1330 eligible FSS families can reasonably be expected to receive supportive services under the FSS program, based on available and anticipated federal, tribal, state, local, and private resources.

P 6 – 4 Clarification last sentence

PHA Policy - Updated

The PHA will require verification that the FSS family has completed certain interim goals, or has completed the contract of participation, and that the FSS family is no longer a recipient of welfare assistance, as relevant, before making interim and final disbursements.

The PHA will follow HUD's verification hierarchy set forth in Notice PIH 2010-19 to make these verifications. However, when needed, the PHA will use a *knowledgeable professional* as a third-party source to verify the need for interim disbursements.

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION
WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
POLICY BOARD**

MEETING DATE: March 23, 2021

SUBJECT: 6th Amendment of the 2020-2021 Budget

PRESENTER: Andrea Roper, Finance Director

ATTACHMENTS: Budget Summary Sheets

SUMMARY OF REQUEST: The attached 6th Amendment of the 2020-2021 Budget reflects a total budget of \$21,534,980 and an operating budget of \$7,655,091 which represents decrease of \$19,993 from the February 23, 2021 budget amendment.

The 6th Amendment of the 2020-2021 Budget includes:

- Economic Development increased \$8,821 due to an increase in ARC anticipated expenses.
- Regional Public Housing increased \$18,439 due to an added housing position.
- Aging decreased \$21,943 to adjust for the reallocation of CARES Act funding. These funds will be spent directly from the aging pass through funds.
- Compensated Absences increased \$14,904 to better reflect anticipated expenses.
- Contractual increased \$39,668 to cover provider reimbursements for the Aging CARES Act funding.
- Supplies decreased \$66,054 due to the reallocation of Aging CARES Act funding to contractual and aging pass through funds.
- Capital Outlay-Equipment decreased \$10,328 due to the transfer of funds to the Capital Reserve Fund.
- Contingency decreased \$26,385 due to funds being reallocated to other expense lines and to better align with actual costs in the current fiscal year.
- OPEB Trust Allocation decreased \$22,661 due to the increase in compensated absences, retirement and group insurance.
- Transfer to Capital Reserve Fund increased \$70,328 to reflect the \$60,000 transfer approved on February 23rd and the additional \$10,328 from capital outlay.
- Special Revenue Fund – WIOA increased \$9,171 to reflect actual program income.
- Capital Reserve Fund increased \$10,328 to reflect a transfer from the General Fund, capital outlay.
- All other changes to the expenditure lines reflect normal program needs.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED: Staff requests Policy Board to review and approve the Sixth Amendment of the 2020-2021 Budget.

Suggested Motion: *I move that the Board approve the 6th Amendment of the 2020-2021 Budget as proposed.*



**WESTERN PIEDMONT
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**
2020-2021 BUDGET
6th Amendment of the Budget
March 23, 2021



WPCOG REVENUE BUDGET FY 2020-2021 3/23/2021	03/23/21	02/23/21	VARIANCE
	PROPOSED BUDGET	CURRENT BUDGET *	
WPCOG ASSESSMENTS	297,186	297,186	0
INTEREST	400	400	0
MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	335	335	0
ANNUAL MEETING CONTRIBUTION	9,000	9,000	0
GENERAL GOVERNMENT			
FIN. ADMIN, COMM.SRV	48,157	48,157	0
TRANSPORTATION			
MPO (FHWA & FTA) & PASS. SAMPLING	1,144,275	1,142,180	2,095
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION			
WATER RESOURCES, EPA 205(j) PROJECTS, AND ARC WATERSHED	282,530	277,666	4,864
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT			
CDBG, HOUSING COUNSELING, & MPP	1,472,021	1,472,021	0
COMMUNITY & REGIONAL PLANNING			
PLANNING, DATA SERVICES, GIS	541,631	541,631	0
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
ECON DEV GRANTS & BUILDING REUSE	510,279	501,458	8,821
GIS SERVICES			
GIS SERVICES	0	0	0
REGIONAL PUBLIC HOUSING			
SECTION 8 HOUSING VOUCHERS	1,059,047	1,040,608	18,439
AREA AGENCY ON AGING SERVICES			
AGING ADMINISTRATION & SERVICES	1,329,607	1,351,550	(21,943)
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT			
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT	934,460	934,450	10
INDIRECT FUNDS			
TRANSFER TO CAPITAL RESERVE FUND	0	10,328	(10,328)
FUND BALANCE APPROPRIATED			
FUND BALANCE APPROPRIATED	26,163	17,299	8,864
SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS (PASS THROUGH)			
AGING	4,452,596	4,452,596	0
SECTION 8 HOUSING	6,485,205	6,485,205	0
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	2,942,088	2,932,917	9,171
TOTAL	21,534,980	21,514,987	19,993

CAPITAL RESERVE FUND			
ALLOCATED FUND BALANCE	70,328	60,000	10,328
TOTAL	70,328	60,000	10,328

WPCOG EXPENSE BUDGET FY 2020-2021 3/23/2021	03/23/21	02/23/21	VARIANCE
	PROPOSED BUDGET	CURRENT BUDGET *	
GENERAL GOVERNMENT			
ARC-LDD, FFEA, & EDA	86,172	86,172	0
TRANSPORTATION			
MPO (FHWA & FTA) & PASS. SAMPLING	1,144,275	1,142,180	2,095
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION			
WATER RESOURCES, EPA 205(j) PROJECTS, AND ARC WATERSHED	282,530	277,666	4,864
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT			
CDBG, BLDG REUSE, COUNSELING, MPP	1,472,021	1,472,021	0
COMMUNITY & REGIONAL PLANNING			
PLANNING, DATA SERVICES, GIS	573,266	573,266	0
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
ECON DEV GRANTS	706,832	689,147	17,685
GIS SERVICES			
GIS/IT SERVICES	0	0	0
REGIONAL PUBLIC HOUSING			
SECTION 8 HOUSING VOUCHERS	1,059,047	1,040,608	18,439
AGING AGENCY SERVICES			
AGING	1,396,488	1,418,431	(21,943)
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT			
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT	934,460	934,450	10
INDIRECT FUNDS			
TRANSFER TO CAPITAL RESERVE FUND	0	10,328	(10,328)
SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS (PASS THROUGH)			
AGING	4,452,596	4,452,596	0
SECTION 8 HOUSING	6,485,205	6,485,205	0
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	2,942,088	2,932,917	9,171
TOTAL	21,534,980	21,514,987	19,993

CAPITAL RESERVE FUND			
TRANSFER TO CAPITAL PROJECTS	70,328	60,000	10,328
TOTAL	70,328	60,000	10,328

* This budget authorizes a transfer of \$10,328 from the General Fund to the Capital Reserve Fund. \$60,000 was authorized at the February 23rd Executive Committee meeting.

* The amounts used for the Current Budget are from the adoption of the 2020-2021 Budget presented on February 23, 2021.
The Proposed Operating Budget is: **\$7,655,091**

WPCOG EXPENSE BUDGET FY 2020-2021 3/23/2021	03/23/21	02/23/21	VARIANCE
	PROPOSED BUDGET	CURRENT BUDGET *	
CHARGEABLE SALARIES	3,259,165	3,255,169	3,996
COMPENSATED ABSENCES	219,906	205,002	14,904
INCENTIVE	4,500	4,500	0
LONGEVITY	50,707	44,000	6,707
RETIREMENT	643,953	639,254	4,699
GROUP INSURANCE	498,687	498,413	274
WORKERS' COMPENSATION	18,000	18,000	0
UNEMPLOYMENT COSTS	36,720	36,720	0
CONTRACTUAL	1,114,693	1,075,025	39,668
TRAVEL-SUBSISTENCE/REGIST.	72,786	75,779	(2,993)
TRAVEL-TRANSPORTATION	95,214	99,422	(4,208)
FUEL	2,414	1,100	1,314
TELEPHONE	39,507	38,872	635
POSTAGE	25,209	24,667	542
PRINTING	14,768	15,170	(402)
UTILITIES	44,000	44,000	0
RENT - EQUIPMENT	31,000	31,000	0
RENT/LEASE - BUILDING	92,700	92,700	0
MORTGAGE/OCCUPANCY COST	133,000	133,000	0
SUPPLIES	549,411	615,465	(66,054)
AUDIT	37,000	37,000	0
DUES	26,136	27,753	(1,617)
ADVERTISING/SUBSCRIPTIONS	52,155	57,371	(5,216)
MAINTENANCE-EQUIPMENT	43,770	42,007	1,763
MAINTENANCE-VEHICLES	709	1,009	(300)
MAINTENANCE-BLDG/GROUNDS	51,000	51,000	0
CONTENTS/LIABILITY INSURANCE	25,755	20,424	5,331
ANNUAL MEETING	18,000	18,000	0
LEGAL FEES	12,677	11,852	825
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE	10,810	10,810	0
CAPITAL OUTLAY-EQUIPMENT	57,306	67,634	(10,328)
CONTINGENCY	205,727	232,112	(26,385)
RESERVE FOR FUTURE EXP.	1	1	0
OWNER IMPROVEMENTS	0	0	0
INTERNET SERVICE	10,140	10,140	0
WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT	298	298	0
SECTION 8 PORTABLE ADMIN	5,000	5,000	0
OPEB TRUST ALLOCATION	81,939	104,600	(22,661)
ALLOCATED FUND BALANCE	0	0	0
TRANSFER TO CAPITAL RESERVE FUND	70,328	0	70,328
SR - AGING FEES & SERVICES	4,452,596	4,452,596	0
SR - SECTION 8 FEES & SERVICES	6,485,205	6,485,205	0
SR - WIA FEES & SERVICES	2,942,088	2,932,917	9,171
TOTAL	21,534,980	21,514,987	19,993

**REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION
WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
POLICY BOARD**

MEETING DATE: March 23rd, 2021

SUBJECT: 1st Reading of the FY2021-22 Budget

PRESENTER: Andrea B. Roper, Finance Director

ATTACHMENTS: Budget Summary Sheets

SUMMARY OF REQUEST: The attached 1st Reading of the FY2021-22 Budget reflects a total budget of \$19,263,795 and an operating budget of \$6,684,443 which represents a decrease of the total budget from the February 23, 2021 budget amendment of approximately 10.5% or \$2,251,192.

Some key parts of the budget are uncertain at this time and that is normal for the first reading. The 1st Reading of the FY2021-22 Budget includes:

- 61 full and part-time staff positions.
- WPCOG dues rate increased by \$.01 per capita plus dues increases for the MPO as approved by the Board in January.
- Financial Administration Services for one local government and one local non-profit.
- Town planning services for 7 local governments.
- Long Range Planning services for 6 local governments.
- Code Enforcement services for 8 local governments.
- Administration of several new community & economic development projects (building reuse, infrastructure, economic development, etc.).
- A group insurance increase (\$45,303) reflecting a projected health insurance increase of 8%. We usually do not receive quotes until early May for FY22 and this number will be adjusted at that time.
- The decrease of \$454,245 in contractual is attributed to the current fiscal year housing rehab and urgent repair projects that were completed. The Burke Transit project contractual expenses are expected to be considerably lower in FY22.
- Supplies decreased \$481,346 mainly due to the reduction in COVID funding for PPE & supplies.
- Advertising/Subscription costs decreased \$25,041 to cover anticipated costs in other expense lines.
- Capital Outlay decreased \$67,634. Excluding transfers to the Capital Reserve Fund, no major equipment purchases are planned at this time.
- Contingency decreased \$154,173 due to those funds being utilized in the FY 21-22 budget.
- OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) Trust Allocation decreased \$64,328 due to the expected increase in retirement and group insurance. This allocation may increase with the availability of funds.
- Aging Special Revenue Funds decreased by \$1,291,366 to reflect the reduction in CARES Act funding. All funds are expected to be used in FY21.
- The proposed budget includes approximately \$89,039 in anticipated contracts for FY22. This amount is \$175,484 lower than the FY21 anticipated contracts amount at this time last year. The unfunded areas at this point are within the Community & Economic Development Department.
- The fund balance allocated is higher due to a change in accounting requirements regarding the use of project funds carried from one fiscal year to the next.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED: Staff requests Policy Board to review and approve the First Reading of the FY2021-22 Budget.

Suggested Motion: *I move that the Board approve the 1st Reading of the FY2021-22 Budget as proposed.*



Western Piedmont
Council of Governments

**WESTERN PIEDMONT
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**
2021-2022 BUDGET
1st Reading of the Budget
March 23, 2021



Western Piedmont
Council of Governments

WPCOG REVENUE BUDGET FY 2021-2022 3/23/2021	03/23/21 PROPOSED BUDGET	02/23/21 CURRENT BUDGET *	VARIANCE
WPCOG ASSESSMENTS	302,502	297,186	5,316
INTEREST	400	400	0
MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	335	335	0
ANNUAL MEETING CONTRIBUTION	9,000	9,000	0
GENERAL GOVERNMENT			
FIN. ADMIN, COMM.SRV	35,536	48,157	(12,621)
TRANSPORTATION			
MPO (FHWA & FTA) & PASS. SAMPLING	1,060,988	1,142,180	(81,192)
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION			
WATER RESOURCES, EPA 205(j) PROJECTS, AND ARC WATERSHED	393,570	277,666	115,904
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT			
CDBG, HOUSING COUNSELING, & MPP	1,099,299	1,472,021	(372,722)
COMMUNITY & REGIONAL PLANNING			
PLANNING, DATA SERVICES, GIS	332,444	541,631	(209,187)
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
ECON DEV GRANTS & BUILDING REUSE	491,593	501,458	(9,865)
GIS SERVICES			
GIS SERVICES	0	0	0
REGIONAL PUBLIC HOUSING			
SECTION 8 HOUSING VOUCHERS	1,124,940	1,040,608	84,332
AREA AGENCY ON AGING SERVICES			
AGING ADMINISTRATION & SERVICES	751,348	1,351,550	(600,202)
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT			
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT	942,912	934,450	8,462
INDIRECT FUNDS			
TRANSFER FROM CAPITAL PROJECT FUND GENERATOR	0	10,328	(10,328)
FUND BALANCE APPROPRIATED			
FUND BALANCE APPROPRIATED	139,576	17,299	122,277
SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS (PASS THROUGH)			
AGING	3,161,230	4,452,596	(1,291,366)
SECTION 8 HOUSING	6,485,205	6,485,205	0
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	2,932,917	2,932,917	0
TOTAL	19,263,795	21,514,987	(2,251,192)

WPCOG EXPENSE BUDGET FY 2021-2022 3/23/2021	03/23/21 PROPOSED BUDGET	02/23/21 CURRENT BUDGET *	VARIANCE
GENERAL GOVERNMENT			
ARC-LDD, FFEA, & EDA	73,551	86,172	(12,621)
TRANSPORTATION			
MPO (FHWA & FTA) & PASS. SAMPLING	1,118,668	1,142,180	(23,512)
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION			
WATER RESOURCES, EPA 205(j) PROJECTS, AND ARC WATERSHED	393,570	277,666	115,904
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT			
CDBG, BLDG REUSE, COUNSELING, MPP	1,099,299	1,472,021	(372,722)
COMMUNITY & REGIONAL PLANNING			
PLANNING, DATA SERVICES, GIS	440,406	573,266	(132,860)
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
ECON DEV GRANTS	671,061	689,147	(18,086)
GIS SERVICES			
GIS/IT SERVICES	0	0	0
REGIONAL PUBLIC HOUSING			
SECTION 8 HOUSING VOUCHERS	1,124,940	1,040,608	84,332
AGING AGENCY SERVICES			
AGING	820,036	1,418,431	(598,395)
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT			
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT	942,912	934,450	8,462
INDIRECT FUNDS			
TRANSFER FROM CAPITAL PROJECT FUND GENERATOR	0	10,328	(10,328)
SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS (PASS THROUGH)			
AGING	3,161,230	4,452,596	(1,291,366)
SECTION 8 HOUSING	6,485,205	6,485,205	0
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	2,932,917	2,932,917	0
TOTAL	19,263,795	21,514,987	(2,251,192)

* The amounts used for the Current Budget are from the adoption of the 2020-2021 Budget presented on February 23, 2021.
The Proposed Operating Budget is: **\$6,684,443**

WPCOG EXPENSE BUDGET FY 2021-2022 3/23/2021	03/23/21	02/23/21	VARIANCE
	PROPOSED BUDGET	CURRENT BUDGET *	
CHARGEABLE SALARIES	3,391,063	3,255,169	135,894
COMPENSATED ABSENCES	204,260	205,002	(742)
INCENTIVE	4,500	4,500	0
LONGEVITY	55,778	44,000	11,778
RETIREMENT	709,414	639,254	70,160
GROUP INSURANCE	543,716	498,413	45,303
WORKERS' COMPENSATION	18,000	18,000	0
UNEMPLOYMENT COSTS	36,720	36,720	0
CONTRACTUAL	620,780	1,075,025	(454,245)
TRAVEL-SUBSISTENCE/REGIST.	75,038	75,779	(741)
TRAVEL-TRANSPORTATION	88,995	99,422	(10,427)
FUEL	11,858	1,100	10,758
TELEPHONE	32,469	38,872	(6,403)
POSTAGE	23,318	24,667	(1,349)
PRINTING	12,721	15,170	(2,449)
UTILITIES	44,000	44,000	0
RENT - EQUIPMENT	31,000	31,000	0
RENT/LEASE - BUILDING	100,862	92,700	8,162
MORTGAGE/OCCUPANCY COST	133,000	133,000	0
SUPPLIES	134,119	615,465	(481,346)
AUDIT	37,000	37,000	0
DUES	27,313	27,753	(440)
ADVERTISING/SUBSCRIPTIONS	32,330	57,371	(25,041)
MAINTENANCE-EQUIPMENT	44,956	42,007	2,949
MAINTENANCE-VEHICLES	1,000	1,009	(9)
MAINTENANCE-BLDG/GROUNDS	51,000	51,000	0
CONTENTS/LIABILITY INSURANCE	20,109	20,424	(315)
ANNUAL MEETING	18,000	18,000	0
LEGAL FEES	10,777	11,852	(1,075)
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE	5,810	10,810	(5,000)
CAPITAL OUTLAY-EQUIPMENT	0	67,634	(67,634)
CONTINGENCY	77,939	232,112	(154,173)
RESERVE FOR FUTURE EXP.	0	1	(1)
OWNER IMPROVEMENTS	0	0	0
INTERNET SERVICE	10,140	10,140	0
WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT	298	298	0
SECTION 8 PORTABLE ADMIN	5,000	5,000	0
OPEB TRUST ALLOCATION	40,272	104,600	(64,328)
ALLOCATED FUND BALANCE	0	0	0
TRANSFER TO CAPITAL RESERVE FUND	30,888	0	30,888
SR - AGING FEES & SERVICES	3,161,230	4,452,596	(1,291,366)
SR - SECTION 8 FEES & SERVICES	6,485,205	6,485,205	0
SR - WIA FEES & SERVICES	2,932,917	2,932,917	0
TOTAL	19,263,795	21,514,987	(2,251,192)

Executive Director's Report

March 23rd, 2021

This report is intended to provide details about current operations of the WPCOG and issues that may be of interest to board members. The updates are grouped according to each department.

Administration

- The WPCOG office remains closed to the public except by appointment. We are encouraging the public to communicate with us through phone and email in lieu of office visits whenever possible. Because most of our foot traffic to the office consists of people attending meetings and our public housing clients, this arrangement has worked well. There are very few in-person meetings and we have assisted our public housing clients' needs effectively and even more efficiently.
- 76% of staff have taken their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. While 100% is the preferred participation rate, our rate is much higher than the average. Most of the staff will receive their second vaccine around March 24th. A special thanks to the **Catawba County Government & Health Department** for coordinating vaccines for WPCOG staff.
- We are considering plans to open the office on April 12th to walk-in foot traffic. This is a tentative plan and has not been announced to the public yet. Public Housing Authority clients will continue to be seen on an appointment only basis.
- Some staff continue to telework but all staff work at least four days per week in the office.
- Safety of staff continues to be a priority along with service delivery to our local governments. To-date there has been no employee-to-employee transmission of COVID at the WPCOG office building.
- Mark your calendars for Thursday, April 22nd for the Virtual WPCOG Annual Meeting at 2pm. WPCOG Annual Meeting "Save-the-Dates" have been mailed to area elected officials, local government staff and partners. More details to come.
- WPCOG continues to assist the **Town of Catawba** in their search for a new Town Manager. Interviews will be scheduled for mid-April.
- Staff are initiating a cyber-security assessment for the WPCOG. The study will identify areas that we can improve our security and enhance protections from cyber-attacks.
- We previously communicated to you that our HVAC system was experiencing pre-mature failures and replacement costs may exceed \$200,000. In response, the Executive Committee approved the creation of a Capital Reserve Fund. This will allow us to fund the HVAC replacement over three fiscal years, beginning with the current fiscal year.
- WPCOG Communications was notified that we won a bid to create the Lumber River Council of Governments website and a contract is currently being drawn-up for approval.
- Upcoming Communications projects includes the LRCOG website, the 2021 Spring EIN and finalizing the design of the **Long View Police Department's** website.

- Administration, Planning, and CED staff have developed an initial schedule for an update to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The Policy Board will need to appoint a CEDS Committee later this year.
- The Executive Director recently facilitated the City Council planning sessions for **Lenoir and Newton**.

Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

- Through 2/28, the AAA served 1,309 older adults and caregivers in direct service with CARES funding.
- Through 2/28, the AAA processed 1,353 intakes from older adults or their caregivers for CARES assistance.
- Through 2/28, the AAA utilized \$276,512 in direct service to older adults and caregivers with CARES funding.
- The AAA has used all CARES Act funding for **Alexander and Catawba Counties** and funds for **Caldwell and Burke Counties** are nearly exhausted. We have stopped any new applications for these funds.
- We still have CARES funds to assist Family Caregivers, including grandparents raising their grandchildren/relatives.
- Ombudsmen continue to work with facilities, county health departments, residents, and families on COVID-19 outbreaks in facilities. All LTC facilities have had the opportunity to receive both doses of vaccine for residents and staff who wanted it.
- AAA staff continue to make presentations on a variety of topics to groups via Zoom or Go to Meeting.
- AAA has been working with state and local groups to help disseminate information to the public and aging service providers regarding vaccine distribution.
- AAA staff have begun offering Health Promotion classes virtually.

Community & Economic Development (CED)

- Community and Economic Development staff are currently administering seventy-seven (77) grants for local governments.
- The NC Department of Commerce funded Two (2) Building Reuse grant applications in February. **Burke County** received \$500,000 for Ekornes Furniture. The project will create 80 jobs and leverage \$572,600 in private investment. The **City of Morganton** received \$100,000 for Toner Machining. The project will create 16 jobs and leverage \$593,000 in private investment.
- Four (4) homes are received urgent repairs so the homeowners may remain in their homes.
- Assisted three (3) first-time homebuyers purchase their first home. The HOME Program has provided over \$1.3 M in down payment assistance since the program guidelines were changed last spring. The program is out of funding for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021 and has stopped accepting applications. New applications will be accepted on July 1, 2021.
- Fourteen (14) homeowners received foreclosure prevention counseling.

Community & Regional Planning

Planning:

- Planning Staff held a virtual meeting for completion of the 2020 Census.
- 160D Land Use Ordinance Updates – Planning Board presentations and drafts have been completed for **Catawba, Sawmills, Hildebran, Drexel, Gamewell, Rutherford College, and Cahaj's Mountain**. Council for **Hildebran** to review this month.
- 160D draft completed and will be presented this month to **Alexander County**.
- 160D will be presented this month to **Cedar Rock and Claremont**. Drafts underway.
- **Catawba and Claremont** full ordinance re-writes are underway.
- **Granite Falls** Land Use Plan restarted and in progress (paused in 2020 at the request of town due to COVID restrictions).
- **Drexel** Comprehensive Plan is in progress.
- Drafted multiple 3D renderings for **Granite Falls** Land Use Plan.
- Drafted multiple 3D renderings for **Sawmills** Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- 140+ drone flights for EDA Cares Act Grant.
- Produced 48 recreation location videos for EDA Cares Act Grant.

Natural Resources:

- Staff will continue serving as the **Caldwell County** Environmental Health Program Manager through March 19th, 2021. The new environmental health supervisor began March 1st.
- WPCOG staff secured contracted support staff for **Caldwell County** Environmental Health program to aid the back log. Five contracted staff currently working.
- **Valdese and Conover** Stormwater Management Plans public comment period ended March 1st. Awaiting comments from DEQ.
- **Sawmills, Gamewell, Lenoir, Granite Falls, Cahaj's Mountain and Hudson** stormwater management plans are in public comment period.
- Three public outreach events set up in **Morganton, Hickory, and Lenoir** for the weekend of April 10th through the 11th. This is a statewide girl scout's event.

Data Center:

- Facilitated State of Workforce Report SWOT analysis for Northwest Prosperity Zone CTE Directors.
- Began creating 2020 Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) data layer based on new 2020 Census Geography.
- Completed an analysis of eligible COVID-19 Vaccine Group three eligible workers in **Catawba County**.
- Completed **Catawba County** housing analysis for Prism.
- Completed **Caldwell County** West Lenoir, Lower Creek, Valmead and Whitnel redistricting analysis.
- Completed **Caldwell County** economic analysis for Bernhardt foundation.
- Completed February 2021 **Hickory** Economic Indicators Report.
- Gave **Hickory** Ethnicity Report presentation to NAACP Hickory Chapter.
- Attended/gave presentation at **Catawba County School Board** Retreat.
- Gave presentation on economic data to **Hickory staff/ Catawba Economic Development Corporation** in preparation for Hickory staff retreat on March 10.
- Completed analysis of Latino owned businesses in **Hickory** for Central Latino.

- Reviewed Census Bureau recommendation to changes in Urbanized Area definitions.
- Began work on Spring 2021 Economic Indicators Newsletter.
- Completed creating 2020 population estimates for the **Caldwell County** fire districts.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS):

- Continued research into weather radar installation project at Hickory Airport (Drone).
- Created Stormwater data maps for several locations in the region.
- Gave Hudson an update on Stormwater Mapping project.
- Provided technical assistance for Greenway service map.
- Staff worked five days in Rutherford College collecting wastewater features (added 395 additional features into the town's infrastructure GIS).
- General ArcGIS Online and mapping support for **City of Claremont, Town of Maiden, and WPCOG Code Enforcement**.
- Submitted Lake Rhodhiss Boating Access conceptual site plan to Duke Energy for FERC application.

Code Compliance:

- Determination received by the North Carolina School of Government for a minimum housing case, now working with contract and property owner to meet at the property for inspection.
- Providing code enforcement services for 9 municipalities.
- **City of Conover** ADA Inventory and Transition plan is in public comment period and was slated for adoption March 1, 2021, but meeting was postponed.
- **Town of Granite Falls** was presented a working draft of their ADA Inventory and Transition plan. The draft is slated to go to the March 29th or April 4th meeting which will begin the public comment period.
- A facility GIS application was created to begin ADA inventory for the WPCOG building and parking lot. Inventory will began the 2nd week of March.

Transportation:

- Participated in continuing webinars for the Walkability Academy, including presentation of our region's five measurable goals for the Action Plan to affect changes in local government, WPCOG, and NCDOT policies, processes, and projects.
- Refined draft recommendations for **Sawmills** Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- Facilitated third and final **Sawmills** Steering Committee meeting.
- Developed low-cost bus-service option for **Long View** Food Lion and met with Town Manager.
- Presented Re-Route 2021 updates to **Conover and Newton** City Councils.
- Presented NC 127 widening and side path update to Bethlehem Business Association in **Alexander County**.
- Collaborated with NCDOT on multimodal design options for both Castle Bridge replacement and Interstate 40 Exit 118 interchange upgrade in **Burke County**.
- Facilitated discussion and assisted with initial next steps for potential earmark projects to be considered by the region's Congressional delegation in the next Transportation Act.

Finance

- Finance continues to administering financial services for **Town of Catawba and Caldwell Chamber**.
- The Caldwell Chamber 2019 audit is complete. The fieldwork for the 2020 Audit has been scheduled for April. We are currently working on gathering the needed selections for this audit.
- Accounts Receivable is working with **Caldwell Chamber** staff to import all accounts receivable information (membership dues information) from their software into our accounting software.
- We are in the process of creating/updating budget and financial statement reports in our accounting system to accommodate the needs of **Caldwell Chamber**.
- FY19-20 **Town of Catawba** audit was completed and presented to their council on March 1st by their auditor, Deborah Wentz.
- The WPCOG FY21 audit contract with Martin Starnes & Associates was approved by the Executive Committee at the February meeting.
- The Executive Committee approved the fifth budget amendment and the creation of a Capital Reserve Fund. Also approved, was a \$60,000 transfer from the General Fund to the Capital Reserve Fund.

Regional Housing Authority (RHA)

- The RHA resumed annual inspections in March 2021. The inspector is now doing all annual inspections as well as initial and special inspections. Accommodations will be made regarding COVID-19 issues.
- The RHA continues to see an increase in tenants beginning to go back to work and housing assistance payments for the RHA are beginning to decrease.
- The RHA has approximately 400 families on the waiting list.
- The RHA began leasing the 75 additional awarded Mainstream Vouchers in March 2021. Currently, the RHA has 246 available MainStream Vouchers and 171 of those are leased.
- The RHA began leasing the 10 new VASH-Veteran vouchers awarded in February 2021.
- With the addition of the new vouchers, the total for our jurisdiction is now 1,330. Since 2018, the RHA has increased its voucher capacity from 1074 to 1330, which is an increase of 256 vouchers or 23.8%.

Workforce Development

- The NCWorks Career Centers are open to the public and light foot traffic is still the norm.
- Board staff (Leslie Farris and Matthew Xiong) are still doing a great job helping create Virtual Job Fairs for employers. Virtual workshops are planned monthly and job fairs as needed/requested. We are partnering with the **City of Hickory** to post our workshops and job fair information on their website and in their newsletters.
- NC Department of Commerce, Labor and Economic Analysis Division (LEAD) created an Unemployment Insurance Claims Dashboard (that can provide information by County, and Workforce Board) January 2021 numbers are now available: click [here](#).
- Our region is averaging a 6% Unemployment rate as of 2/28/21.
- Since the beginning our new program year (July 1, 2020 to January 1, 2021) we have provide 128 scholarships.
- The Workforce Development Board's Workforce Intelligence Sub-committee is working on a three-phase State of the Workforce Report to include a "pull-out" section that can be used by K-

12 and other workforce/career advising partners to help students and job-seekers know what training and career opportunities exist across the four counties. There will be more updates on this project as we move forward, with the help of Taylor Dellinger.

- The workforce board released a RFP for the One-Stop Operator (NCWorks Career Center operations) on 2/22/2021. Currently the Division of Workforce Solutions staff serve as the One-Stop Operator. The RFP will close Friday, 3/19/21 at 4:00pm.