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THOMAS JEFFERSON PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION (TJPDC)

Draft Minutes, October 1, 2020

Commissioners Present:

Dale Herring – Greene County
Ned Gallaway – Albemarle County
Jesse Rutherford – Nelson County
Dylan Bishop – Nelson County
Keith Smith – Fluvanna County
Andrea Wilkinson – Greene County
Tony O'Brien – Fluvanna County (7:23)
Donna Price – Albemarle County
Bob Babyok – Louisa County
Michael Payne – City of Charlottesville (7:10)
Willie Gentry – Louisa County
Rory Stolzenberg – City of Charlottesville

Commissioners Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Chip Boyles, Executive Director
Christine Jacobs, Chief Operating Officer

Guests Present:

Sean Tubbs, Independent Journalist, Citizen

Note: The Governor has declared a state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the nature of this declared emergency makes it impracticable or unsafe for the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission to assemble in a single location. This meeting was held utilizing electronic virtual communication with the Zoom software application, and in accordance with virtual meeting procedures and policies as outlined in Item 4.0-01 of the Virginia state budget (HB29), as effective April 24, 2020. A recording of the meeting was made available to the public on October 3, 2020 at <https://tjpd.org/meeting-agendas/tjpd-20201001/>

1. Call to Order: Dale Herring called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. He started with an overview of the electronic meeting protocols, to include, informing participants that the meeting was being recorded, that roll call would be verbal, that all participants should keep their microphones on mute unless speaking, that the chair will verbally identify who makes a motion and seconds the motion, and that public comments are limited to 2 minutes. He informed participants that TJPDC staff was monitoring the meeting for those requesting to join the meeting late or for unexpected interruptions to the meeting. Mr. Herring then read the names of all Commissioners for the roll call. Results of the roll call are noted above.

2. Matters from the Public:

a. Comments by the Public: None

b. Comments provided via email, online, web site, etc.: None

3. Consent Agenda: The consent agenda consisted of the draft minutes from the September 3, 2020 Commission Meeting and the Financial Report through August 31, 2020. Both items on the consent agenda were considered in one vote

Action Items:



City of Charlottesville

Albemarle County

Fluvanna County

Greene County

Louisa County

Nelson County

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- a. Minutes of the September 3 Commission Meeting:
- b. August Financial Reports:
 - **On a motion by Jesse Rutherford, seconded by Andrea Wilkinson, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the September 3, 2020 meeting and the August Financial Reports, as presented.** Commissioner Stolzenberg was not present for the vote.

4. Resolutions:

- a. FY21 Department of Housing and Community Development Funding Agreement: Mr. Boyles shared that DHCD has historically provided the TJPDC with agency funding of \$75,971. There was an increase approved for FY21, however, the budget crisis that occurred due to the Pandemic saw the increase removed. In return for the funding, the TJPDC completes an annual strategic plan, as well as a report of accomplishments for the fiscal year. Funding can be used for regional planning.
 - **On a motion by Andrea Wilkinson, seconded by Willie Gentry, the Commission unanimously approved the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Housing and Community Development Financial Assistance Funding Agreement.**

5. New Business:

- a. Rental & Mortgage Relief Program Update: Christine Jacobs gave an overview of the Emergency Rent and Mortgage Relief Program (RMRP). She noted that the overall data, contained in the attached Summary Data report, was through 9.22.20 and that the numbers changed hourly. She shared that an additional \$305,000 in reimbursement has been requested from DHCD. She also shared that the TJPDC has been approved for up to \$1,350,000 in funding, to date. Ms. Jacobs shared that the program guidelines had been updated to allow 100% of rent/mortgage in arrears to be covered by RMRP funds as well as both the current month's rent/mortgage and the next month's rent if applying after the 15th of the month. She shared that DHCD also instituted a Landlord Program through Virginia Housing where landlords could apply on behalf of their tenants. Christine fielded several questions from the Commissioners on the progress of the program. A brief discussion was had on how the localities could support the program and their residents. There was also a brief discussion on the different average household payments by locality. Ms. Jacobs shared that requests from households were increasing due to the updated program guidelines. She also noted that Charlottesville's data was slightly skewed because they have an additional Pathways program that offers financial support to residents. For example, the number of pending applicants in Charlottesville is likely less than the data indicates because many of those pending clients have received support from another program but remain as pending in the system should they re-approach RMRP for future assistance.
- b. TJPDC Project Update Mr. Boyes presented a high-level update on the major projects and programs of the TJPDC, following the handout provided in the Commission Packet.
 - The TJPDC Website is expected to be presented to the Commission in November. The site will use updated technology and have a new, fresher look.
 - The Regional Housing Partnership's affordable housing search tool is scheduled to roll-out in November. It will have both for rent and for sale affordable housing included. Mr. Boyles shared an example: <https://dchousingsearch.org>. Property owners will be able to list their units for free. It will also include a regional housing informational hub, to include resources and programs available in each locality and the state. There will be an affordability calculator for families to determine how much home they can afford. Mr. Boyles shared that a funding request was sent out to the local governments and that Albemarle and Nelson had committed funding. He also shared that was a grant request out that would match local contributions.
 - The Annual financial audit will be presented in the November meeting. Robinson, Farmer, Cox worked in the office for 3 days and the audit progressed smoothly.

- The CEDS grant application was submitted to the US EDA for a comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan. The TJPDC is partnering with the Rapidan/Rappahannock PDC for a \$250,000 super-regional plan.
- The TJPDC is working with the Charlottesville Area Alliance on a 5-year action plan to create an age-friendly community.
- The TJPDC completed a grant application for Louisa County to receive funding to increase voter participation. Louisa was awarded the grant funding.
- The TJPDC is administering the Nelson CARES Small Business Assistance Grant Program. Over 25 letters of interest were received. The TJPDC will send out 11 award letters in the coming week.
- The TJPDC is working with Nelson County of a GO Va grant for marketing and business rejuvenations to get through the pandemic.
- The TJPDC is also working with Nelson on a CDBG downtown revitalization application to DHCD. The application was successfully submitted in the past week. The CDBG application was a planning grant for a visualization and action plan for Nelson County to work on revitalizing downtown Lovington.
- The Rivanna River Summit, with Albemarle Supervisor Ann Malek, had over 50 participants. It included a great conversation, with action items to come, for the entire watershed area.
- The Regional Housing Partnership is holding a fall virtual speaker series in lieu of an in-person conference. Over 40 participants joined an economist out of Northern Virginia to discuss the impacts of COVID on the housing market. There will be a November and December event and details can be found on the Regional Housing Partnership's page of the TJPDC website.
- The TJPDC is completing a plan in Zion Crossroads to address transportation and land use needs. VDOT consultants completed the initial work. The project is now working with the public to see the possibility for roadway and transportation improvements in concord with land use recommendations.
- The TJPDC will be completing a North 29 corridor plan north of Airport Road into Greene County. The purpose of the plan is to identify transportation needs.
- The Regional Broadband Partnership will hold its first stakeholder meeting in October.
- TJPDC Planner, Nick Morrison, completed Albemarle's Infrastructure Inventory (3rd phase/neighborhood), which included a GIS assessment of infrastructure with conditions. This will provide a quick-reference to the planning department when making capital improvement decision.
- The Rivanna River Corridor Plan continues to progress. TJPDC staff posted information poster along the Rivanna Trail which receive 30 responses from the public with feedback.
- The Hazard Mitigation Plan is kicking off and TJPDC staff has begun to work with localities.
- The Cherry Avenue Plan for the City of Charlottesville is complete and will go to the Planning Commission in November for consideration.

Commissioner Gallaway asked for an update on whether the rural transit funding from DRPT had been held back by the state. Mr. Boyles responded that the TJPDC staff are monitoring that through the Commonwealth Transportation Board. He expects it to be on the October or November agenda. The General Assembly has not adopted a revised budget so the Transportation Board has not adopted their budget. Mr. Boyles noted that, to date, the holdback money has not been committed anywhere else.

6. Executive Director's Report:

a. Executive Director's Report: Mr. Boyles shared that the TJPDC had a net gain of \$11,000, which is good for this time of year since the PDC does not receive local or state money early in the year. The Accrued Revenue report shows that there is enough grant money to cover expenses through the year. It is possible that some projects will be pushed into next year, which will help FY22 projections.

b. Agenda Items FY2: Mr. Boyles reviewed the FY21 Commission schedule to indicate that there were important meetings coming up that would require a quorum and 1 representative from each jurisdiction. He advised that the Audit review would be presented in November. He says the CAPER, HOME Annual Action Plan and Budget come at the same time every year. He also noted that Albemarle and Charlottesville had a November 5 deadline for local contribution requests. If Commissioners have a specific topic that they would like covered, they should notify Mr. Boyles

7. Other Business:

a. Roundtable Discussion by Jurisdiction:

- **Albemarle County:** Mr. Gallaway shared that the Albemarle Board of Supervisors had a board retreat focused on board governances and reviewed processes and procedures. The board received an update on the Community Development work plan and the progress on large projects. The board is in preparation for the upcoming budget and strategic planning. All supervisors are curious to see the impacts to last fiscal year due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. He noted the removal of the confederate statue outside of Court Square. The statue went to Shenandoah Valley Battlefields and was selected from a dozen applicants. Supervisor Price shared that the Board was expecting to get a draft of the housing policy recommendations. She also shared her support for the Fluvanna traffic circle.
- **Nelson County:** Mr. Rutherford shared that Broadband continues to be a huge topic. They are rolling out more fiber with the goal to get to all households in Nelson County within the next 2 years. He said the Cooperative covers 85% of the County so the Supervisors are targeting the remaining 15%. Mr. Rutherford thanked TJPDC staff for their work on the Lovingson CDBG project. He noted that there were morale issues in the school system and an increase of foster children in the County needing support. Ms. Bishop added that, while they lost funding that would have been for a Comprehensive Plan update, they are having preliminary talks with staff to break down items that can begin now. She also shared that they are working on going through their special use permit applications list, which is backed-up due to the Pandemic.
- **Louisa County:** Mr. Gentry said the Supervisors were getting more serious about Broadband and committing funding. He shared that they have had several solar projects that were all successful (except for one due to improper buffers). He said the school system is doing extremely well and appreciates all of the effort that has been put in to make it so. Finally, he shared that Lake Anna has been doing very well as folks are seeking opportunities outside of urban areas during the Pandemic. Mr. Babyok shared that Louisa County received a grant prepared by the TJPDC for funding to increase voting. He shared that over 1700 people had voted early, which is an average of 150 people/day in one location at the Administration building. The County will be opening a new location nearer to the end of the month. He continues to be frustrated by the lack of Census participation, sharing that the County receives \$2,000 per man, woman, and child for the next 10 years.

- Fluvanna: Mr. O'Brien shared that they have been promoting the elections as much as possible. He said that they are benefitting from general growth near Zion Crossroad and are pleased to have good access to Broadband. Mr. Smith shared that the new round-about is routing traffic around at Lake Monticello road and Route 53. He noted that it should be wrapped up by November 1st and that it was the first SmartScale project in Virginia. He also shared that a multi-family developer/builder was working on a 150 rental unit development with affordable housing. Finally, he shared that the Thomas Jefferson Community Land Trust is currently in discussion with Piedmont Housing Alliance for a merger.
- Greene County: Ms. Wilkinson shared that the TJPDC helped Ruckersville with a Small Area Plan that was continuing to receive support and making progress through the Ruckersville Advisory Council. She discussed two small public green spaces near the Visitor Center and near the Food Lion off of Route 29. Mr. Herring shared that the new EMS would start operations later in the month. They are now fully staffed. He noted that the County is in litigation with the Rappahannock Service Authority due to requesting a withdrawal that was denied. The school system is now operating in a Hybrid attendance model. As the Director of Technology for the school system, he said there were challenges with access for their small division. Finally, he shared that an EMS study was completed and provided at no charge by the state.
- City of Charlottesville: Mr. Payne shared that there was an uptick in local cases of Coronavirus due to the University of Virginia beginning classes. The City continues to partner with Albemarle County and UVA to keep restrictions in place to slow the spread of the virus. The school system is examining options for returning to in person classes. It has been difficult to navigate for teachers and families. The City would soon be finalizing their next round of CDBG funding and the City contributed money to their Pathways Fund to support the Rent and Mortgage Relief Program. The Comprehensive Plan and Housing Plan with a zoning rewrite is making progress. He is excited to hear the Community Land Trust news as it is a reliable tool to address affordable housing issues. Hotel/lodging has taken a bigger hit than expected and there are continued concerns about the fall with outdoor seating and the impact on restaurants and local businesses. Chair Herring introduced Mr. Stolzenberg as the new City of Charlottesville Commissioner. Mr. Stolzenberg introduced himself as a software engineer and Planning Commissioner. He is looking forward to learning more about the work of the TJPDC and the surrounding localities.

Mr. Smith reminded the Commission that they used to rotate locations for the monthly meetings. He suggested that they continue to do that.

Mr. Herring shared that with the change in environment, that he did not foresee the schools going back to not offering a virtual component. He also noted expectations that Black Friday would be impacted by the Pandemic.

b. Next Meeting – November 5, 2020

Mr. Boyles thanked the commissioners for 100% attendance and shared how helpful it was for staff.

Adjournment:

- **On a motion by Jesse Rutherford, seconded by Mr. Obrien, the Commission unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 pm.**