



# Southcentral Michigan Planning Council

300 South Westnedge Avenue · Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

Phone: (269) 385-0409 · Fax: (269) 343-3308 · Email: [info@smpcregion3.org](mailto:info@smpcregion3.org)

## Board Meeting Minutes

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, August 4, 2020  
**MEETING TIME:** 11:30 am  
**MEETING LOCATION:** Virtual Meeting  
<https://www.gotomeet.me/Upjohn> (Audio and Video)  
1-877-309-2073 (Toll Free)  
1-669-224-3217  
Access Code: 422-647-013

1. Call to Order
  - a. The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:38am.
2. Representatives Present/Introductions
  - a. Representatives: Grieve, Carahaly, Morse, Bomba, Kale, Hazelbaker, and Pangle
  - b. Staff: KATS – Stepek; SMPC – Adams, Trueblood
  - c. Members of the Public: Lotta Jarnefelt – Kalamazoo County
3. Representatives Excused
  - a. Woodin excused; Drost, Frisbie unexcused.
  - b. **No objections; approved by unanimous consent at 11:40am.**
4. Approval of the Agenda
  - a. Adams added two items to the agenda under Transportation and Local Government Assistance.
  - b. **No objections; approved by unanimous consent at 11:42am.**
5. Approval of the Minutes
  - a. **No objections; approved by unanimous consent at 11:43am.**
6. Public Comments
  - a. Jarnefelt stated that a solid waste management planning committee is being formed for Kalamazoo County; the application period was extended because the needed governmental, industrial, and professional representation has not yet been found. The Kalamazoo County website has the application and position definitions. An amendment to the county's solid waste plan will need to be reviewed and potentially approved once committee is formed.
  - b. The Chair asked Jarnefelt to explain the amendment. She stated that a developer wants to build a recycling plant for construction waste at Ravine Road and Nichols Road. The developer needs permission from EGLE, but this cannot be granted because the activity is not defined in the county's solid waste management plan. Amending the plan requires reassembling the committee. The developer presented the site plan for review to the –Kalamazoo Township Planning Commission in early June, and they have preliminarily approved it with several conditions needing to be met before final site plan approval. Amendment will take 12 to 18 months, must be approved by committee, county board, two thirds of municipalizes, and EGLE.
7. Acceptance of the Financial Report
  - a. Review and accept quarterly report: Adams explained that changes in reporting systems have delayed the completion of this report due to translation issues. He expects to have the report ready in September. Therefore, no action was taken on this agenda item.
8. Transportation
  - a. KATS report: Stepek explained that KATS planners hope to extend road rating projects into next fiscal year using some funds allocated for this year since staff are not able to get out and do ratings, especially for MDOT work. KATS has been doing local road ratings on their own.
  - b. The Chair thanked KATS for doing ratings while it's possible. Staff discussed some of the activities in the KATS letter, then transitioned to the discussion on the work program to submit to MDOT.

- c. Review updated 2020 Transportation Work Program **[Action]**
  - i. Stepek explained that the budget is the same as last year, and follows the MDOT template on work items. Top priorities are asset management, rural task force, and small urban programs. He explained that activities need to be pre-approved, but some funds can be reallocated or requested if needed. Approval of the work program is due to MDOT by August 17<sup>th</sup>; MDOT Finance sent out the project authorization already but they haven't yet approved the work plan. Adams stated that the drafted contract was already reviewed and corrected by MDOT.
  - ii. Kale asked whether a template exists for a 5-year road plan; Stepek said he would send materials to Adams to cover this request.
  - iii. Chair invited motion to approve the 2021 FY regional transportation work program for KATS. **Morse moved, Kale and Pangle supported. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously at 12:08pm.** The Chair thanked KATS for their work and support.

#### 9. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy / EDA

- a. Update on CEDS work conducted to-date: Adams explained the committee-based process for organizing the CEDS plan. The committee has identified the six priority areas: recovery and resiliency; workforce and education; equity; broadband and critical infrastructure; housing ecosystem; quality of life and talent attraction. SMPC formed subcommittees to help identify priorities and brainstorm objectives and strategies to accomplish those priorities. SMPC next plans to refine the objectives and strategies; to invite full committee input on all priorities; and then to gather public input. The Chair requested that SMPC board members also have time to comment, and Adams said that the board would be notified once the priorities are refined. Adams stated the target for plan approval by the SMPC board is this October or November.
- b. Update on the application to EDA for capacity-building grant: The Chair gave background information on the grant application that was sent to the EDA in June. Adams requested an update from the project officer, but he said that it is still under review. Adams read through the activities of the grant: develop recovery and resiliency plan for the region; evaluate and strengthen regional supply chains, especially in manufacturing; provide technical assistance to regional organizations; and create a regional broadband plan. Adams explained the purpose of the application was to increase staff capacity to assist the region. He also reviewed the budget, which was split 80% federal and 20% match. The match is time-equivalent in-kind from the Institute.
  - i. The Chair clarified the phrase 'The SMPC Team at the Upjohn Institute,' which is a succinct way to describe the relationship between SMPC and Upjohn, and may assist in receiving the grant and district designation. He asked representatives to weigh in on the terminology and the relationship. Kale stated that COVID underscores the importance of this partnership. Morse said that this is the most realistic way to ensure systems are in place for people to access what they need. Hazelbaker reiterated the importance of broadband for Branch County. The Chair asked which activities might go forward without the grant, and said that broadband planning sounds likely. Grieve stated that the timeline does not seem aligned, and Adams commented that the grant application was intentionally conservative, but will move forward as quickly as possible.
- c. Discussion on local EDA applications: The Chair stated that local municipalities and nonprofits have been applying for EDA CARES Act funding. Adams stated that SMPC can help support local applications if board members have need. The Chair pointed to the support letter in the packet for an example.
  - i. Jarnefelt asked whether District Organization status for the EDD has been received yet, and Adams replied that EDA requires CEDS to be done first before applying for the District Organization status.

#### 10. Housing

- a. Update on regional Housing Toolkit: Adams said that data has been received for the housing feasibility model, which was the last piece of the toolkit. Now SMPC needs to put it together over the next few weeks. One jurisdiction has suggested that SMPC also develop regional priorities for housing, and staff are considering whether to include this in the toolkit, or to create a separate document. The Chair asked how priorities will be established, and Adams responded that CEDS has a priority for housing, perhaps a regional group with the subcommittee included could be formed. Morse requested that each county be

represented in this group to communicate and coordinate priorities, and not duplicate efforts. Grieve suggested pushing the toolkit through and creating priorities with another planning effort. The Chair asked that SMPC staff share beta version of toolkit/feasibility model to board members.

- b. Update on St. Joseph County Housing Plan: Adams described the on-going work to write the plan, craft priorities, and add background data. Staff hope to get the plan completed and approved in September.

#### 11. Strategic Plan

- a. Review 2019 Strategic Plan: The Chair asked board members to consider what changes might be needed to the plan, written in 2018. Adams said that the goals and objectives still mostly apply, but regional prosperity has fallen off as a statewide priority; SMPC would add broadband and a few other priorities. The Chair asked whether board members wanted to form a committee to update the plan, or allow staff to update. With no objections, board members opted to allow staff to update the plan. The Chair asked staff to provide an updated version by next meeting, and to request feedback from board members.
  - i. Grieve commented that growing SMPC's influence and ability to provide services may be important priorities to include, and Adams agreed.

#### 12. Local Government Assistance and Planning Activities

- a. Regional broadband discussion: Adams stated that this item has been discussed already in the meeting.
- b. Regional brownfield discussion: Adams described a grant opportunity through the EPA, and requested the board members consider an application to support regional brownfield assessments and priority-setting. He stated that a local organization could assist with the application for free, and that guidelines for application may be coming out soon. Adams then asked board members if such an application was appropriate; whether SMPC should work with a contractor; and whether the contractor needs to be selected through a procurement process.
  - i. Morse asked whether all counties have brownfield organization in their structures, and whether this would duplicate or overlap with local efforts. Adams stated that the hope was to add resources to support existing entities' work, and many counties have received funding in the last 3 years, so this collaborative approach might expand the work that they are doing. Bomba emphasized the importance of considering existing priorities. Jarnefelt asked whether SMPC would apply directly or form partnerships; Adams responded that support from each county would be requested, and at least 2 entities will be necessary to apply. The Chair stated that it sounded like a good idea, and Grieve stated that it seems like more funds are needed. Morse clarified that she was in support of the application to provide more funding for projects, and encourages collaboration between existing entities. Hazelbaker said Branch County would be in support of additional financial resources to help with clean-ups. All present board members approved SMPC staff to proceed with the application, and also approved working with a local partner to complete the application for free if possible; if this is not possible, then revisit.
- c. Updates on various projects: Adams stated that the Parchment Master Plan was completed in July.

#### 13. Staff Report/Other:

- a. Monthly Correspondence: The Chair recognized the support letter to BCU in the packet.

#### 14. Representative Comments

- a. Hazelbaker: Branch County voting today on sheriff, commissioners; jail is being worked on now.
- b. Bomba: County is back in the office; two millages on ballot today: a renewal of the senior millage, and new proposal for parks millage (0.2 mils) that would be split between county and other jurisdictions.
- c. Morse: Housing millage is proposed for Kalamazoo County; countywide 911 funding on ballot today.
- d. Grieve and Carahaly: no additional comments.

#### 15. Action: Adjournment

- a. Hazelbaker moved to adjourn at 1:05pm.

**Next Meeting:**  
September 1, via GoToMeeting