



# Southcentral Michigan Planning Council

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## Board Meeting Minutes

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, October 28, 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 11:34am.
2. Representatives Present/Introductions
  - a. Bomba, Carahaly, Drost, Frisbie, Grieve, Hazelbaker, and Pangle
  - b. KATS: Nagler. Public: Jarnefelt. SMPC staff: Adams, Trueblood
3. Representatives Excused
  - a. The Chair explained that staff would take administrative attendance going forward and this item will be stricken from future agendas.
4. Approval of the Agenda
  - a. The Chair requested additions to the agenda at 11:35am. He noted the incorrect date listed for the next meeting. Adams corrected the public meeting notice on the website.
  - b. Without objection, **the agenda was approved by unanimous consent at 11:37am.**
5. Approval of the Minutes
  - a. **The October 6<sup>th</sup> SMPC board meeting minutes were approved by unanimous consent at 11:38am.**
6. Public Comments
  - a. None were offered.
7. Acceptance of the Financial Report
  - a. Adams presented the preliminary end of year report, and explained that the budget still needs to be finalized before the end of the year. He explained that some FY2020 invoices are still outstanding, but the end of year numbers are close to the budget established at the beginning of the year. The Chair reviewed the SMPC financial management relationship between SMPC and the W.E. Upjohn Institute.
  - b. By unanimous consent, **the preliminary annual financial report was approved at 11:44am.**
8. Transportation
  - a. Nagler provided the monthly KATS report. He said that most staff time has been spent on nonfederal road ratings, and they are likely done with this activity for the year. KATS is now focusing more time on Rural Task Force activities, and Nagler wants to get county meetings started soon, likely in December due to communication and time constraints, and he also hopes to start polling agencies about their needs and preferences. KATS has received federal allocations for surface transportation funding for FY2021, although some amounts have been reduced slightly. Nagler will attend the TAMC conference this year virtually.
9. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy / EDA
  - a. Trueblood provided an overview of the CEDS public engagement processes, including a public meeting planned for October 28<sup>th</sup>, a survey available through the SMPC website through November 13<sup>th</sup>, and

interviews with key stakeholders. She also said that staff plan to present a draft of the CEDS document at the next CEDS committee and SMPC board meetings. Adams asked board members to think about the long-term structure of CEDS committee, and about how to accomplish the CEDS' most important steps. Grieve requested to receive the draft CEDS plan well in advance of SMPC meeting on December 1<sup>st</sup> so that board members can provide adequate feedback. The Chair iterated his desire to submit the CEDS as soon as possible, and staff explained the steps required to do so within the grant timeline.

- b. An update on the EDA capacity building grant application was not provided.

#### 10. EPA Grant Application

- a. Adams reviewed the application to the EPA Brownfields Assessment grant program. Staff and the grant contractor, SME, identified downtown Coldwater and Homer as the target areas for the grant, and recruited support for the application from key local stakeholders.
- b. Jarnefelt agreed with the approach of staff, and said that it's great that funds can be flexible. Carahaly asked how the priority areas were chosen, and Adams described the collaborative effort between staff and the contractor to assemble the needed data and partners. Adams asked that board members provide feedback at this meeting since the grant application was due on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Hazelbaker asked about how the funding would be used and prioritized in the Coldwater area, and Adams described the process of identifying potentially contaminated sites, writing redevelopment plans, and aligning resources. Adams said that the funds would also support identification of potential contaminants in Homer. Pangle asked about the time frame for the grant, and Jarnefelt explained that the funding should be allocated in early spring 2021, and available by October 2021.

#### 11. Strategic Plan

- a. Adams reviewed the updated SMPC strategic plan, and the key activities identified by staff that should be prioritized in 2021. He reviewed the goals of aligning SMPC activities with members' goals and needs, and increasing capacity of local governments and nonprofits. Grieve asked to clarify 'increase capacity' to do what, and Adams said that it could be to accomplish their missions. Grieve suggested that it be rewritten that SMPC provide tools to local governments and nonprofit organizations to increase their capacity through education.
- b. The Chair asked board members to provide feedback to staff via email or in person, and then vote on the final strategic plan at the next SMPC meeting in December.
- c. Adams continued reviewing the remaining goals, objectives, and key activities of the strategic plan, including increasing awareness of SMPC; promoting regional prosperity, recovery, and resiliency; assist local units of government with limited resources; assist state departments with service delivery; increase members' and SMPC organizational access to local, state, and federal funding; and continue creating and implementing regional and multijurisdictional plans.
- d. Grieve asked about the format, and Adams explained that the draft workplan would be put together once the strategic plan is approved.

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

- a. Adams requested representatives' feedback on potential steering committee members for creating a broadband plan. Pangle said that the suggested list was pretty comprehensive, with the exception of potentially including an SMPC board member. Adams said that broadband planning would likely begin after the holidays.
- b. Adams explained that Upjohn Institute received funding from the Kellogg Foundation to help digitize the housing toolkit, and the website should be up and running by the end of the year. Carahaly asked to make sure that the funds would be spent before the end of the year, and said that he was glad that the Upjohn Institute helped engage the contractor. Jarnefelt asked that the Kalamazoo County board receive an update or presentation when the toolkit is completed, and board members agreed that the toolkit should be shared widely when completed.
- c. Adams explained that the St. Joseph County Housing plan is nearing completion.
- d. Adams reviewed the plan updates and amendments in process, including Nottawa Township, St. Joseph County Master Plan, Branch County, and Flowerfield Township. Adams explained that the zoning official on staff is keeping busy in Kalamazoo Township, but additional staff resources may be needed soon.

#### 13. Staff Report/Other:

- a. Staff reported no monthly correspondence.

14. Representative Comments

- a. Hazelbaker stated that the Branch County Jail is on schedule and on budget.
- b. Bomba stated that she is excited about the potential to bring brownfield funds to Homer via the EPA grant.
- c. Drost shared that site selectors are looking for areas that have invested in green, renewable energy, and that her economic development team is working on six expansion projects in Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties. She also stated that labor force participation is a current and future concern; vacancies are numerous and wages have started to increase.

15. Adjournment

- a. Carahaly adjourned the meeting at 12:38pm.

**Next Meeting:**  
December 1st, via GoToMeeting