



**Minutes**  
**Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission Meeting**  
**112 MacTanly Place, Staunton, VA**  
**June 17, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**

**Member Jurisdiction Representatives**

	<b>Augusta County</b>		<b>City of Staunton</b>		<b>Staff</b>
	Butch Wells		Amy Darby	✓	Garreth Bartholomew
	Pam Carter		Sharon Angle	✓	Zach Beard
✓	Vickie Moran		<b>Rockbridge County</b>	✓	Steve Bolster
✓	Julia Hensley	✓	Jay Lewis	✓	Philippe Bone
	<b>Bath County</b>		Chris Slaydon	✓	Jeremy Crute
✓	Lynn Ellen Black		<b>Rockingham County</b>	✓	Ann Cundy
	<b>City of Buena Vista</b>		Leila Longcor	✓	Allyson Finchum
✓	Tyson Cooper	✓	Rhonda Cooper, Secretary	✓	Donnie Kern
	<b>City of Harrisonburg</b>	✓	Kim Sandum	✓	Rachel Kinzer
	Laura Dent			✓	Paula Melester
	Monica Robinson		<b>City of Waynesboro</b>	✓	Kimberly Miller
	Adam Fletcher	✓	Terry Short, Treasurer	✓	Devon Thompson
	<b>Highland County</b>		Jim Shaw		<b>Others</b>
✓	Henry Budzinski, Vice Chair			✓	Tom Carroll, City of Lexington
	<b>City of Lexington</b>			✓	Dan Layman, CFCBR
✓	Frank Friedman, Chair			✓	Anna Leavitt, CAPSAW

**Call To Order**

The June 17, 2024, Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairperson Frank Friedman. There being no quorum of voting members present, the action items were discussed, but no votes were taken.

**Public Comment**

Chairperson Friedman opened the floor for public comments. There were no public comments.

**Consideration of Minutes**

Chairperson Friedman stated the minutes of the April 15, 2024 meeting will be considered at the next meeting.

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## **Chairperson's Report**

Chairperson Friedman introduced his guest, Mr. Tom Carroll, who is the new city manager of Lexington. Originally from Appleton, WI, and a graduate of UVA, he spent most of his career near Cincinnati and most recently in Cambridge, MD. He welcomed Mr. Carroll to the Commission meeting and said that it is a good opportunity for the city manager to see the workings of the Commission on behalf of the region.

## **Executive Director's Report**

Under the Executive Director's Report, Ms. Cundy introduced two new planners to the PDC, Garreth Bartholomew, Transportation Planner, and Rachel Kinzer, Regional Planner, both recent UVA graduates. She also announced three internal promotions: Paula Melester as Director of Transportation, Zach Beard as Transportation Program Manager, and Devon Thompson as Transit Program Manager. The organization is currently recruiting a new Transit Planner.

Ms. Cundy reported on the following items:

1. Afton Express received a grant from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, which will reduce the local match required from funding partners by two-thirds. This grant will ease the transition of the route to becoming a full rural route over the next five years. Afton Express recently exceeded 100 passenger trips in a single day in April, a new record.
2. The Lewis Street Hub renovation project in downtown Staunton is progressing on schedule and within budget. Recent developments include the construction of a stone retaining wall and the pouring of concrete curbing and sidewalks. A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be planned for the fall.
3. The PDC submitted their 2024 CDBG Small Cities regional priorities, with the top three being public infrastructure (including housing), economic development and business district revitalization, and community service facilities (two community centers are being supported, in Rockbridge County and in Rockingham County). Establishing these priorities ensures that the region's applications will receive a scoring bonus, making them more competitive. The PDC also submitted \$5.35 million of funding applications for various community facilities, planning grants, and industrial revitalization projects that includes:
  - \$1,250,000 to build a multipurpose community service facility in Goshen.
  - \$100,000 planning grant to develop a master plan for the redevelopment of Afton Mountain in Augusta County in partnership with county staff.
  - \$1,000,000 industrial revitalization fund grant to renovate the Stillwater plant in Rockbridge County.
  - \$3,000,000 funding allocation to restart our SPARC program which provides reduced rate mortgages for first time home buyers. SPARC when paired with down payment assistance supports affordable homeownership.

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4. DHCD announced last week that the City of Buena Vista will receive \$431,000 in additional CDBG funding to complete their business district revitalization project. This project was paired with VDOT Transportation Alternatives Program funds for streetscape improvements. The PDC worked with the City to write the supplemental funding request.
  5. Lastly, the PDC has engaged Brown Edwards to undertake their FY24 certified financial audits. A letter of notification from Brown Edwards was included in your meeting materials.

Chairperson Friedman asked Ms. Julia Hensley, of Augusta County, to provide an update on the Afton Mountain revitalization project. Ms. Hensley stated that the County is working to determine the feasibility of expanding water and sewer to the site, which includes the Inn and the former Howard Johnson's. Ms. Cundy added that Augusta County had applied for EDA CARES Act application to develop a scope of work for the site. Although not funded, the PDC and the County have been working to accomplish the tasks as able by applying various other funding sources. The SAWMPO conducted a small area study to undertake the transportation circulation evaluation at the site and recommended a roundabout at the Howardsville Turnpike and Rt 250. Timmons Group, one of our On-Call Consultants, did the study.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Chairperson Friedman presented for consideration the Treasurer's Report (handout attached to file minutes). Mr. Kern gave a report on the April 2024 Financial Statements, noting that the CSPDC's financial position remains strong. He stated that revenues year-to-date are over \$4.9 million, which is down from this time last year due to the Bath-Highland VATI grant being completed. Mr. Kern also stated that receivables are healthy.

### **Consideration of Draft CSPDC FY25 Budget (BAF #24-7)**

Chairperson Friedman introduced the agenda item for the draft FY25 budget. Chair Friedman stated that the Executive Committee approved the budget at its May meeting, and it will be discussed at this meeting and approved at the next meeting. In response to a question, Ms. Cundy stated that it will not prevent the PDC from moving forward with implementation since it was approved by the Executive Committee.

Mr. Donnie Kern provided an overview of the draft budget. He stated that the budget is balanced at \$6.8 million and is very close to FY23. Funding sources are \$1.7 million of state, \$3.7 million of federal, and \$1.1 million of local funding. Wages are flat with FY24 budget and FY23 actuals. He provided a breakdown of the funding as follows:

- State funding includes \$926,000 from DRPT.
- Federal funding primarily comes from FTA (\$2.2 million), FHA (\$485,000), and USDOT (\$620,000).
- Wages are projected at \$1.4 million, remaining flat compared to the previous year, with a 4% cost of living adjustment.
- Additional revenue of \$136,000 is expected from facility leases.

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- The budget includes pass-through funds that are received and then distributed to other agencies.

### **Consideration of BRITE Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Bylaws Amendment (BAF #24-8)**

Chairperson Friedman introduced the BRITE TAC Bylaws Amendment. Ms. Devon Thompson, CSPDC Transit Program Manager, presented proposed changes to the BRITE Transit Advisory Committee (BTAC) bylaws. She explained that the BTAC is responsible for making recommendations to the CSPDC regarding transit system operations and representing their respective agencies. The organizations who would be members of the BTAC were originally appointed by the Commission in 2015 when the CSPDC took over the transit system.

She explained the two proposed changes to membership that must be reflected in the Bylaws:

1. The Valley Community Services Board has requested to reinstate their status as a funding partner and reinstate the stop they once had. The BTAC Bylaws require any funding partner to be a voting member and for any changes to the membership to be approved by the Commission.
2. The BTAC also requests adding a non-voting rider to represent Afton Express. This rider representative will attend meetings remotely (due to working in Charlottesville), so they will not be a voting member.

These proposed changes were voted on and approved by the BTAC at their May meeting. The new representatives will be allowed to attend and participate in meetings, but the new voting member won't be able to vote until the changes are officially approved.

### **Presentation: “Fostering a Regional Housing Consortium” by Mr. Dan Layman, Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge, and Ms. Anna Leavitt, Community Action Partnership of Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro**

Chairperson Friedman presented the next agenda item, a presentation on fostering a regional housing consortium.

Ms. Cundy introduced Mr. Dan Layman from the Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge and Ms. Anna Leavitt from Community Action Partnership of Staunton, Augusta and Waynesboro (CAPSAW) and explained that these two organizations are taking the lead on the SAW Housing Consortium. She welcomed them and thanked them for providing this presentation.

Mr. Layman explained how the initiative began during the pandemic through a public-private partnership led by Emergency Management. In late 2022, the subcommittee for vulnerable communities decided to tackle quality and affordability of housing, leading to a Housing Summit in October 2023 with 170 participants. The Planning District Commission was brought in for project management support. Additional support was brought onboard from the Department of Health, Virginia Housing, Augusta Health, Valley Community Services Board, Community Foundation and Valley Homeless Connection, and others.

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A Housing Exhibit called, “This is Home” was created both online and as a physical exhibit that has been displayed around the region. He passed out a card that contains a QR code that leads to the online exhibit.

The Housing Summit was 1.5 days and opened with someone who had dealt with housing insecurity, who spoke and had a video made to tell his story. Sessions throughout the day dealt with various housing impacts and successful models.

On day two, 120 participants returned, which was more than expected. They utilized the day to gather more information and plan next steps. Some specific requests from the group were to develop a housing resource directory, host ongoing lunch and learn sessions, expand the steering committee, and hold a follow-up SAW Housing Summit, which is scheduled for June 27, 2024.

Ms. Leavitt discussed the lunch-and-learn sessions and noted that there are many new people who have not been involved in other community projects. She stated that the Steering Committee outlined four proposed work groups focusing on housing stock for home ownership, stock of rental units, housing stability for immediate needs, and housing sustainability for long-term success. They are also looking to identify what is working well in other communities and develop best practices that can be used in our region.

Mr. Layman mentioned that the Community Foundation and Augusta Health are setting aside money for creative housing investments. The discussion touched on challenges such as infrastructure capacity for new developments and the need for partnerships to address these issues.

Several important points were raised during the meeting, including discussing potential legislative solutions like affordable housing overlay zoning, addressing high eviction rates in Virginia, and the need for policy advocacy. The presenters emphasized the importance of identifying legislative goals and combating a “not in my backyard” mindset. Questions from attendees covered topics such as Habitat for Humanity's involvement, the replicability of the process in other regions, and the potential role of large employers in addressing housing issues.

The presentation concluded with an invitation to attend the upcoming Housing Summit and access recorded sessions online.

#### **Intergovernmental Review (Board Memo #24-4)**

Chairperson Friedman presented the Intergovernmental Review (IR) discussion. Ms. Cundy stated that these IRs are provided for informational purposes and no action is required. The IRs include three from DEQ and one from VDOT. The floor was opened for questions; there were none.

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**Other Business**

Ms. Cundy noted that the August meeting is considered the Annual Commission meeting, and the Commission will celebrate its 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary (1969-2024). Chairperson Friedman added that the meeting date is August 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, a motion for adjournment was unanimously passed at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kimberly Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

Kimberly Miller, Commission Clerk