

WMSRDC

WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

May 18, 2020 – Oceana County

I. CALL TO ORDER – 10:00 AM by Chairperson Bonnie McGlothlin

II. ROLL CALL QUORUM: Yes

Commissioners Present:

Mason County: Charles Lange, Joe Lenius
Muskegon County: Kay Beecham, Jennifer Hodges, Bonnie McGlothlin, Bob Scolnik
Newaygo County: Burt Cooper, James Maike, James Rynberg
Oceana County: Dean Gustafson
WMSRDC Appointees: James Kelly, Andrea Large, Rich Houtteman
Muskegon CC: Dale Nesbary

Commissioners Absent:

Lake County: Howard Lodholtz
Mason County: Nick Krieger
Muskegon County: Marcia Hovey-Wright, Ken Johnson, Rillastine Wilkins
Oceana County: Jim Brown
West Shore CC: Crystal Young

Staff/Guests Present: Erin Kuhn, Amanda Snyder, Syndi Copeland

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Commissioner Maike and supported by Commissioner Cooper to approve the agenda for the May 18, 2020 Commission meeting. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Commissioner Lange and supported by Commissioner Gustafson to approve the January 27, 2020 Commission meeting minutes. Motion carried.

The February 24, 2020 and the April 20, 2020 Officer's meeting minutes were attached for information only.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS

There was no public comment.

VI. HOST (ZOOM) Erin welcomed all to WMSRDC's first zoom board meeting.

VII. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Commissioner McGlothlin discussed the Conflict of Interest and Codes of Ethics Policy. Motion was made by Commissioner Beecham and supported by Commissioner Kelly. Motion carried.

Erin reminded the board that the auditor suggested each board member sign a Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Policy form. Amanda created the form and the executive committee approved the form. Each board member will need to return the signed form

via email or mail. Syndi will email the form separately.

VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Erin remarked that all staff has been able to work from home. WMSRDC could provide electronics to all staff that didn't have a personal computer. Muskegon County IT has made it possible for all to access the WMSRDC network at home. There have been a few glitches; but overall things have run smoothly. Erin, Amanda and Syndi go into the office on occasion. All meetings have been held via Zoom.

Transportation – WMSRDC staff attended the Pre-United Work Program annual meeting in Lansing on February 26 with MDOT and FHWA. This meeting is similar to a program audit and looks into the next fiscal year's work program and budget for the MPO.

WMSRDC applied for an MDOT Service Development and New Technology (SDNT) grant on behalf of Muskegon Area Transit System (MATS) and Harbor Transit to conduct a West Michigan Regional Transit Systems Governance and Organizational Transition Study. This is a feasibility study to look at both organizational structures to identify how they can operate more efficiently and possibly combine.

WMSRDC staff completed the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The Plan has been approved by both the Technical and Policy Committees and has been forwarded on to MDOT and FHWA for their approval.

Q: Rich Houtteman – Did the respective transit boards offer resolutions of support?

A: Erin answered that Harbor Transit, Muskegon County, Muskegon Area Transit System and the MPO Policy committee sent Letters of Support.

Economic Development – As part of the Federal CARES Act passed on February 27, EDA was allocated \$1.5 Billion to distribute through their Disaster Relief Program. Through this disaster declaration EDA grants now require an 80/20 match. WMSRDC staff forwarded a notice of this funding throughout our region and has been working with local leaders regarding several projects from all five our member counties.

Q: Kay Beecham asked about the requirements of the local match.

A: \$225 M has been split into several different pots of funding.

- A competitive grant process which is the 80/20 match
- A direct grant to WMSRDC – non-competitive grants allocated directly to districts to help with the economic recovery of COVID-19. WMSRDC has until June 5 to submit an application for a match free grant up to \$400,000.
- Stephen looked over the CEDS document to come up with a few ideas including broadband facilitation; mapping of critical infrastructure; West Michigan food processing cluster (especially supply chain); and Work Force Gap Analysis (identify gaps)
- Erin requested ideas from the Board in how best to utilize these funds to meet regional needs. Commissioner Cooper, Newaygo County suggested contacting emergency managers and county administrators. Erin stated that WMSRDC will be reaching out to them later this week, as well as the CEDS Committee. Commissioner Nesbary mentioned broadband for schools, colleges and medical facilities in the form of studies and collaboration.

Q: Commissioner Lange asked if there was any way to help local businesses get back on their feet.

A: Erin replied that there is another pot of funds. WMSRDC has been encouraged to apply to EDA for a regional Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). With these dollars coming through the disaster declaration and the 80/20 match, Erin discussed the idea with the board to gather thoughts and /or approval to move forward.

Several suggestions were made by Board members before Erin asked about starting the process. Motion was made for WMSRDC to investigate all aspects of providing a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) by Commissioner Lange and supported by Commissioner Gustafson. Motion carried.

Commissioner Large agreed to help Erin connect to foundations and organizations. Others offered assistance as needed.

Environmental – Due to the Governor's Stay Home Stay Safe Executive Order, all environmental construction projects were placed on hold. With the recent lifting of restrictions, the Lower Muskegon River, Amoco, MERES and Urban Green Infrastructure projects may now move forward. During this time WMSRDC also had to furlough two part time employees. They were provided with information to apply for unemployment. It is anticipated that they will be brought back as environmental projects resume.

State and Federal partners have worked with us regarding potential delays due to the shutdown and providing no cost extensions when needed.

Local Government Services – WMSRDC staff completed three recreation plans for local communities. The Village of New Era has opted to wait until the pandemic is over for public comment on their Master Plan. WMSRDC staff continues to work with the City of Ludington and Pere Marquette Township to utilize RRC funds to develop a Shoreline Land Use and Resiliency Plan. The public involvement process has also been put on hold due to the pandemic. Stephen is doing a great job.

Other Activities – Asset Management Self-Assessment was put on hold by the State. We will move forward with communities who want to do these assessments through Zoom once the state allows. Some communities are not able to concentrate on these right now, but we want to allow for flexibility with those that can.

Erin commented that the 50th Celebration on July 7 should most likely be postponed until the summer of 2021. The Board agreed. WMSRDC staff will move forward with the 50th anniversary newsletter which is currently being developed. The new logo will be revealed in the newsletter. Each staff member put together a historical section on the programs. Jamie Way has put together a time line for each of the WMSRDC programs.

Erin and Amanda are putting the budget together for FY2021. There are uncertainties as to how the pandemic is going to affect our budget. They are hearing on the transportation side that funds are going to be down significantly. They are taking this into account as they prepare. They are also watching the MERS account very closely. They will attend a MERS webinar and will know more once the actuarial report comes out in June.

IX. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Amanda presented the April 2020 financials. WMSRDC remains financially stable and cash remains strong.

Motion was made by Commissioner Rynberg and supported by Commissioner Lenius to approve the April 2020 financials. Motion carried.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- Jim Maike asked if there is anything we can do to help out smaller lakes that are way beyond flooding? Erin answered that she is not aware of any grants to help with the long term high water levels of lakes.

XI. ROUND TABLE

- Andrea Large thanked Rich Houtteman at Consumers for all of their support and relief in her county.
- Jim Maike – Charles Lange and he serve on District 10 board. COVID-19 can be kept track of by zip code.
- Erin – WMSRDC website, MUNETRIX is tracking COVID-19, reports, zips, comparisons, etc.
- Dale Nesbary – Muskegon Community College Health and Wellness Center is fully equipped to take overload from Mercy or Spectrum. Thanks to all who helped us turn the gym into an emergency hospital. The State of MI is looking to reduce appropriations to colleges by 20% which is an equivalent of \$2M over 18 months.
- Fremont Area Community Foundation, Community Foundation for Muskegon County, Meijer, and Consumers, have helped fund so much during the pandemic.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENT - WMSRDC PROGRAM

There was no public comment.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Commissioner Lenius and supported by Commissioner Beecham to adjourn at 10:53 AM. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING: July 20, 2020 – Oceana County or Zoom


Bonnie McGlothlin, Chairperson

7/20/2020
Date


Erin Kuhn, Executive Director

7-20-2020
Date