



Southcentral Michigan Planning Council

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Board Meeting Minutes

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, October 6, 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 11:37am. Since quorum was not initially achieved, KATS began with their report. The quorum was achieved at 11:53am, at which time the Chair officially began the meeting.
2. Representatives Present/Introductions
 - a. Bomba, Morse, Drost, Carahaly, Hazelbaker, and Grieve
 - b. KATS: Nagler. SMPC staff: Adams, Trueblood
3. Representatives Excused
 - a. The Chair asked the members to concur with him that attendance could be taken by staff, instead of taking an action. All attending members were in agreement with this approach.
4. Approval of the Agenda
 - a. The Chair began a discussion on the schedule of upcoming meetings. Since the November meeting is scheduled for Election Day, Adams suggested that more members might participate if the meeting were held on October 27th; Morse, Drost, and Bomba agreed. The Chair agreed to reschedule by administrative action and asked Adams to communicate the change via email.
 - b. Because quorum wasn't achieved until 11:53am, the Chair suggested that board members review attendance requirements and potentially make changes to the bylaws about quorum. The Chair asked to approve the minutes before the annual meeting items, and pushed back the discussion on the strategic plan to the next meeting. By unanimous consent, **the amended agenda was approved at 11:55am.**
5. Approval of the Minutes
 - a. The Chair asked for amendments to the minutes. None were offered, so the **minutes were approved by unanimous consent at 11:56am.**
6. Annual Meeting Items
 - a. The Chair began the discussion on election of officers at 11:57am. Hazelbaker asked Carahaly whether he would serve another term as Chair. Carahaly agreed, then asked if Hazelbaker would continue as Vice Chair, who also agreed to another term. Bomba was identified as the current secretary/treasurer.
 - i. Having identified a slate of officers, Hazelbaker moved to accept Carahaly as Chair, Hazelbaker as Vice Chair, and Bomba as Secretary/Treasurer. Drost seconded. By unanimous consent, the **officers were approved at 12:00pm.**
 - b. The Chair began the discussion on the approval of the SMPC Annual Budget. Adams explained that the \$3,000 projected loss was concentrated in providing services to local units of government, which fits the SMPC mission of returning value to the public. The Chair asked for the budget line to be increased to increase the investment in local communities, with a focus on the four member counties. Hazelbaker stated that he would be ok to increase the amount invested up to \$10,000. Morse asked how the money would be allocated, and Adams described planning services that SMPC offers at no cost and some of the regional initiatives taken on by SMPC. Morse agreed that the planning services are important, but

requested that the expenditures be planned out and enacted when staff have more capacity. The Chair agreed that it may be more appropriate to outline these expenditures via strategic planning, since an elected official had recently requested additional services. Grieve supported using the money to support projects, particularly moving things along faster like broadband planning or work more closely with Upjohn. Bomba liked reserving some money for contingencies and agreed with Morse to plan expenditures. Drost agreed that the board needs to take more time to discuss these investments and spend the money strategically and equitably among the members. The Chair, board members, and staff discussed the potential amendment of the expenditure line item. Grieve pressed staff to provide valuable services, and Adams agreed that staff could increase their quality of services through the current EDA capacity building grant. Staff recommended adding \$2,000 to line item 34052 under Wages & Fringe (Staffing Expenses). Hazelbaker suggested to continue the discussion at a board retreat. The Chair explained that the Michigan Association of Regions (MAR) dues were removed from the budget per the discussion at last month's meeting. Adams explained that the MAR board anticipates making some changes to the long-term structure to better meet members' needs by mid-2021, including meeting every month and creating a platform for on-going communication. The Chair anticipates evaluating the situation at a later time, if an invoice for dues is received.

- i. Grieve moved to approve the budget as presented in the packet, with the exception of adding \$2,000 to Wages & Fringe; Morse seconded. By unanimous consent, **the budget was approved at 12:35pm.**
- c. The Chair opened discussion of the Public Notice for FY 2021 SMPC Meetings. Adams explained the changes from the typical schedule, which include holding mostly virtual meetings, with in-person meetings held quarterly in each county over the year. Adams explained a typographical error in the meeting schedule; the meetings outlined in the packet were listed as Wednesdays, but the meetings will actually be scheduled on Tuesdays. Adams listed two options for the typical spring break schedule, the week before (March 31st) and April 6th (the week of). The board chose to stick with the typical meeting date (April 6th).
 - i. By unanimous consent, **the public notice of meetings for FY 2021 was approved at 12:40pm.**

7. Public Comments

- a. None were offered.

8. Acceptance of the Financial Report

- a. The Chair began the review of the FY 2020 quarterly report, which Adams said would need further adjustments. The Chair postponed the discussion on the financial report to the meeting on October 27th.

9. Transportation

- a. Nagler provided the KATS report: There has been some work on the Rural Task Force, Small Urban Task Force activity in Albion, and continued work on non-federal PASER ratings. A new budget for MDOT is expected around beginning of November, while federal highway dollars are expected to be extended. Nagler would like to arrange individual county meetings to review the bylaws, and have updated elections of members who participate on RTF. Adams said that project authorizations, invoices, and an amendment to the asset management program were all included in the packet.

10. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy / EDA

- a. Trueblood provided a brief update on CEDS work conducted to-date, including beginning a public engagement plan and the economic analysis section. Staff anticipate completing these final elements of the plan by November, with a draft plan completed in early December, and the final plan delivered by January.
- b. Adams provided an update on the application to EDA for the capacity building grant, which was preliminarily approved for \$280,000 pending further documentation.

11. Strategic Plan

- a. This discussion was postponed to the October 27th meeting.

12. EPA Grant Application and Potential Contractors

- a. The Chair began a discussion on the regional brownfield grant application. Adams explained that the deadline is approaching at the end of October, and the contractors need time to assemble the application. Since the grant application is not guaranteed to be successful, staff recommended limiting SMPC expenditures on the grant application, which only SME has offered to complete for free.
- b. Morse moved to accept staff recommendation to work with SME, Drost seconded. By unanimous consent, **SME was selected as the environmental consultant for the EPA RFQ at 12:57pm.** Adams agreed to notify the respondents.

13. Local Government Assistance and Planning Activities

- a. Adams explained that the EDA capacity-building funding will support regional broadband planning, and that staff have already been helping assemble stakeholders in Calhoun County, which will help staff improve the planning process in other counties. He also reviewed a potentially innovative data-gathering process that is being developed with Upjohn staff to determine where broadband access already exists.
- b. Adams stated that SMPC has a contractor in place now to finish up the regional Housing Toolkit by the end of the year, with funding supported by Upjohn and the Kellogg Foundation.
- c. Trueblood provided an update on St. Joseph County Housing Plan, which should be completed soon.
- d. No updates on various other projects were provided in light of time constraints.

14. Staff Report/Other:

- a. The Chair agreed to move the 2021 SMPC Budget Discussion to the October 27th meeting.
- b. Staff reported no monthly correspondence.

15. Representative Comments

- a. Hazelbaker said that construction of the new Branch County jail is on time and on budget.
- b. Carahaly stated that he's now chair of the Kalamazoo County Planning Commission.

16. Adjournment

- a. Grieve motioned to adjourn, Carahaly seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 1:06pm.

Next Meeting:
October 27, via GoToMeeting